

# **Phase III COVID-19 Mitigation Health Plans for Augusta County Public Schools**

## **August 2020**

This document provides the plan for Augusta County Public Schools (ACPS) to enter Phase III of the Governor's phased reopening of schools in the Commonwealth. ACPS strives to meet the Key Elements listed below as provided herein in order to mitigate risks associated with COVID-19. Identified barriers indicate some (but not necessarily all) factors or as-yet unknowns that may impact ACPS's ability to meet the goals listed in this document and may require ACPS to re-evaluate and adapt its approach to the Key Element(s). In such case, ACPS will consult up-to-date guidance documents from relevant government sources as well as the Central Shenandoah Health Department staff for assistance in ameliorating the barrier and/or alternative means of accomplishing the goal, if either is possible.

### **1) Local Public Health Conditions**

a. Do you consider your community to be one with no or minimal case transmission? If so, what public health metrics or considerations informed your assessment?

- Yes, based on data from and conversations with the Virginia Department of Health.

b. Will your health mitigation strategies vary from the Phase Guidance in any major ways? If so, how? (e.g. no physical distancing on buses; athletic competitions; etc)

- Students on buses cannot maintain social distancing but are required to wear face coverings when on ACPS buses and in ACPS cars.

### **2) Planning to Reopen**

a. Establish a COVID-19 team within the school division and a point person at each school facility. Provide names of staff and contact information.

- Opening of Schools Task Force - Health & Safety Subcommittee:
  - Executive Director of Operations and Maintenance Services/Director of Athletics- Greg Troxell - 540-245-5145
  - Executive Director of Student Services-Sandi Thorpe- 540-245-5131
  - School Community Health Coordinator-Carol Cash - 540-245-5132
  - Executive Director of Personnel - Miranda Ball- 540-245-5107
- Point person at each school: Principals
  - Buffalo Gap High School - Dr. Ian Marshall - 540-337-6021
  - Fort Defiance High School - Alan Shull - 540-245-5050
  - Riverheads High School - Matt Stevens - 540-337-1921
  - Stuarts Draft High School - Nick Nycum - 540-946-7600
  - Wilson Memorial High School - Dr. Kelly Troxell - 540-886-4286
  - Beverley Manor Middle School - Yvonne Howdyshell - 540-886-5806
  - Stewart Middle School - Mike Conner - 540-245-5046
  - Stuart Draft Middle School - Scott Musick - 540-946-7611
  - Wilson Middle School - Vanessa Mundie - 540-245-5185
  - Cassell Elementary School - Adam McLaughlin - 540-946-7635
  - Churchville Elementary School - Carrie Barb - 540-337-6036

- Clymore Elementary School - Fonda Morris - 540-245-5043
- Craigsville Elementary School - Crystal Coffman - 540-997-9184
- North River Elementary School - Lori Cox - 540-350-2463
- Riverheads Elementary School - John Matherly - 540-337-2535
- Stuarts Draft Elementary School - Tina Bowersox - 540-337-2951
- Stump Elementary School - Shawn Baska - 540-337-1549
- Wilson Elementary School - Dawn Young - 540-245-5040

b. Know the contact information and procedures for reaching the local health department. Provide the name of a specific point of contact and direct contact information for that person.

- Dr. Laura Kornegay, District Director, [Laura.Kornegay@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Laura.Kornegay@vdh.virginia.gov) - 540-332-7830
- Stephanie Kellner, Epidemiologist, [stephanie.kellner@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:stephanie.kellner@vdh.virginia.gov) - 540-332-7830x317

c. Plan for health and absenteeism monitoring/approaches. Provide the mechanism/program/process for tracking attendance and interventions, when necessary.

- Our School Community Health Coordinator will work with school nurses and principals to monitor health issues and absences at each school. This information will be shared with our division's Executive Team and school-by-school interventions will be implemented in consultation with the Central Shenandoah Health Department.

d. Develop, and describe below, a communications strategy that includes:

i. Orientation and training for staff and students specific to new COVID-19 mitigation strategies;

- Executive Director of Operations and Maintenance Services provided information to school-based administrators who then relayed it through training and implementation at each school. Weekly meetings with principals have informed them of information and guidance from VDH and this information was used to develop and implement mitigation efforts.

ii. Plans for communication with staff, parents, and students of new policies;

- Frequent phone calls, emails, social media postings, and website updates are methods for communicating information to staff, parents, and students.

iii. Plans for how to communicate an outbreak or positive cases detected at the school.

- We are working in cooperation with the Central Shenandoah Health Department to plan for communication related to positive cases and outbreaks within our schools.

e. Describe the division or school's participation in community response efforts.

- Our school division has been present in community response efforts and planning that involve emergency services, our court system, non-profit community organizations/agencies, other local school divisions, local health care providers, DSS, the Central Shenandoah Health Department, and colleges/universities.

- f. Prepare your division's student health services. Are you doing the following:
- i. Assure provision of medical-grade PPE for health services staff;
    - Our school clinics are stocked with PPE and additional supplies and resources have been secured.
  - ii. Assure and maintain typical (non-COVID-19) health services;
    - All of our typical (non-COVID-19) health services will be provided in our schools during Phase III.
  - iii. Describe how you will assure the maintenance of routine mental health services.
    - Social-emotional supports for our staff and students continue to be a priority for our division. Our division works with community agencies to provide Therapeutic Day Treatment and “outpatient in school”-services continue to be available in each of our schools. Counselors, school social workers, and behavior support staff work in collaboration with administrators, teachers, staff, and families to provide mental health supports to students.

**3) Promoting Behaviors That Reduce Spread of COVID-19**

a. Create an education/training plan for staff, students and families. Consider COVID-19 prevention education (hand washing, staying home if ill, etc.). Education should be part of staff and student orientations and to be sent to all parties before reopening schools. Does your training and communication to school community members include the promotion of the following?

- i. Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette,
  - Yes, prevention education with staff, students, and families will be provided.
- ii. Use of cloth face coverings,
  - Yes, prevention education with staff, students, and families will be provided.
- iii. Staying home when sick,
  - Yes, prevention education with staff, students, and families will be provided.
- iv. Encouraging physical distancing.
  - Yes, prevention education with staff, students, and families will be provided.

b. Maintain adequate supplies to promote healthy hygiene.

- This is a coordinated and ongoing effort by the Executive Director of Operations and Maintenance Services and Executive Director of Student Services and their staff.

c. Provide signs and messaging to promote healthy hygiene.

- This is a coordinated and ongoing effort by the Executive Director of Operations and Maintenance Services and Executive Director of Student Services and their staff.

d. Promote physical distancing. Explain how you will promote physical distancing, including the following:

- i. Modify layouts of classrooms, communal areas and buses to ensure social distancing is maintained.
  - This is a coordinated and ongoing effort by the Executive Director of Operations and Maintenance Services, the Executive Director of Student Services, the Executive Director of Transportation, and their staff in collaboration with principals and the Deputy Superintendent.
- ii. Develop strategies for food/dining services; these should be consistent with plans to optimize physical distancing.
  - This is a coordinated and ongoing effort by the Executive Director of Operations and Maintenance Services, the Executive Director of Student Services, the School Nutrition Program Supervisor, and their staff in collaboration with principals and the Deputy Superintendent.
- iii. Limit size of gatherings consistent with Executive Orders and impose strict physical distancing place during gatherings.
  - This is a coordinated and ongoing effort by the Deputy Superintendent and principals.
- iv. Follow relevant Virginia Phase Guidance[1] for Schools and [CDC guidance](#) for recreational sports for school-related sports and other recreational activities.
  - We continue to implement existing mitigation efforts for extracurricular activities that are consistent with Phase III Virginia Guidance for Schools.

**4) Maintaining Healthy Environments and Operations**

a. Plan for health monitoring of staff and students. Your plan should address the following: (1) Will health screenings of students or staff take place? (2) If so, when, where, and by whom?

- Yes, principals are developing school-specific plans for health screenings of students each morning as they enter the building. Parents are expected to do at-home screenings and school staff will complete temperature checks for students. Staff will perform daily health self-screenings that include temperature checks.

b. Hygiene Practices: Are you promoting the following hygiene practices? (Y/N)

- i. Create cleaning and disinfection protocols that include frequently touched surfaces; transport vehicles; schedules for increased cleaning, routine cleaning, and disinfection; ensuring adequate cleaning supplies and correct use/storage.
  - Yes
- ii. Provide additional hand sanitizer/handwashing stations.
  - Yes
- iii. Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing to the extent possible (e.g. dedicated student supplies, lab equipment, computers, etc).

- Yes

c. Have you ensured ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible?

- Yes

d. Have you ensured that water systems are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown? Please include water fountains as part of your considerations.

- Yes

e. Do your plans for gatherings, field trips, and volunteer restrictions align with the Executive Order in effect?

- Yes

f. Have you trained back-up staff to ensure continuity of operations? Please consider both instructional and support positions.

- Yes

## 5) **Protecting vulnerable individuals (e.g. 65+, underlying health conditions):**

a. What policy options have you created to support those students and staff at higher risk for severe illness to limit their exposure risk (e.g. telework, modified job duties, virtual learning opportunities)?

- All students have the option of full-time distance learning. Considerations for accommodations, modified duties, telework, etc are made for employees with health concerns whose essential professional functions allow.

b. Describe flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable faculty, staff and students to stay home or self-isolate when they are sick or have been exposed.

- Our division is implementing leave allowances as directed by the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. Additionally, if individuals are able to telework during quarantine or isolation periods, we will plan for this.

c. Describe your policies for return to class/work after COVID-19 illness.

- As directed by the Central Shenandoah Health Department, employees and students return to school following their physician-directed 14-day quarantine or isolation. Additional recommendations from health care providers will be followed.

## 6) **Preparing for When Someone Gets Sick**

Please describe how your plan addresses the following:

a. Separate and isolate those who present with symptoms.

- Employees and students who are ill are expected to stay home and not come to work or school. If symptoms present at school/work, adults will be expected to immediately notify their supervisors and then leave. Students who present with symptoms will be immediately isolated in a predetermined location within the school. The student will be monitored by the school nursing staff and parents will be called to immediately pick them up. Students and staff who present with symptoms will be directed to immediately contact their health care provider and will be expected to follow all related recommendations.

- b. Facilitate safe transportation of those who are sick to home or healthcare facility.
  - If adults who become ill are unable to transport themselves, their emergency contacts will be notified to come to pick them up. Parents will be contacted and expected to make immediate arrangements to pick up sick students. In any emergency situation, 9-1-1 will be utilized.
- c. Implement cleansing and disinfection procedures of areas used by sick individuals.
  - Custodial staff is prepared to implement sanitation measures for all isolation areas immediately after use. These same measures can be applied to any other location on an as-needed basis. This is all in addition to our daily cleaning practices and weekly sanitation procedures.
- d. Develop a communications plan with the local health department to initiate public health investigation, contact tracing and consultation on next steps.
  - Our School Community Health Coordinator is prepared to immediately contact the Central Shenandoah Health Department when public health investigations, contact tracing, and consultation are warranted.

**7) Planning to close down if necessary, due to severe conditions.**

Please describe which if any conditions will trigger:

- a. A reduction in in-person classes
- b. A complete school closure
- c. A complete division closure
  - Guidance from the Central Shenandoah Health Department, an outbreak/increase in local cases of COVID, and/or an order from the Governor will trigger consideration of the three circumstances above.

**8) Overnight boarding schools should consult *the Virginia Higher Education Reopening Guidelines* and [guidelines for Congregate Settings](#) for additional information and recommendations.**