



CORONAVIRUS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

How to Protect Yourself and Others

Will my student or I be penalized for staying home from school sick?

Absolutely not. We want our students to be at school. However, when they are sick, they should be at home. The same applies to our staff members. We need our staff to be healthy in order to care for our children, so they should stay home when they are sick. Per DCS policy for employees, please provide a note from your health care provider to excuse (5) five consecutive days of missed work due to illness.



What measures are you taking to prevent the spread of illness?

We have put additional plans in place to increase the disinfection of schools, including surfaces and buses. DCS also is taking this opportunity to remind students and staff about good hand hygiene and to cover coughs and sneezes.

Additionally, DCS has cancelled all school sponsored out-of-state field trips and sporting events. Changes in DCS lunchrooms include temporary discontinuing student self-service and 'share tables' at participating schools.



How will DCS handle an outbreak of illness in our community and/or schools?

We are in the process of updating our plan to include what we know and understand thus far about the COVID-19 virus and its potential impact on the daily operations of our schools. In all cases, we would be working closely with the Alabama Department of Public Health and following its recommendations.

At what point might you take additional measures if needed?

If there were infections in our community, public health authorities may recommend specific measures to lessen the possibility of the spread of infection in our schools. This could include measures to increase "social distancing," such as moving desks further apart and limiting activities where large groups are closely gathered like assemblies or certain after school activities.



If my student travels outside of the country, will DCS restrict their reentry into school?

DCS will be following the direction of the Health Department in these situations. Right now people are being screened on entry to the country, and depending on a myriad of factors, public health officials make a decision about whether people can return to work or school after foreign travel.



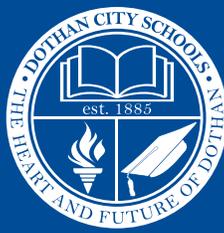
How will DCS determine when it might be necessary to close a school(s)?

Closing schools would most likely be at the recommendation of public health authorities in the region or at the direction of elected local or state leadership. It is also possible that the Superintendent and Board of Education would make the decision to close schools if there were not enough healthy staff members available to work. There may also be a situation where specific schools would close while others remained open. We are tracking student and staff illnesses in our schools on an ongoing basis. In the event of a closure, efforts would be made for the provision of alternative education methods for students (i.e. Internet instruction to maintain continuity of education).

Looking for more information?

Our top priority is the health and safety of our students and staff, and we take this responsibility very seriously.

We also encourage you to follow our website at dothan.k12.al.us.



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Additional Measures of Protection

Currently, we have increased our cleaning and sanitizing procedures and are emphasizing the importance of good hand hygiene at school.

Although we hope that our schools will not need to close, we are looking at ways to support student learning in the event of a prolonged closure. We will share more information about these plans as they become available.



What should I do if my child is sick?

If your child is sick, please keep them home from school. Please call your child's school and report the illness symptoms your student is experiencing to the attendance secretary. Call your child's health care provider for advice on managing your child's illness.



Are students given opportunities to wash their hands during the school day including before lunch?

Students are being given opportunities to wash their hands during the school day. In locations where access to soap and water is limited, alcohol-based hand sanitizer is also available.



Can and/or should students and staff wear masks at school?

Public health authorities do not currently recommend that healthy people routinely wear masks nor do we recommend that students and staff wear masks at school.

How can my child and family stay well?

To help prevent the spread of illness, follow these important tips:



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.



Avoid close contact with people who are sick and stay home when you are sick



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

To learn more about how we plan and prepare go to dothan.k12.al.us