

AAPS 2020-2021 School Year

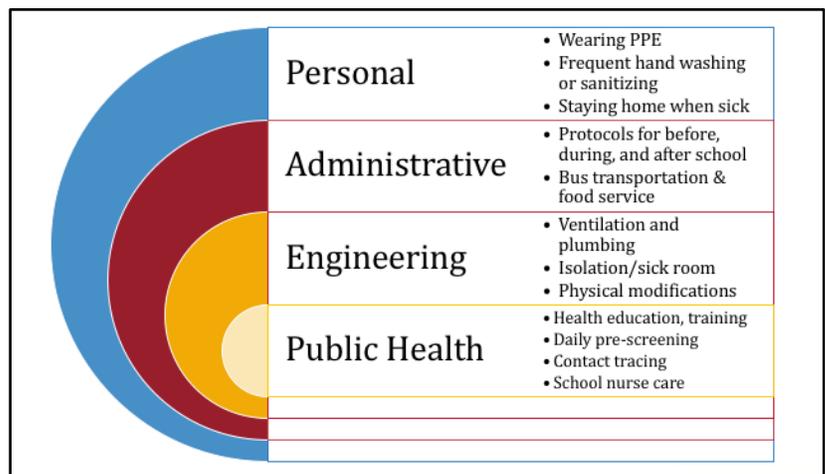
For Families: Questions and Answers about COVID-19 Prevention Efforts

How is AAPS using public health guidance to protect students and staff?

In AAPS, plans for returning to in-person school during COVID-19 are grounded in science and public health expertise, with flexibility for changing protocols based on new guidance. Our goal is to minimize risk for staff and students while providing learning environments where students will thrive.

Researchers at the U of M School of Public Health state that “stacking” best practices is most effective for protecting people in different settings. This means implementing several layers and types of safeguards to reduce the spread of COVID-19. (*Stacking Best Practices to Help Michiganders Safely Return to Work*, Bridge Magazine, April 29, 2020.)

Best practices are layered in four areas: personal (what individuals do to protect themselves); administrative (the policies and protocols that protect health); engineering (the physical environment); and public health (specific public health tools to fight COVID-19). The figure above shows examples of how these four areas will be implemented in AAPS.



AAPS protocols are drawn from the *MI Safe Schools: Michigan's 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap*, the AAPS COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan and Policy, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for schools, and other trusted sources.

What prevention measures will be in place to protect my student before, during, and after school?

Using the principle of layering best practices shared above, AAPS will implement protocols to reduce the risk for both students and staff. Please keep in mind that these prevention measures may change as new guidance is released.

Before the School Day Starts

- Families will complete a simple pre-screening health tool for their student(s) and follow directions for contacting their school if needed.
- On school buses:
 - Drivers and students will sanitize hands prior to entering the bus with hand sanitizer provided on each bus.
 - Face coverings must be worn by preK-12 students, staff, and bus drivers during school transportation.
- Walking and biking in family groups is encouraged. Each school is able to provide the best walk and bike routes as part of their Safe Routes to School Program.

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- When arriving at school, families and students will be expected to maintain physical distance and students will sanitize their hands upon building entry.
- If plans call for staggered arrival times, students and families will be expected to arrive only at their assigned time.

During the School Day

- Face coverings
 - PreK-5th grade students will wear face coverings in hallways and common areas.
 - Students in grades 6-12 must wear face coverings in their classrooms, hallways, and common areas, except during meal times.
 - Note: exceptions to student mask use can be made with medical reasons that comply with the federal laws or if a student is unable to remove a mask during emergencies.
- Classroom hygiene
 - Students will wash hands or use hand sanitizer regularly during the school day, and in particular after playing outside and before and after meals.
 - Students' personal items will be kept separate from others' belongings, with limited sharing of personal items
 - Classroom materials will be disinfected between uses to the extent feasible
- Physical distancing in the classroom and building
 - Classroom furniture will be arranged with 6 feet of space between students, facing the same direction, as much as possible
 - Staff and students will follow building protocols for physical distancing including one-way hallway movement, eating meals, and using restrooms.
- Visitors
 - No visitors will be allowed beyond the school office except under extenuating circumstances.

School Dismissal

- When departing school, students will be expected to maintain physical distancing requirements
- Students will depart school property immediately unless attending an approved after school or athletic program.
- On school buses:
 - Drivers and students will sanitize hands prior to entering the bus with hand sanitizer provided on each bus.
 - Face coverings must be worn by preK-12 students, staff, and bus drivers during school transportation.

What happens if a teacher or student tests positive for COVID-19?

Rapidly responding to positive tests will help prevent the spread of COVID-19 within AAPS buildings and programs. AAPS has developed a district-level COVID-19 Rapid Response Team to quickly take action when a positive case is identified. The team includes district and building leadership, school nurses, and health specialists, and will work in close collaboration with the Washtenaw County Health Department.

Health specialists are AAPS staff who receive extensive training on responding to COVID-19 cases. They will play a key role in coordinating with the Washtenaw County Health Department to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within school buildings.

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- Health Specialists conduct contact tracing that is limited to AAPS students and staff.
- Throughout the process, health specialists will strictly adhere to all laws and regulations regarding confidentiality, including protecting names and other personal information.
- Health Specialists' responsibilities will include the following for AAPS staff and students:
 - Conducting an interview with the employee or student (or parent, as appropriate) to determine close contacts in AAPS school buildings/campuses.
 - Notifying close contacts on AAPS campuses about their exposure and provide them with information about staying home from work or school.
 - Collaborating with the Washtenaw County Health Department on each case and list of AAPS close contacts. Only local health departments can give close contacts an official quarantine order.
 - Offer continued support and resources to staff and students/families.

Building administrators and district leadership will follow local and state public health guidance on when to dismiss classrooms for quarantine, close schools, or otherwise respond to positive cases.

What if my child becomes ill at school?

Students who become ill at school with COVID-19 type symptoms will put on a mask and go to the school's designated Isolation Room for assistance. The school nurse will be contacted for consultation and care. It's critical that parents have a plan in place for quickly picking up their children who become ill at school.

What is AAPS doing to ensure school buildings are as safe as possible?

The AAPS Physical Properties department uses guidance from the CDC, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, the American Institute of Architects, and others to plan for returning to in-person learning.

- Handsanitizer and other disinfecting supplies will be provided throughout each school
- Informational signage will be placed throughout the school to reinforce personal public health actions (e.g. handwashing). Directional signs, such as one-way hallway and staircase traffic circulation, will also be posted.
- Cleaning will be completed in compliance with the Michigan Safe Return To School Plan and the Center for Disease Control as appropriate for each Phase of re-occupancy. This will include conducting frequent cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces.
- Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Systems (HVAC)
 - Enhanced ventilation will be deployed using the District's HVAC Building Automation System (BAS) that will maximize outdoor air provision according to outside temperature and humidity points. Additionally, ventilation filters will be replaced three times per year.
- Plumbing and Drinking Water
 - Prior to re-occupancy, the building drinking water systems will be thoroughly flushed.
 - Safe drinking water will be provided in a manner that minimizes the potential spread of contagions.
- School offices and other transaction locations

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- Sneeze guards will be installed.

How will school breakfast and lunch service work?

The priority of the AAPS food service plan is to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19 during the school day while providing nutritious and appealing breakfast and lunch options for students.

In partnership with Chartwells, the district's food service provider, AAPS will offer:

- Grab-and-go breakfast option along with a la carte items and juice
- Hot and cold lunch options with a la carte options and milk
- Meals for students who qualify for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch for the days they are learning remotely

All food will be prepared and pre-assembled by food service staff utilizing face coverings and gloves. To ensure social distancing, students will not congregate in the cafeterias but rather eat with their classmates in an assigned classroom. In schools with multiple floors, hallway food carts will serve student meals to limit the need to travel between floors to the cafeteria.

Additionally, AAPS is pleased to introduce a new food service software program, Meal Magic, that allows for the cloud-based pre-order of meals, online payments and online Free and Reduced-Price Lunch applications. More information on Meal Magic will be available prior to the start of in-person school.

What can my family do to help?

AAPS will be able to consider returning to in-person school when the level of community spread of COVID-19 is very low for a sustained amount of time. All members of the AAPS community have a critical role in stopping the spread of COVID-19. Each of us can follow public health guidance, including wearing a face covering, staying socially distant from people we don't live with, staying home when sick, and washing our hands frequently.