

New Jersey Yeshiva Day School Joint Medical Committee - Addendum to Reopening Guidelines for Elementary, Middle, & High Schools

Elementary and Middle School - Addendum to Release 1.1

High School - Addendum to Release 1.0

September 7, 2020

Introduction

- Many of our member schools have now completed their first week of in-person classes. As planned, the Joint Medical Committee met to discuss issues that arose during that week and to reassess our guidelines as they have been implemented. The revised recommendations below stemmed from that reassessment. We will continue to meet regularly throughout the school year and revisit our protocols as needed.
- As school - and society in general - reopens, it has become clear that our actions outside of school will affect the ability of schools to remain open. This is especially important as we approach the High Holidays, a time we usually spend in communal gatherings. Therefore, we are adding a section on "Socializing Outside of School." Our goal is not to restrict who our families can spend time with, but to mitigate the risk of our leisure and social activities bringing Covid into the schools. We are therefore providing recommendations aimed at reducing the risk of viral transmission during social activities, as well as reducing the impact of "high risk" social activities on the school community.
- Our original recommendations required that household members of students/staff who develop symptoms at school be sent home immediately, along with the symptomatic person. However, given the current low prevalence of Covid in our area, we are relaxing this requirement to allow the need to immediately exclude household members to be based on a risk assessment of the sick person's symptoms. If those symptoms are "low risk," the household members may complete the day at school, but will not be allowed to return the next day unless the index case has been cleared by a physician.
- We are also providing clarification on what constitutes an "alternative diagnosis" to allow a student or staff member to return to school without Covid testing.

- We are shortening the time to return to school campus after a non-Covid diagnosis is made from 72 hours to 24 hours after resolution of symptoms.
- Questions arose at some schools about the classification of carpools and buses vis a vis the need to quarantine or be excluded from school while a member of that carpool/bus is being investigated for possible Covid. At this time, we are recommending to treat the carpool/bus in the same way that the classmates/pod are treated during the investigation period.

Socializing outside of school

Smachot, Gatherings, and Minyanim

- The risk of viral transmission is increased in crowds. This is especially true if the gathering takes place indoors or without masks and social distancing. Therefore,
 - Families who go to indoor smachot, gatherings, or minyanim at which masks are not worn or social distancing is not maintained may not attend school in-person for 14 days after the gathering.
 - Families who attend gatherings - either indoors or outdoors - that do not follow NJ State guidelines regarding number of attendees, masks, and social distancing requirements may not attend school in-person for 14 days after the gathering.
 - The NJ State guidelines for gatherings can be found here: <https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/reopening-guidance-and-restrictions/are-people-allowed-to-gather-in-person#direct-link>
- A closed tent is considered “indoors” from a Covid disease transmission perspective.

Hosting Guests & Yom Tov Events

- Hosting overnight guests is discouraged.
 - If a family chooses to have overnight guests, mask wearing by both the hosts and guests and social distancing between the hosts and guests should be maintained in order to mitigate the risk of viral transmission.
- Large indoor meals should be discouraged.
 - A Sukkah is considered “indoors” from a Covid disease transmission perspective.
- Students and staff may not return to in-person school for 14 days if they attend an overnight hotel Yom Tov program.

Playdates & Shul Groups

- Mask wearing and social distancing guidelines should be maintained during playdates in order to mitigate the risk of disease transmission.
- It is best to make playdates within your pod, but we recognize that children cannot be restricted to only the friends that their school assigned them to. If pods are mixed during playdates, it is even more important that mask and social distancing guidelines are maintained in order to prevent widespread outbreaks between pods or schools.
- Playdates should be held outdoors whenever possible.
- Preschool playdates: mask wearing should be encouraged
- Shul groups should only be held outdoors, and should always observe social distancing and mask wearing guidelines.
- Keep in mind the longer the contact and possible exposure, the more likely the chance of viral spread.

After School Programs

- Strongly discourage mixing of pods/schools with after school athletic clubs
- Mask wearing is encouraged for all players
- Choir is strongly discouraged

Protocol for Students or Staff with Symptoms

What to do if Someone Develops Symptoms at School?

- Any student/staff member who has any of the symptoms below should be sent home.
- **However, only send home that person's siblings/household members if the ill person has two or more symptoms from column A or one symptom from column B.**
 - Regardless of whether they are sent home together with the ill student/staff, the ability of the household to return to in-person school the next day is dependent on a healthcare professional assessment of the index case.
- **No household members/close contacts of a symptomatic case under investigation may return to school while there is a pending Covid test for that case.**

Column A	Column B
_ Headache	_ Fever

<input type="checkbox"/> Sore throat	<input type="checkbox"/> New cough or change in chronic asthmatic/allergic cough
<input type="checkbox"/> Nausea and/or Vomiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath
<input type="checkbox"/> Diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/> New loss of smell
<input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/> New loss of taste
<input type="checkbox"/> New congestion or runny nose or change in chronic allergic rhinitis	<input type="checkbox"/> Rigors or Chills (shivers)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Myalgias (muscle aches)

Protocol for Returning to School Campus after Symptoms

COVID testing is mandated when an alternative diagnosis is consistent with a non-specific viral illness (“pharyngitis”, “viral URI”, “bronchitis”, “croup”, “gastroenteritis”).

- a. Rapid antigen ok, but nucleic acid test is better
- b. Siblings may return to school once the index case has a specific non-COVID diagnosis or if COVID testing is negative
- c. No household members/close contacts of a symptomatic case under investigation may return to school if there is a pending COVID test
- d. Index case returns 24 hours after a complete resolution of all symptoms without use of a fever reducer, or, if some mild symptoms linger, on a date specified by a healthcare professional.

Protocol for Students or Staff with Covid Exposure

- 1) A COVID test performed at 24-48 hours from the last time of classmate exposure
- 2) A truly asymptomatic COVID+: Quarantine all contacts in the 48 hour period prior to positive test.

Day-to-day Operations

Carpools & Buses

- Carpools and buses are equivalent to pods. They should be treated as such when determining whether they may remain in school when there is a case under investigation.