Basics of Contact Tracing in Schools & School Staff Response

NN HCOC Community Mitigation Team
August 2021
1. What to do if an individual comes to school with symptoms
2. What to do if you learn that an individual who tests positive was in school
3. What to do if an individual has an exposure
4. How do these scenarios differ by vaccinated vs unvaccinated
5. What are the testing options
Social Distancing in Schools

- **School and Classroom Physical Distancing**
  - Promote at least 3-6 feet apart from one another
  - Maintain 6 feet and/or do activities outdoors if increased exertion/breathing

- **Eating and Lunch Breaks**
  - Masks off, so maintain 6 feet and/or do activities outdoors

- **Buses**
  - Masks on!

- **Cohorting**
  - Groups of students and staff who interact mostly only with each other to prevent potential COVID-19 spread.

Note: School guidelines change frequently; please check the most recent Navajo Nation school guidelines
What to do if an individual comes to school with symptoms
What to do if an individual comes to school with symptoms

Immediately Isolate student
- Notify parents to pick them up and take them home

Advise parent / guardian
- ASAP: Get tested for COVID-19 and notify school of result
- Get clearance letter from health care professional – must provide before returning to school.
- Confirm best phone number to be reached

Return to school
- Communicate internally to staff that student cannot attend school without clearance letter
- Allow student to return once clearance letter received
What to do if you learn that an individual who tests positive was in school
What’s a “Close Contact”?  
• Someone who was within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes). 
• Remember: people can spread COVID-19 **starting 2 days before they have any symptoms** (or, if no symptoms, 2 days before positive test collected) until they finish isolation. Ask about close contacts during that entire infectious period.

**Exception to Close Contact Definition – for Schools:**  
• Students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student where **both students were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks**; and other K–12 school prevention strategies (such as universal and correct mask use, physical distancing, and increased ventilation) were in place in the K–12 school setting. 
• This exception only applies to students, not adults
What to do if an individual who tested positive was in school

**Investigate**
- Gather Key info from student, school staff, and parent
- When did symptoms start?
- Last day at school/work?
- Vaccination status
- Past positive (COVID positive in the last 90 days)?
- Identify all close contacts (work site/classroom, staff & students)

**Notify Close Contacts**
- If unvaccinated: pick up, take home, and get tested ASAP
- If vaccinated and no symptoms: ok to stay in school; get tested 3-5 days after exposure.
- If vaccinated and symptoms: pick up, take home, and get tested ASAP
- If "past positive": ok to stay in school

**Isolate and Quarantine**
Positive case and any close contacts who are sent home
- Communicate internally that student cannot attend school without clearance letter
- Student can return once clearance letter received

**Reporting**
- Local public health authority: provide information on Case and Close Contacts
- Navajo Nation Heath Exposure Portal within 24 hours
- Weekly public notification
What to do if an individual has an exposure (inside or outside of school)
What to do if an individual has an exposure (inside or outside of school)

Advise parent / guardian
- ASAP: Take student home, get tested for COVID-19 and notify school of result
- Get clearance letter from health care professional – must provide before returning to school.
- Confirm best phone number to be reached

If positive test result
- Complete steps in previous slide

Return to school
- Communicate internally to staff that student cannot attend school without clearance letter
- Allow student to return once clearance letter received
How do these scenarios differ by vaccinated vs unvaccinated?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unvaccinated (or partially vaccinated)</th>
<th>Fully Vaccinated (2 weeks after 2\textsuperscript{nd} dose Pfizer/Moderna, or 2 weeks after J&amp;J)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quarantine for full 14 days after last exposure</td>
<td>May be allowed to return to school if they do not have any symptoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing recommended</td>
<td>Testing recommended 3-5 days after exposure, or ASAP if symptoms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Individual recommendations depend on healthcare provider / contact tracing team
- Always require a letter from a health care professional to return to work or school
What To Do If...

...you are exposed to someone with symptoms of or confirmed COVID-19.

Do you have symptoms?

NO

You need a PCR test 3-5 days after exposure regardless of vaccine status.

If fully vaccinated:*

Wear mask indoors in public for 14 days after exposure or until test result is negative.

AND

If not fully vaccinated:

Quarantine for 14 days** and watch for symptoms.

YES

- You need a PCR test regardless of vaccine status.
- Contact your healthcare provider.
- **Isolate** from others in your home - use a separate bedroom, bathroom, utensils, and avoid common areas of the home as much as possible.

*Contact your local health provider on whether you can return to school*
Communication tips

Need-to-know
- Reassure all staff / parents that anyone who has been exposed will be notified and oriented on what do to
- For any COVID-19 case, don’t need to notify those who were not exposed

Protect confidentiality
- Don’t use names
- For internal communication about clearance letter, don’t need to specify if the individuals was a close contact or case
- If someone is diagnosed through school, let them know that school is required to share information with public health authorities; this is in order to make sure that person and people close to them get the resources they need to stay safe

What are the testing options
Testing: Another layer we weave into the basket to keep our schools safe
Navajo Nation COVID-19 Safe Schools Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Setting &amp; Description</th>
<th>Frequency based on transmission level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screening Testing</td>
<td>Regular testing of teachers, staff, and students</td>
<td>Critical/Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommended 1-2x per week for teachers/staff/students</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Optional 1x per week for teachers/staff</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Low and Intermediate Risk</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommended 1x per week</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Optional 1x per week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>High Risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommended 2x per week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Optional 1x per week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COVID Testing

• Testing can help determine if a person has COVID, but testing is not perfect
  • Positive results: very accurate
  • Negative results: less accurate, may be false negative
• The virus must develop enough in the respiratory system to be detected
• Who should be tested?
  • Anyone with possible COVID symptoms
  • Anyone around someone with COVID
  • Anyone who would like a test
Viral Testing Options

PCR
• Most accurate
• Results in 1-3 days
  • Sometimes can be done in hours depending on lab

Antigen
• Less accurate; more accurate if patient has symptoms
• Results in <1 hour
• May have home testing option in the near future
What’s the best way to prevent COVID?

Get VACCINATED!
Resources

Navajo HCOC Safe Schools Community of Practice – Wednesdays 3pm
• Join Zoom Meeting
  https://jh.zoom.us/j/92172260922?pwd=ZWVFSzE1QVN2WmJna0d1WGVtMmloZz09

Navajo Department of Health Safe Schools Framework

Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health
• https://caih.jhu.edu/schoolresources/

Center for Disease Control School Guidance
• https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html