

COVID-19 Mitigation Health Plan
Phase III Return
Westmoreland County Public Schools

Return to In-Person Learning

- a) WMLCPS has established a COVID-19 Team that includes the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Building Principals, Division Social Worker, and School Nurses.

The points of contact (POC) are: Division-level (POC) - Deputy Superintendent; W&L High School POC - Building Principal; MMS POC - Building Principal; CES POC - Building Principal; WDES POC – Building Principal.

- b) Westmoreland County Health Department (WCHD): 18849 Kings Hwy, Montross, VA 22520; Phone: (804) 493-1124
Three Rivers Health District: 2780 Puller Highway, Saluda, VA 23149; (804) 758-2381

These procedures are used to contact the Health Department if there is a suspected case:

- i) School-level POC contacts the Division POC if made aware of a positive case.
- ii) Division-level POC contacts the WCHD if made aware of a suspected positive case. WMLCPS will follow the guidance of the WCHD after reporting the outbreak or positive case.

- c) *Monitoring Health and Absenteeism*

The attendance policy was adjusted to accommodate students learning remotely. Staff attendance is documented and monitored through Human Resources and student attendance is documented and monitored through the Student Information System.

Staff, including a permanent substitute nurse, screens students who are participating in face to face instruction. There is a parent form for parents to check at home. Upon arrival at school, all personnel and students are given a temperature check. Every school has designated an isolation room for quarantine if warranted. All children are quarantined if they exhibit COVID symptoms.

School policy has been amended to address the new guidelines on quarantines. Students are allowed to use inhalers, but not nebulizers while at school. The School Nurse coordinates with the Health Department to implement Tracing Protocols.

- d) *Communication Plan*

- i) Staff communication began formally at the end of June and has continued. New policies, procedures, and protocols are communicated to staff and stakeholders through emails, virtual meetings, and face to face.

- ii) Communication to parents and students is multi-faceted. Alert-Now, the school division website, and social media are utilized.
- iii) If an outbreak or positive case occurs, WMLCPS follows their standard procedures for communicating communicable disease information.

e) *Community Response*

WMLCPS participates in community response efforts as appropriate. We have currently designated sites for COVID-19 testing in partnership with many of our local emergency responders. We will continue to assist in these efforts.

f) *School Health Service Providers*

School division health service providers assists in planning and implementation of additional programs and services. All staff members participated in July training, before the start of school, on COVID-19 mitigation strategies provided by the Division Nurses. The information reflected guidance from the Virginia Department of Health and the Center of Disease Control. This training was replicated by staff to students.

Every extracurricular program advisors and athletic coaches replicated the training from the nurses with the students they supervised. Each program conducted an orientation session for students and staff when the program began. WMLCPS staff members documented that training had been conducted and received.

g) *Medical-grade PPE*

Health services staff provided medical-grade PPE to employees and students. WMLCPS Nurses are integral to the ordering of PPE for the Division. They determine the kinds of PPE that is needed and the quantities that are needed.

h) *Typical (non-COVID-19) Health Services*

Typical (non-COVID-19) health services are not neglected in the emphasis of COVID19. COVID does not eliminate the typical health services needed by our students. Students have access to traditional services as appropriate and per policy.

i) *Providing Mental Health Services.*

Staff continue to work with community agencies and families to assist with mental health services for students. Students continue to have access to Counselors, the Division's School Psychologist, the Division Social Worker, and referrals are made to the Middle Peninsula/Northern Neck Community Services Board, as necessary and outlined in the division's threat assessment plan.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) continues to be available to employees who have personal and/or work-related problems. EAP addresses issues affecting mental and emotional well-being, such as alcohol and other substance abuse, stress, grief, family problems, and psychological disorders.

Promoting Behaviors that Reduce COVID-19 Spread

Westmoreland County Public Schools is committed to implementing strategies to mitigate the spread of COVID – 19. The COVID-19 Team has developed a plan for COVID-19 prevention education (hand washing, staying home if ill, etc.) These actions include the following;

a) Creating an Education Plan

An Education Plan was been created and shared with all staff, students, and families before the new school year began. The plan provided training and emphasized behaviors and practices that mitigate COVID-19. The plan allows students and staff to participate in activities that include COVID-19 prevention. Additional information was sent home with students as appropriate. Prevention activities and materials include:

- i. Utilizing Physical distancing in various settings;
 - Pre- Kindergarten
 - Elementary Schools
 - Secondary Schools
 - Special Ed. Classes
 - Buses
 - Hallways
 - Playgrounds
 - Cafeterias
- ii. Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette;
- iii. Use of cloth face coverings and PPE according to CDC guidelines;
- iv. Staying home when sick; and
- v. Testing and Screening
- vi. Taking and Monitoring temperatures at home

b) Maintain Adequate Supplies

WMLCPS maintains adequate supplies of product to promote healthy hygiene. WMLCPS pursued grant funds to ensure that hand sanitizers, PPE, and other supplies remained on hand to promote healthy hygiene. Schools store additional quantities of cleaning materials at the schools and additional hand sanitizers dispensers are installed in strategic areas.

c) Provide Signs and Messaging

WMLCPS provided signage and messaging to promote healthy hygiene. Schools have directional arrows in the hallways and post Posters throughout the facilities. The messaging is also placed on the website.

d) Promote Physical Distancing.

WMLCPS will promote physical distancing.

- Staff modified classrooms, communal areas and buses to ensure social distancing was maintained using the CDC and AAP guidance of a minimal of three feet. Building level Principals worked to ensure these guidelines were in place and followed. Communal areas are off limits except by appointment. Buses transported children adhering to social distancing.

- Staff developed strategies for food/dining services. The strategies included bringing meals to the classrooms. During class transitions, classes were staggered to limit the number of students in hallways at any given time.
- Staff limited the size of gatherings according to social distancing guidance. Signage on the floor and walls are utilized to ensure the CDC guidelines are met.
- Staff will follow relevant CDC guidance, and laws for sports and extracurricular activities.

Maintaining Healthy Environments

Westmoreland County Public Schools COVID-19 Team has discussed and developed a plan for maintaining a healthy environment for Westmoreland County School's employees and students. The components are shared below.

a) *Health Screenings*

- 1 Staff conduct daily health screenings of all students, staff and visitors. Staff receive a temperature check upon arrival at the school.
- 2 All students, bus and car riders, receive a temperature check upon arrival at the school.
- 3 All visitors and volunteers receive a temperature check upon arrival at the school.
- 4 Individuals who have questionable or failed screenings are denied entrance into the school or placed in the isolation room.

b) *Hygiene Practices*

The Maintenance Director implemented cleaning and disinfection protocols for all custodians. They include;

- Frequently Touched Surfaces: Staff members are provided disinfecting wipes and spray to use on door handles and frequently touched surfaces throughout the day.
- Transport Vehicles – Each vehicle is thoroughly cleaned daily.
- Increased cleaning - Additional staff and time allocation is employed.
- Routine Cleaning: School schedules designate areas to be cleaned and how often.
- Additional Hand Sanitizer Stations – WMLCPS strategically added hand sanitizers.

c) *Limiting Sharing of Supplies*

WMLCPS staff ensure adequate student supplies to minimize sharing to the extent possible. All students are assigned their own technology equipment and other dedicated supplies.

d) *Operable Ventilation Systems*

WMLCPS staff ensures ventilation systems operate properly and increase the circulation of outdoor air as much as possible. Filters are changed regularly or more often if needed. Coils are cleaned per our contract with our HVAC vendor.

e) *Water Systems*

WMLCPS staff ensures that water systems and features are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown by doing the following;

- The county checks all schools' water supply before re-opening.
- Taking the five steps recommended by the CDC to minimize mold.
- Taking the eight recommended steps by the CDC to minimize Legionnaires' Disease and Legionella.
- Drinking fountains are converted to touchless bottle stations. WMLPS encourages staff and students to bring their own water bottles.

Maintaining Healthy Operations

Westmoreland County Public Schools COVID-19 Team has discussed and developed a plan for maintaining "healthy operations" for Westmoreland County School's employees and students. The components are shared below.

a) *Implementing Protections*

WMLCPS implemented protections for staff and children at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Staff work with families and private health care providers as appropriate and provide accommodations as deemed necessary.

b) *Plans for Gatherings*

WMLCPS plans for gatherings, field trips and other events that will be consistent with CDC guidelines and laws. Nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups are limited.

c) *Sick Leave Policies and Practices*

WMLCPS staff adhere to our sick leave policies and practices to enable staff and students to stay home or isolate when they are sick, or have been exposed to the coronavirus.

d) *Back-up Staff*

WMLCPS ensures the continuity of operations by having each operational building's Principal, Director, Manager or the Superintendent (or authorized designee) identify critical functions that must be maintained in spite of illness. Individuals are identified who should be cross trained to assist in the absence of the individual primarily responsible for those functions. Staff will train others to ensure continuity of operations.

Protecting vulnerable individuals with underlying Health Conditions

Westmoreland County Public Schools COVID-19 Team has discussed and developed a plan for protecting those most vulnerable individuals in our community with a number of strategies.

a) *Accommodations*

Accommodations are provided as needed, upon request, to support those

at higher risk for severe illness to limit their exposure risk. Certain individuals and populations, such as those aged 65 and older, and those with underlying health conditions are at a greater risk for severe illness if COVID-19 is contracted. Under legal guidance, individuals over age 65 or with a documented medical condition making them vulnerable for severe illness, as outlined by the CDC, have their exposure risk limited by:

- a. Opportunity to telework, if appropriate for job duties.
- b. Working with employees and student families on an individual basis if appropriate in a modified but needed assignment.

b) Flexible Sick Leave

Staff implemented flexible sick leave options and practices under the guidance of legal counsel that enabled faculty, staff and students to stay home or isolate when they are sick or have been exposed.

c) Options for Return

Staff return to work after COVID-19 illness per the guidance of the WCHD, VDH, and the CDC. However, in order to return, staff and students must meet CDC guidelines.

d) Who needs to Quarantine?

- People who have been in [close contact](#) with someone who has COVID-19—excluding people who have had COVID-19 within the past 3 months or [who are fully vaccinated](#).
- People who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months and recovered do not have to quarantine or get tested again as long as they do not develop new symptoms.
- People who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.
- People who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they have been [fully vaccinated](#) against the disease and show no symptoms.

What counts as [close contact](#)?

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19
- You had direct physical contact with the person (hugged or kissed them)
- You shared eating or drinking utensils
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you

e) Options to reduce Quarantine

Reducing the length of quarantine makes it easier for employees by reducing the time they cannot work. The local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantines should last, based on CDC guidelines, local conditions and needs.

The CDC currently endorses quarantine for 5 days followed by 5 days of masking. The CDC will continue to evaluate new information and update recommendations as needed.

Preparing for when someone gets sick

Westmoreland County Public Schools COVID-19 Team has discussed and prepared to address the situation where someone may get sick at school. The following steps will be applied to this situation.

a) *Students who Present Symptoms*

Students/staff who present symptoms of the coronavirus in the school setting will be addressed by;

- Immediately separating staff and children with COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, or shortness of breath) at school. Individuals who are sick will be taken immediately to the isolation room. They will then be sent home or to a healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are.
- School administrators, in consultation with school nurses, will place an individual in the isolation room who tests positive but does not have symptoms.
- Staff will contact a parent or guardian to facilitate safe transportation of those who are sick to home or healthcare facility.

b) *Transportation*

WMLCPS's protocols to facilitate the safe transport of those who are sick to their home or a healthcare facility include;

- Educating parents of the importance of maintaining up to date emergency contact information which is placed in the student information system.
- Alerting the ambulance or the hospital, that the person being transported may have COVID-19
- If for whatever reason transportation home is needed, transportation will be provided by a transportation professional in an appropriate school division vehicle. Mitigation methods will be taken.

c) *Maintenance Director*

The Maintenance Director will develop protocols for staff to implement cleansing and disinfection procedures in areas used by sick individuals. They include;

- Closing off areas used by a sick person for use until after these areas have been cleaned and disinfected, using materials and methods outlined by the CDC and in consultation with the local health department.

- Ensuring safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products including storing products securely away from children.

d) *Initiate Public Health Investigation*

After the School Level POC contacts the Division POC, the Westmoreland Health Department will be contacted to initiate a public health investigation, and possible contact tracing.

WMLCPS will consult and wait for the next steps from the Westmoreland County Health Department.

Close Down, Due to Severe Conditions

There is always the option of shutting the face to face instruction down due to severe conditions.

- WMLCPS will follow state guidelines for conditions that will trigger a temporary return to virtual learning.
- WMLCPS will follow state guidelines for conditions that will trigger a complete school closure and return to virtual learning.