Frequently Asked Questions

ROADMAP DETAILS

Q: What is the NOLA Public Schools Roadmap to Reopening? What is the goal of the Roadmap?
A: The NOLA Public Schools Roadmap to Reopening is a comprehensive plan that outlines common guidelines for reopening schools citywide for the 2020-21 school year and sets common health and safety standards for all NOLA-PS schools. The Roadmap was developed to safeguard the health and safety of students, staff, and families; facilitate in-person student learning; provide flexibility to meet the varied needs of key stakeholders; and ensure citywide consistency. To return students, teachers, and staff to school in the safest and most responsible way possible, the Roadmap was created in alignment with the city's phased reopening plan.

Q: How was the NOLA Public Schools Roadmap to Reopening developed?
A: The Roadmap is a product of extensive engagement with a variety of stakeholders and experts. The Roadmap was also informed by a number of district advisory groups, the findings of the NOLA Public Schools community stakeholder survey, which gathered responses from nearly 5,000 parents and over 1,400 educators, the Reopening Taskforce, and weeks of conversations with health experts and school leaders.

Q: When will all students return to in-person instruction?
A: The NOLA Public Schools Roadmap to Reopening outlines when and how students may return to in-person instruction based upon the health and safety requirements issued by the Louisiana Department of Education and the state board of education and is aligned to City of New Orleans phases for reopening. Given restrictions on the number of students that can be in one room at a time set by the state, along with other social distancing requirements, NOLA-PS has developed a plan to return students across each phase. Understanding that not all students and their families will be ready to return to school at the same time, *parents will be permitted to opt out of in-person learning and choose distance learning for their students on a quarterly basis during 2020-21*. At any time, if critical health data trends indicate it may not be safe to have students and staff return to in-person instruction, distance learning will be instituted across the school system.

Q: What support will NOLA Public Schools provide to schools and students as part of the Roadmap to Reopening plan?
A: Via the Reopening Roadmap, NOLA Public Schools set the standards all schools must meet during each phase of reopening. NOLA-PS is also providing support to schools in ways such as coordinating trainings, purchasing personal protective equipment, and offering sets of resources and supplemental guidance for schools citywide.

This supplemental guidance includes, but is not limited to, the following topics:
- Recommendations for supporting the social and emotional health of students and staff
- A toolkit for complying with the Operational Health and Safety standards (for example: exemplar cleaning procedures and entry and exit procedures)
- A distance learning toolkit
- Detailed response plans for handling COVID-19 positive cases in the school community

NOLA-PS is also frequently updating our Resources to support families in parenting and digital education during COVID.

Finally, NOLA-PS will include COVID-related topics in specialized school trainings this summer including: IDEA and Section 504 legal implications of COVID-19, Teletharapy, Mental Health Supports, and culturally responsive teaching and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices. In partnership with Children's Hospital, NOLA-PS will also offer health and safety trainings to nurses, teachers, and school-based staff.

Q: What safety precautions will schools take to ensure the health and wellbeing of students?
Schools will be required to implement the health and safety standards outlined within the Roadmap to mitigate the risk of a potential spread among the student body, faculty, and staff in schools. Given the nature of COVID-19, no efforts can be taken to eliminate risk. However, based upon the advice of medical experts, our schools will institute a variety of safety measures to help minimize risk such as requiring face masks for all students and staff, conducting temperature checks, implementing social distancing measures and enhanced cleaning of classrooms and facilities. For more detail on standards supporting the health and wellbeing of students, faculty, and staff, please review the *Operational Standards* section of the Roadmap.

Q: What if I have feedback on the roadmap?
A: To find the Roadmap to Reopening NOLA Public Schools, click here. This initial Roadmap is a dynamic document. It will be updated continuously based on evolving medical information, contextual factors, and feedback from the community. To provide feedback on the Roadmap, click here. If you have questions about the Roadmap to Reopen, please contact NOLA-PS at 504-304-3520 or call your school.

REOPENING SCHOOLS

Q: Who will monitor the reopening?
A: NOLA Public Schools monitors schools' implementation of the health and safety standards outlined within the Roadmap. In addition, the district has hired public health experts to advise on our reopening efforts who will be available to advise schools throughout the school year as well.

Q: Will school buildings have to close after reopening?
A: After reopening, school buildings may need to close for one of two reasons: (1) if city health data worsens, resulting in a city-wide return to distance learning or (2) if health data at an individual school results in that school closing for a quarantine period.

In either instance, students will return to a distance learning curriculum. The critical health data trends that NOLA-PS will monitor, in coordination with the New Orleans Health Department, are milestones such as reductions in new cases, increases in hospital capacity, and increases in testing capacity. Given the fluid nature of the impact of COVID-19 on our community, adjustments to the Roadmap may be required.

As a part of the supplemental guidance to be released on July 17, 2020, NOLA-PS has provided detailed school-level protocols for responding to COVID-19 cases in schools. To view this protocol, click here.

July 21, 2020

PREVENTION PROTOCOLS AND RESPONDING TO COVID-19

Q: Will NOLA Public Schools require that students wear face masks or protective coverings?
A: To ensure a safe return to school for students, faculty and staff, it will take the commitment of our entire community; that means that everyone will be required to wear face coverings in school buildings and buses. The supplemental guidance includes specific considerations for those who are not able to wear face coverings and adaptations and alternatives for these individuals. Additionally, this guidance will include age-specific resources for teaching students to wear masks and enforcing the use of masks in a non-punitive manner.

Q: How will the face mask requirement be enforced at the student level?
A: Like any classroom procedure, teachers and administrators will work to educate students on the importance of face masks. The intent of the requirement is not to be punitive. Families and students are encouraged to ask their schools about the specific policies and practices to be implemented at individual schools. Additionally, NOLA-PS will identify age-specific resources for teaching students to wear masks and enforcing the use of masks in a non-punitive manner.

Q: What measures will NOLA Public Schools take to prevent the spread of coronavirus in schools should an individual test positive?
Responses to positive COVID-19 cases in schools, among students or staff, will be highly individualized. The City Department of Health will coordinate all contact tracing communications and will advise schools on a broader communications plan. The Department of Health and Children's Hospital will also provide guidance on precautionary quarantine measures and, if necessary, closures of individual schools. More detailed COVID-19 scenarios and response plans are provided in the supplemental guidance released on July 17, 2020.

Q: What are the protocols in place for if and when a student becomes sick?
A: The health and wellbeing of students, faculty and staff is paramount. Detailed COVID-19 scenarios and response plans, developed with guidance from doctors and state and federal guidelines, are provided in the supplemental guidance released on July 17, 2020.

Q: What should students, faculty and staff do if they have come into contact with an individual who has been confirmed to carry the coronavirus?
A: All students and staff who have been in a classroom with a **confirmed** case or who otherwise have had close contact (defined as within 6 feet for 15 or more minutes) with a **confirmed** case will need to be quarantined at home for a minimum of 14 days. Current guidance from the CDC about measures to take following exposure can be found here.

Families and staff may also call Children's Hospital New Orleans' Hotline for School Wellness and Virtual Care (504.837.7760) for more details on how to respond. Also, please refer to the CDC guidelines to help watch for symptoms of COVID-19.

Q: Will my child's temperature be checked before getting on the bus?
A: Schools are not required to conduct temperature checks on the bus. But temperature checks are required upon entry to school. To mitigate risk on buses, riders should wear masks on the bus and use the provided hand sanitizer upon entry. We are also employing the additional safety measures on buses: buses will operate well below full capacity to support distancing, windows will be open to ensure proper

ventilation, and buses will be cleaned between each use. Additionally, parents and families are encouraged to remain socially distanced at bus stops and, as always, to keep sick students at home.

Q: Will my child's temperature be checked before going into the school building?
A: Yes. Schools will conduct a wellness screening upon entry to school, which will include daily temperature checks. We recommend schools take temperatures indoors, at a student's first class of the day. This is because it is hot outside and we want to mitigate the risks of students congregating as they wait for temperature checks. If a student registers a temperature of 100.4 or higher, their temperature should be taken a second time 5-10 minutes later before sending the child home. Examples of what health screenings may look like can be found on the CDC website.

Q: If school faculty or staff are exposed to COVID-19 and need to quarantine, how will leave be handled?
A: Each school operator will address leave in accordance with their own leave policies and any applicable laws, policies, regulations and procedures.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

For specific questions regarding students with special needs, see our Special Education Reopening Considerations document.

CHOOSING DISTANCE LEARNING

Q: If we choose the distance learning model and subsequently want to choose in-person school, what is the process? What if we choose in-person school and then elect to do distance learning instead?
A: Regardless of the reopening phase, all families may elect to participate in distance learning, receiving school programming at home, if they are not ready to return to school in-person. Distance learning programming is school-specific and families wishing to participate in this option or learn more about it should contact their school for further detail. To protect the health and safety of students, faculty and staff, schools must thoughtfully plan for the introduction of students to in-person learning. As such, families wishing to return to *in-person learning* may do so on a quarterly basis. Families wishing to elect *distance learning* may do so at any time but should be aware that the transition to in-home programming may require time. Please contact your school to learn more about and sign up for distance learning programming at your child's school.

Q: Rather than enroll in distance learning, can my family elect to homeschool without losing our seat in a specific school?
A: No. In order to remain enrolled in a specific school, students must participate in either in-person or distance learning programming offered by the school. Distance learning programs will take attendance, require students to turn in work, and issue grades.

Q: I still don't have a school for next year, is it too late to sign up?
A: Families still needing a school for the 2020-21 school year can sign up for late enrollment at https://enrollnola.org/late-enrollment/. On that page you will be able to access a school availability

July 21, 2020

report and a signup form that will be used to verify your identity and to contact you. More details about the process is located at https://enrollnola.org/late-enrollment/.

Q: What resources do you offer to help families as they engage in distance learning?
A: We at NOLA-PS understand the challenges distance learning presents. Our Roadmap to Reopening website includes links to resources for parents and families to support learning about frequently used school programs, to teach children about appropriate online behavior, and to build daily plans for school and work to occur at home. This page will be constantly updated. If you have a resource you'd like us to add, please send it via our feedback form, here.

IN-PERSON LEARNING

Q: Once in-person learning resumes, will my child still have extracurricular activities, recess, or afterschool programming?
A: Yes. To the greatest extent feasible, schools are permitted and encouraged to continue recess, outdoor activities, aftercare, and *most* extracurricular activities. During these activities, schools must comply with maximum group sizes and appropriate physical distancing guidelines or maintain static groups. Athletic activities are allowed to resume within the recommendations put forth in the Louisiana High School Athletic Association's Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities. Per the Louisiana State Department of Education, band and vocal music may resume in Phase 3, with physical distance recommendations in effect.