

North Collins Central School District
UPDATED COVID-19 Reopening Plan
2020-21 School Year
April 2021
Revised May 2021 (revisions highlighted in yellow)



MISSION STATEMENT

“The North Collins Central School District is a safe and supportive learning environment that strives to maximize educational opportunities for all students, faculty, staff and community members. We nurture responsibility, creativity, energy, and open-mindedness to empower successful contributors to a global society.”

The North Collins Central School District's COVID-19 health and safety **UPDATED** reopening plan **summarizes** the updated policies, practices and conditions necessary to meet the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and New York State Education Department (NYSED) guidelines for COVID-19 published on April 9, 2021. As the health and safety of district staff and students is our top priority, the plan has a strong commitment to those measures. The **UPDATED** reopening plan is divided into categories directly from the NYSDOH latest guidelines (April 9, 2021). Each category contains guidance, procedures, protocols and/or other measures which explain updated practices that need to be considered in order to maximize the health and safety of students and staff. The full NYSDOH guidance document can be found [HERE](#).

This plan was developed with the collaboration of key school community stakeholders, including teachers, staff, parents, students, administrators, our Medical Director's representative, school nurses, counselors, and District supervisors.

NORTH COLLINS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (PreK-6)
NORTH COLLINS JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL (7-12)

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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AT PRE-K TO GRADE 12 SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

[Updated NYSDOH Guidance](#)

April 9, 2021

Purpose

This Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (“Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Schools”) was originally created in August 2020 to provide all elementary (including pre-kindergarten), middle, and high schools, as well as their employees, contractors, students, and parents/legal guardians of students with precautions to help protect against the spread of COVID-19 for schools that are authorized to provide in-person instruction in the 2020-2021 school year. This April 2021 update is intended to align this guidance with the most recent recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on how to prioritize safe in-person learning in schools while adhering to layered mitigation strategies.

This guidance is intended to address all types of public and private (both secular and non-secular) elementary (including pre-kindergarten), middle, and high schools. Each school/district must meet the minimum standards set forth in this guidance and reflect engagement with school stakeholders and community members, including but not limited to administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents/legal guardians of students, local health departments, local health care providers, and, where appropriate, affiliated organizations (e.g., union, alumni, and/or community-based groups).

KEY CHANGES TO THE UPDATED INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AT PRE-K TO GRADE 12 SCHOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

April 9, 2021

- Schools/districts may choose to reduce physical distancing to no less than three feet between students during academic instruction, however:
- Schools/districts must follow CDC recommendations for physical distancing depending upon community transmission rates and grade levels. Erie County is currently considered a county with high risk of transmission, elementary schools can maintain physical distancing of at least three feet between students in classrooms and cohorting is recommended when possible. However, in middle and high schools three feet between students in classrooms is recommended only when schools can use cohorting. When schools cannot maintain cohorting, middle and high schools must maintain physical distancing of at least six feet between students in classrooms. **Cohorts, particularly for younger students, are self-contained, preassigned groups of students with reasonable group size limits set forth by the school.*
- Schools must adhere to the exceptions where a minimum of six feet of distance must be maintained including:
 - Six feet is always the required distancing between adults (teachers, staff, visitors) and between students and adults.
 - Six feet of distance is required when eating meals or snacks, or drinking, or other times masks must be removed. This may mean that meals cannot be eaten in classrooms that have been converted to three feet of physical distance during instruction time.
 - Individuals participating in activities that require projecting the voice (e.g., singing) or playing a wind instrument must be six feet apart and there must be six feet of distance between the performers and the audience during performances and concerts.
 - Six feet of physical distance must be maintained in common areas and outside of classrooms (e.g. lobbies, auditoriums, gymnasiums, cafeterias, and hallways), where possible.

For guidance on sports, please refer to the [Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) (March 25, 2021).

- **All schools/districts must have a mandatory face mask policy requiring face masks at all times except during meals.**
- Additional guidance on ventilation and filtration is provided including recommendations for both classrooms that have mechanical ventilation and those that do not.
- Physical barriers are no longer recommended by CDC.
- Schools/districts should, at a minimum, follow CDC recommendations on testing in schools. Schools/districts moving to physical distancing of less than six feet should strongly consider implementing screening testing protocols to ensure monitoring.
- Indicators: Due to evidence that transmission risk ranges by the age of the student, the CDC recommends that physical distancing requirements differ by grade level and community transmission risk. CDC has developed four levels of indicators and thresholds for community transmission of COVID-19. Please refer to *Table 2* in the [CDC guidance](#) for more detail.
- The NYS Department of Health does not review or approve revisions to school reopening plans, which have been previously approved.
- Modified plans must be posted online and opportunity for community input and feedback must be provided. Final modified plans must be shared with Local Health Departments and the State Education Department.

(1) Reopening of School Facilities for In-person Instruction

The North Collins Elementary School

On Monday, May 3, 2021 students in grades PreK-6 will attend in-person learning 5-days a week. Due to the change in the social distancing guidelines, students are able to sit in classrooms less than 6 feet apart (if needed).

The North Collins Jr.-Sr. High School

On Monday, Monday, May 24, 2021, students in grades 7-12 will attend in-person learning 5-days a week. Due to the change in Erie County's Community Transmission Threshold level from RED to ORANGE, students are now able to be socially distanced by a minimum of 3 feet in the classroom (if necessary).

We will continue at both buildings: Health Checks and Screening; Healthy Hygiene Practice; Social Distancing and Face Coverings; as per the NYSDOH and ECDOH Management of Ill persons; assistance in contact tracing; optimizing our ventilation and filtration as per the recommendations, and following the latest guidelines for sanitizing and cleaning procedures.

(2) Monitoring of Health Conditions

Monitoring includes protocols and procedures to track health conditions at schools.

• Screening

North Collins Central School District (NCCSD) has protocols and procedures for mandatory health screenings, including temperature checks, of students, faculty, staff, and, where applicable, contractors, vendors, and visitors to identify any individuals who may have COVID-19 or who may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus. NCCSD limits the number of visitors permitted on school grounds or in school facilities, and, if visitors are allowed, screening of such visitors;

• Testing Protocols

NCCSD has a process for the provision or referral of diagnostic testing for students, faculty, and staff for COVID-19, in consultation with local health department officials, when needed, which should include plans for testing of unvaccinated symptomatic individuals, close contacts of COVID-19 suspected or confirmed individuals, and individuals with recent international travel as designated through the [New York State Travel Advisory](#), before allowing such individuals to return to in-person to the school;

• Testing Responsibility

NCCSD is able to assist in identification of who in the community is responsible for referring, sourcing, and administering testing (e.g., local health department testing site, physician offices, hospital system);

(3) Containment of Potential Transmission of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Containment includes protocols and procedures for how to respond to positive or presumed-positive cases, as well as preventative practices. At a minimum, the NCCSD plan incorporates the following:

- **School Health Offices**

NCCSD has protocols for safely caring for a student, faculty, or staff member if they develop symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day in accordance with the Interim Guidance for School-Based Health Centers Regarding COVID-19 and the New York State Department of Health School-Based Health Center Dental Program Reopening Addendum;

- **Isolation**

NCCSD has procedures to isolate individuals who screen positive upon arrival, or symptomatic individuals should they become symptomatic while at school, providing appropriate PPE for school health office staff caring for the symptomatic individual. Protocols for safe transportation, including pick-up arrangements, if applicable, for symptomatic students, faculty, and staff;

- **Collection**

NCCSD has protocols for how parents or legal guardians should pick up their student with instructions that the student must be seen by a health care provider;

- **Infected Individuals**

NCCSD has requirements that persons who have tested positive complete isolation and have recovered and will not transmit COVID-19 when returning to in-person learning. Discharge from isolation and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the local health department.

- **Exposed Individuals**

NCCSD has requirements that individuals who were exposed to the COVID-19 virus complete quarantine and have not developed symptoms before returning to in-person learning (exceptions for vaccinated individuals and those with prior COVID-19 infection detailed below). Discharge from quarantine and return to school will be conducted in coordination with the local health department.

- **Vaccination**

In New York State, P-12 Teachers and staff have been eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine since January 11, 2021. Asymptomatic fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine if exposed to COVID-19.

- **Previous COVID-19 Infection**

Asymptomatic individuals who have recovered from laboratory confirmed COVID-19 infection during the previous 3 months do not need to quarantine if exposed to COVID-19.

- **Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection**

The NCCSD assures the adherence to, and promotion of, hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection guidance set forth by DOH and CDC, including strategies for cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas and appropriate notification to occupants of such areas;

- **Contact Tracing**

The NCCSD supports local health departments in contact tracing efforts using the protocols, training, and tools provided through the [New York State Contact Tracing Program](#).

- **Communication**

The NCCSD continues to share protocols and safety measures taken by the school with all relevant parties including parents/legal guardians, faculty, staff, students, and the local community.

(4) Closure of School Facilities and In-person Instruction, if Necessitated by Widespread Virus Transmission

Closure includes contingency plans, protocols, and procedures for decreasing the scale or scope of in-person education, and/or closing the school. At a minimum, the NCCSD plans incorporate the following:

- **Operational Activity**

The NCCSD would determine which operations will be decreased or ceased, and which operations will be conducted remotely; include process to conduct orderly closures which may include phasing, milestones, and involvement of key personnel; and

- **Communication**

The NCCSD plans to communicate internally and externally throughout the closure process. State-Issued Guidance and Minimum Standards Pre-K through Grade 12 schools involve a variety of activities depending on their specific educational and extracurricular programs and services, and, as such, should reference relevant “industry-specific” guidelines provided by DOH – and available on the [New York Forward website](#) – for operations of food services, office workspaces, transportation, and other activities, as applicable. Interscholastic athletics must follow DOH’s “[Interim Guidance for Sports and Recreation During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)” (March 25, 2021) ” for the conduct of school-sponsored sports. If school is closed for in person education during the school year due to an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases, school-sponsored sports must be suspended until in-person education is resumed. Further, while hosting competitive play, the NCCSD will follow the Department’s guidance, restricting spectators to no more than the greater of two spectators per player or 100 spectators indoors or 200 spectators outdoors, and, where required, implementing and enforcing rules for appropriate physical distancing, masks, and cleaning and disinfection, as such guidance is updated from time to time.

Standards for Responsible School Activities in New York State

No school activities can operate without meeting the following minimum State guidance, as well as applicable federal requirements, including but not limited to such minimum standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), CDC, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and OSHA. The State standards apply to all school activities in operation during the COVID-19 public health emergency until rescinded or amended by the State. Responsible Parties must work with these same stakeholders to make decisions regarding the updating of plans. **The NYS Department of Health does not review or approve revisions to school reopening plans, which have been previously approved. Modified plans will be posted online, shared with Local Health Departments and the State Education Department. Local Health Departments are the entity charged with ensuring the enforcement of these minimum standards.**

Additional safety information, guidelines, and resources are available at:

New York State Department of Health Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/>

New York State Education Department Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<http://www.nysed.gov/coronavirus>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Occupational Safety and Health Administration COVID-19

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

Erie County Department of Health

<https://www2.erie.gov/health/coronavirus>