



PORTLAND

Public Schools



**Family Guide:
Preventing Illness & Contagious
Disease in School
2023-2024**

**Student Success & Health Department
Office of Student Support Services**

WELCOME MESSAGE

Starting a new school year is an exciting time. Schools provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students to see their old friends, welcome new friends, and learn new things. These slides provide useful health information about illness prevention and how the school responds to contagious disease so that your student can stay healthy and ready to learn.

All of us have a role in preventing communicable disease:

- Public health continues to emphasize **personal responsibility** to protect oneself and others, primarily through prevention.
- PPS's communicable disease response assumes **shared** district- and individual- **responsibility**.

Read on to learn more about how PPS will work with you to keep students, families and staff healthy this year.



Keep Students Home When Sick

If your student feels sick, please keep them home and report illness to the school.

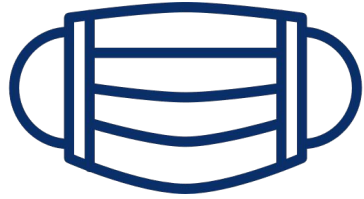
- ❑ Families should review the [Symptom-Based Exclusion Chart](#) and OHA's [Communicable Disease Guidance](#) to know when to keep students home due to excludable symptoms or a communicable disease.
- ❑ Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications and all other symptoms are improving.



Stay Up To Date With Immunizations

Vaccines offer safe, easy, and effective protection from potentially serious and sometimes fatal diseases. They help students stay healthy.

- ❑ At the beginning of the school year, families should provide to their school office [immunization status information](#) for their student.
- ❑ Students in any grade can get vaccinations and boosters like the flu shot at any PPS's onsite Student Health Center. Click here for a list of [MCHD Student Health Centers](#) or visit the [OHSU Benson Wellness Center](#).
- ❑ Students will need to be up to date on their school-required vaccines by **Wednesday, February 21, 2024**.



**People
May
Choose
to Mask
at
Anytime.**

Students, staff, volunteers, and visitors may choose to wear a mask based on their personal risk level for illness.

- ❑ Masks will remain available at school.
- ❑ Students will be offered a mask if they have respiratory symptoms like coughing, sneezing, and/ or shortness of breath.
- ❑ It is recommended that individuals who test positive for COVID-19 wear a mask for 10 days after they develop symptoms or test positive.

****Please note that students should not wear a mask when they are sleeping.***



Teach students to practice healthy hygienic behaviors like handwashing and 'covering their cough'

**Wash
Your
Hands**



**Cover
Your
Cough**



Schools Continue To Use HEPA Filters to Increase Airflow and Circulation

Clean air is essential for living and learning, and effective ventilation is an important prevention strategy to combat airborne viruses.

- ❑ PPS tests, inspects, and maintains [air filtration systems](#) that improve air quality in every school.
- ❑ High-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) ventilators are placed in each classroom and higher-risk areas, e.g. Symptom spaces



Schools Continue to Clean and Disinfect Regularly

Custodians are an integral part of maintaining a clean and sanitary school environment by helping clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces.

- ❑ Schools alert custodians about areas that need enhanced cleaning and disinfection as directed by the MESD Communicable Disease Team when there is a possible outbreak or increased illness in school.

PPS aligns its communicable disease response with Oregon's **Communicable Disease Guidance for Schools**, which means students should not be in school when they have certain symptoms or are diagnosed with a restrictable medical condition.

Communicable Disease Guidance for Schools

Overview

Communicable disease prevention is of paramount importance to support in person learning, support regular school attendance and to maintain the health of the school community. Communicable disease prevention, response and recovery efforts in school settings promote health and prevent disease among students, staff, and surrounding communities.

This document provides guidance to school administrators and staff to assist district-level and school-level planning. In addition to referencing this guidance, each school or district must maintain comprehensive written plans which include:

- Communicable Disease Management Plan per [OAR 581-022-0220](#).
- School-level COVID-19 Management Plans (Operational Plan per [OAR 581-022-0107](#) and Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan per [ODE ESSER III](#))
- Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Rules per [OR-OSHA](#) (e.g. [Exposure Control Plan](#), [COVID-19 Workplace Risk](#), and [COVID-19 Workplace Requirements for Employer-Provided Labor Housing](#), etc.)

Important actions in school settings include

- a. Promote educational systems that support every child's identity, health and well-being, beauty and strength.
 - See [A. EQUITY](#) (page 2).
- b. Maintain communicable disease mitigation measures.
 - See [B. REGULATIONS](#) (page 3) and Appendix I.
- c. Collaborate with school health experts and school staff across all disciplines.
 - See [C. COLLABORATION](#) (page 4)
- d. Implement prevention strategies to reduce communicable disease transmission.
 - See [D. PREVENTION](#) (page 6) and Appendix II.
- e. Exclude students and staff when necessary based on symptoms, diagnoses, or exposure to communicable disease.
 - See [E. EXCLUSION](#) (page 9) including:
 - Symptom-Based Exclusion Guidelines
 - Guidance for Students, Staff, and Families
 - Disease-Specific Guidelines.



If Your Student Develops Symptoms At School

The school nurse and/ or the School Health Assistant (SHA) play a vital role in supporting students that are injured, have health conditions, or become ill at school.

- ❑ Your student may be placed in the Health Room or an identified Symptom Space for further evaluation.
- ❑ Students who have [symptoms](#) that may be contagious to others will be offered a mask.
- ❑ Make sure the school has up-to-date emergency contact information so your student can be picked up promptly if it is determined that they need to go home.

If Your Student Has a Communicable Disease

Please notify the school. The school may have follow up questions if your child is diagnosed with a **CONTAGIOUS DISEASE**, including:

varicella (chickenpox)	diarrhea caused by E. coli, Salmonella or Shigella
hepatitis	measles
mumps	pertussis (whooping cough)
rubella	scabies
tuberculosis (TB)	other diseases as requested

The school will protect your private information as required by law [[OAR 333-019-0010](#); [ORS 433.008](#)].

When Your Student Returns to School after an Illness

Please notify the school if your student:

- Requires **MEDICATIONS** during school hours.
 - If your student's illness requires antibiotics, the student must have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school, and longer in some cases. Antibiotics are not effective for viral illnesses.
- Has an **UNDERLYING OR CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITION**.
 - Your school will work with you to make a plan and address the health condition so that the student can focus on their learning.
 - The school nurse may even consult with the student's health care provider with consent from parent/ guardian to discuss the health condition and necessary treatments.

Communication About Illness



Families *may* receive a letter from the school when:

- A suspected outbreak is occurring in a class, group, or school, i.e. a significant number of students report similar symptoms and or illness.
 - The school will work with Multnomah County and the MESD Communicable Disease Team to start an investigation.
- Students have been exposed to a communicable disease that requires the school to provide notification.
 - NOTE: Schools are not responsible for notifying a school community when an individual tests positive for COVID-19.



COVID-19 Testing Resources

*If your student develops symptoms compatible with **COVID-19** or has been exposed to **COVID-19**, your school may offer:*

Diagnostic (Symptom-based) Testing [At-School](#)

Please complete and submit to your school office a [COVID-19 General Consent Form](#) if you want your student to receive diagnostic (symptom-based) testing at school.

Students with a completed consent form on file can receive a BinaxNOW test if they:

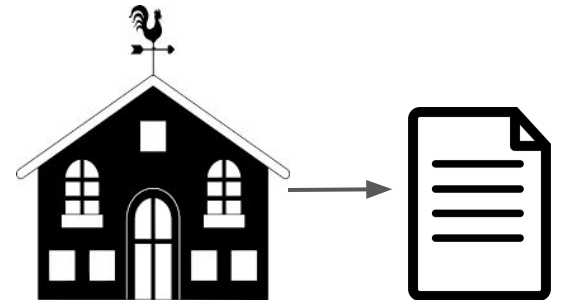
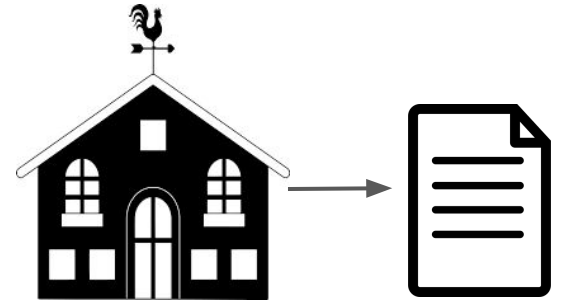
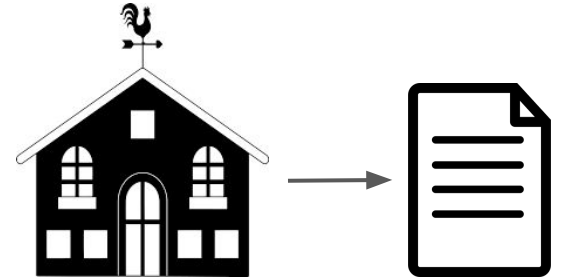
- Develop symptoms compatible with COVID-19 while **at school**.
- Have been exposed to COVID-19.

BinaxNow Rapid Tests [At-Home Use](#)

May be provided to your students to take home when they have symptoms compatible with Covid-19, while supplies last.

School-Level Communicable Disease Plan

- Every PPS school and program has a School-Level Communicable Disease Management Plan (CDMP) for the 2023-2024 School Year.
- The CDMP provides guidance about how the school can prevent, detect, respond to, and recover from communicable disease, including but not limited to COVID-19.
- Your school's CDMP includes all of the mitigation efforts discussed in these slides.



**Thank you for helping
students stay healthy and in
school!**

