

RPCNS COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies for the 2022-23 School Year

RPCNS follows the Center for Disease Control (CDC)'s recommendations for prevention strategies. The CDC has defined "community levels" (**low**, **medium** and **high** impact on healthcare systems and number of people with severe illness) as a tool to help communities decide what prevention measures to take. RPCNS will monitor the community levels as they fluctuate and implement the policy outlined below accordingly. We will follow changes in recommendations from the CDC, unless they are nullified by local regulations or mandates (Montgomery County Department of Health). The CDC COVID-19 community levels are available here: [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#)

Mitigation Strategies for Low, Medium and High Community Levels

The following set of strategies for everyday operations will be in place at all COVID-19 Community Levels.

Vaccinations

- For Students: Staying up to date on routine vaccinations is essential to prevent illness from many different infections. Vaccines reduce the risk of infection by working with the body's natural defenses to help safely develop immunity to disease. **Vaccinations for COVID- 19 are encouraged for those students who are eligible.**
- For Co-oping Adults and Staff: For COVID-19, staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccinations is the leading public health strategy to prevent severe disease. Not only does it provide individual-level protection, but high vaccination coverage reduces the burden of COVID-19 on people, schools, healthcare systems, communities, and individuals who are not vaccinated or may not develop a strong immune response from the vaccines. **Vaccinations for COVID-19 are required for co-oping adults, and staff.**

Ventilation Systems

- When inside the school, we'll provide well ventilated interior spaces. By using a combination of open windows, doors, and air purifiers, outdoor air intake will be increased and air filtration improved.

Quarantine and Isolation

- RPCNS will follow the most recent CDC COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation directives with regards to how to handle illness, quarantining, and isolation. [COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation | CDC](#)

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- Washing hands can prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Minimally 20 seconds of thorough hand washing will be done at the beginning of the school day, and during the school day, supervised by a staff member
- RPCNS will teach and reinforce proper handwashing to lower the risk of spreading viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19. Hand sanitizer will not be used regularly due the young age of our students.
- RPCNS will teach and reinforce covering coughs and sneezes to reduce the spread of germs.

Symptom Monitoring

- RPCNS staff have completed the MSDE mandated COVID-19 Training course, in addition to all the other regulatory requirements.
- Staff will be attentive to any physical symptoms (fever of 100.4 degrees F or higher, sore throat, cough, difficulty breathing, diarrhea/vomiting, severe headache, loss of taste/smell) that may arise during the course of the child's time at school, and will take the appropriate steps as outlined by MSDE and the Health Department. (A runny nose alone is not a symptom of COVID-19, however if the discharge is cloudy, yellow or green in color it is indicative of an infection, and the child should NOT attend school, and should be seen by a pediatrician.)
 - If a child becomes ill or injured during the course of the school day
 - the parent will be contacted and is expected to pick up their child as quickly as possible;
 - the child will be isolated from the other children in their class if they are ill;
 - the other parents in that class will be notified if the child was ill.
 - We request every member parent also include an emergency contact that is not a family member. If the emergency contact you provided on your child's emergency card is not available on a school day please notify your child's teacher in writing of an emergency contact who is available. Please know that you can update the emergency contact information at any time, it's really important to keep it current and accurate.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (light switches, door knobs, faucet handles, etc.) will be done. Toys/manipulatives, etc. will be cleaned per CDC guidelines, using CDC approved cleaning products.
- If a classroom has had a sick person or someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 24 hours, the space will be cleaned and disinfected.

Masking

- Anyone who chooses to wear a mask will be supported in their decision to do so at any COVID-19 Community Level, including low. At a medium COVID-19 Community Level, people who are immunocompromised or at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 should talk to their healthcare provider about the need to wear a mask and take other precautions.
- Masking is an optional choice for adults and students at the low and medium Community Levels.
- Parents using the Sibling Nursery may ask Nursery Workers to wear masks when caring for the children at any community level.

Additional Mitigation Strategies for High Community Levels

The CDC recommends layering prevention strategies at higher Community Levels. The following set of strategies for everyday operations will be in place at High COVID-19 Community Levels, *in addition to* the strategies at low and medium levels.

Additional Masking

- Masks (preferably a well-fitting K95 mask) are to be worn by all staff and adults when entering the building.

- Staff and Co-oping adults can remove masks in the classroom for teaching purposes, when social distancing can be maintained.
- Masks are optional, but strongly encouraged for children 2 years of age and older:
 - We encourage you to help your child practice wearing a mask, and how to put it on and take it off (by the ear loops)
 - We're requesting that you send your child in with at least 3 masks each class day (one that they're wearing and 2 back-up masks)

Additional Mitigation Strategies

- During school operational hours only staff, approved co-ops, their enrolled child and sibling using the nursery will be allowed in our school building, in order to reduce exposure.
- Tours of our school will be conducted either virtually or when our enrolled program is not in session.
- Daily Temperature Checks will be conducted before the enrolled children enter the school/playground.
 - Check-in will be done at the playground gate for all classes.
 - In case of inclement weather check-in will be done in the hallway outside the school's Office.
 - *Before Care* drop-off will be done inside by the school's Office.
- Each class will strive to spend approximately half of the school day outside, weather permitting.
- Since eating requires the removal of one's mask, snack/lunch will be eaten outside in our playground.
 - Social Distancing will be practiced when masks are removed for eating/drinking
 - Children will bring their own towel (to sit on), snack, lunch and water bottles.
 - If a child is staying for *AfterCare* or an *Extended Day Program*, lunch will be eaten in a well ventilated, socially distant space.
 - If there's inclement weather, then eating will be done inside in a location determined by the teacher, with the children socially distant.
- Others who are part of our larger community here at RPCNS but whom operate independently and may have differing COVID-19 policies:
 - Corie Reuschlein CCC-SLP, uses room 112 (which does not have a class meeting in it this year) for her immune-compromised, non-RPCNS school-aged, speech clients on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons;
 - "Miss Gina", our Music teacher, is doing *Music Time for Tots* here on Wednesday morning in our Music classroom, some of our parent members have enrolled with their younger child;
 - Megan Coate, Pediatric Occupational Therapist and former parent member, will be running her *Wee Ones* program on Monday mornings; some of our parent members have enrolled their younger child.