



## Exclusion from School

Last updated September 2021

As of August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 - CDC update: Given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant, CDC has updated the guidance for fully vaccinated people. CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Children should return to full-time in-person learning in the fall with layered prevention strategies in place.

Ongoing: it is recommended those who have been in close contact (6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more) with someone who has COVID-19 stay home for 10 days after last contact with a person who has COVID-19. At this time, Southwest District Health is supporting CDC's recommendation to stay home/self-isolate for 10 days after last contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. (See provisions for testing below)

This document is intended to stress the importance of students and staff having the option of remaining in the classroom if they test negative for COVID-19 in the event of an exposure, and to express BGV's intentions of allowing staff and students with a relevant negative COVID-19 test to return to school under the same guidelines as those for 'essential workers' in CDC guidelines.

Essential workers (which school staff meet the criteria, but students do not) may be permitted to return to work to ensure continuity of operations of essential functions. "CDC advises that critical infrastructure workers may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure to COVID-19, provided they remain asymptomatic and additional precautions are implemented to protect them and the community." Vaccinated employees are still advised to take precautions and will be able to continue working. According to CDC guidelines, Critical Infrastructure workers who have had an exposure but remain asymptomatic should adhere to the following practices prior to and during their work shift:

- Employers should measure the employee's temperature and assess symptoms prior to them starting work. Ideally, temperature checks should happen before the individual enters the facility.
- Wear a Mask: The employee should wear a face mask at all times while in the workplace for 10 days after last exposure.
- The employee should maintain 6 feet and practice social distancing as work duties permit in the workplace.

- Disinfect and clean workspaces: Clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment routinely.
- If an unvaccinated staff member has been in close contact and is symptomatic, the staff member will get a COVID-19 test to determine positive/negative status (at no-cost to the employee). The staff member will quarantine until results are received. Upon receiving a negative test, the employee will be able to continue to work (as an essential worker) with daily temperature checks and a mask on for the duration of the 10-day period.

BGV believes that students in the classroom are as essential as teachers in the classroom: without face-to-face learning for our students, our students will continue to fall behind and suffer the academic and social-emotional consequences associated with excessive school absences. It is clear that online learning is not beneficial for most of our students, and that many students fail to benefit from online-only instruction when required for long periods of time.

BGV has made the following, board approved changes to our practice of exclusion from school due to COVID-19 exposure:

When a positive case is identified, the school may close and/or move to online learning for *at least* one full day, which allows administration to adequately contact-trace the positive case.

- Parent/Guardian notification: Students in **close contact** (6ft or closer for 15 minutes or more) will be notified that they have been in close contact and encouraged to take measures to prevent the spread of the virus.
- Students have the advised option to wear a mask while at school (except when eating and drinking) for the duration of the 10-day timeline (from exposure) unless otherwise medically exempted.
- Students adhere to daily temperature checks by school staff and parents take their students temperature prior to attempting to come to school.

If at any time a student starts experiencing symptoms, the protocol shall recommence under the traditional CDC guidelines with a student being tested for Covid-19 and variants and quarantined as needed.

We recognize that Southwest District Health Department's guidance and opinions are subject to change per emerging guidance. We also recognize and stress the importance of having our students in school and our teachers in the classroom. We will continue to work closely with our community and SWDH to make the best-informed decisions.

In closing, school administrators and parents recognize the importance of face-to-face learning for both the academic needs and the social-emotional supports provided by the face-to-face learning environments. While we recognize that our practices may not be strictly in line with the CDC or SWDH, we believe our practices are necessary to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of our students and to allow for local control of decisions utilizing local data.

Links to current data sources:

1. CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>
2. SWHD: <https://phd3.idaho.gov/covid19/>
3. State of Idaho: <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov>
4. Idaho Department of Education: <https://www.sde.idaho.gov/re-opening/index.html>
5. Idaho School Boards Association: <https://boardofed.idaho.gov/covid-19/>
6. Idaho vaccine resources: <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/covid-19-vaccine/>
7. Governor Brad Little: <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/governors-actions/>