

Interim Guidance on Management of COVID-19 Cases in PreK-12 Schools

The following guidance refers to management of COVID-19 cases in schools within the City of Chicago. For information on migration strategies see CPDH Interim Guidance on COVID-19
Mitigation Strategies in PreK-12 Schools. For additional questions please contact the CDPH Youth Setting Team at covidschools@cityofchicago.org or (312) 746-6015.

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Key Points (updated August 11, 2021)

- K–12 schools in Chicago <u>should collaborate</u> with CDPH when investigating people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 (cases), clusters, and those who are close contacts of persons who have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
 - See "COVID-19 Reporting to CDPH" below
- Students, staff, and educators diagnosed with COVID-19 should <u>isolate</u> and stay away from the school premises until <u>requirements for the end of isolation are met</u>.
- K-12 school officials in Chicago should ensure timely reporting of COVID-19 cases to CDPH. To aid in the investigation, K-12 school officials can establish mechanisms, in advance, to quickly assemble information and records to aid in the identification of people who have potentially been exposed and <u>close contacts</u> of people with COVID-19 at K-12 schools or events.
 - o See "School Contact Tracing" section below
- As soon as possible after they are notified that someone in the K-12 school has tested
 positive for or been diagnosed with COVID-19, K-12 school officials should notify <u>close</u>
 <u>contacts</u> (and families of close contacts in the K-12 school setting) of exposure, in
 accordance with applicable privacy and other laws.
- Students, staff, and educators who have been in <u>close contact</u> with someone who has COVID-19 should receive <u>diagnostic testing</u> and should begin <u>quarantine</u>.
 - See "Quarantine for student or staff with an identified close contact exposure" section below
- Any close contacts who <u>test positive for SARS-CoV-2</u> or who have <u>symptoms</u> should begin <u>isolation</u> regardless of <u>vaccination status or prior infection</u>.
- <u>Diagnostic testing</u> of exposed contacts is a useful strategy to detect new cases, prevent outbreaks, and interrupt the spread of COVID-19.
- For schools in Chicago, all case investigation and <u>contact tracing</u> activities conducted should be consistent with CDPH policies and applicable federal and workplace, healthcare/medical, privacy, informed consent, data security, and confidentiality laws, regulations, and requirements.

Overview

K-12 school should prepare policies and procedure to take a stepwise approach in response to COIVD-19 case reports.

- 1. School receives report of COVID case or identifies person with COVID-19 like symptoms
- 2. Isolate case
- 3. Report to CDPH
- 4. Identify, notify, and quarantine close contacts
- 5. Notify school community

CDPH will contact schools to discuss any pending issues following the report to CDPH. The CDPH Youth Settings Team is also available for consultation and to answer questions from school administrators via email (covidschools@cityofchicago.org) or phone (312-746-6015).

COVID-19 Reporting to CDPH

Under <u>Public Health Order No. 2020-2</u>, schools must report to CDPH clusters of 2 or more cases of COVID-19 occurring within 14 calendar days of each other within 24 hours of identifying the cluster, in order to prevent COVID-19 transmission in schools and ensure efficient case investigation and contact tracing. **Five or more cases is considered an outbreak according to Illinois Department of Public Health.**

Clear guidance should be provided to parents and staff about acceptable methods of reporting

COVID-19 lab results or diagnosis to the school as soon as possible. Schools should reinforce that children and staff be kept out of school pending the results of COVID-19 testing for any reason.

Cases in a student or staff member should be reported through the confidential CDPH COVID-19 Online Case Report Form: http://redcap.link/chicovidreport (select option 2 "Community congregate setting: single case or cluster of 2 or more cases").

In order to complete the form, you will need the following information:

- Total number of classrooms/cohorts impacted
- Total number of students thought to be exposed (close contacts)
- Total number of staff thought to be exposed (close contacts)
- The positive individual's reported or observed symptom onset date
- The positive individual's last date at school
- Additional optional information includes method of notification, test date (if known), testing provider (if known).

If your school has 2 or more cases (apart from household members) that involve 2 or more different cohorts or classrooms, make a note in your <u>REDCap online case report form</u> to receive additional CDPH support and guidance. This may prompt more intensive case investigation. Select cohort quarantine rather than full school closure is typically preferred.

School Contact Tracing

Given your access to staff and student records, the need for prompt notification to close contacts, and the relationship you have with your staff and families, your school is best positioned to conduct initial contact tracing (identification of contacts) and notification. CDPH will conduct contact tracing of cases outside of the school.

Contact Tracing First Steps

- Above all, ensure the identity of the positive individual is protected.
- Interview the staff member or student's parent/guardian by telephone as soon as you receive a verbal or written report that they tested positive. Questions to ask include:
 - Were they diagnosed through a test?
 - If so, what type (nose swab, mouth/oral swab, or blood test).
 - If they had only an antibody (blood test) and they have not had any symptoms, no further action is required.
 - What was the test date?
 - What was the last day they were at school? (Please confirm by looking at attendance files.)
 - If symptoms, please ask the first day of their symptoms.
 - If NO symptoms, confirm the test date again.
- Complete the CDPH Online COVID-19 Case Report Form:
 http://redcap.link/chicovidreport (select option 2 "Community congregate setting: single case or cluster of 2 or more cases").

Determining Who Is a Close Contact

- Close contacts are individuals who were within 6 feet of an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes). An infected person can spread SARS-CoV-2 starting 2 days prior to their first day of symptoms (or for asymptomatic individuals, 2 days prior to their test date) through their last day at school (or ten days after their onset of symptoms/test date).
 - Exception: In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. If they were not consistently masked, then close contacts are classroom students who were within 6 feet of the infected student for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
 - NOTE: This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.
 - In general, individuals who are solely exposed to a confirmed case while outdoors should not be considered close contacts.

• Considerations for determining close contacts:

- Assess whether there were any other staff members not assigned to the classroom/cohort or students in other classrooms/cohorts with whom the positive individual had close contact (e.g., siblings or substitute teachers). If the positive individual is a staff member, this assessment should include an interview of that staff member.
- Depending on the classroom structure selected by the individual school, all students and staff within the positive individual's classroom/cohort could be considered close contacts but is not required during periods of low community transmission.
- Make sure to include any extracurricular activity groups (e.g., sports, music, before- and after-school programs) and shared transportation.
- In general, CDPH supports a broad definition of cohorts and broad quarantine of cohorts to facilitate timely quarantine and reduce transmission

Isolation/Quarantine Recommendations

Definitions:

- <u>Isolation</u> is used when a person has been infected with the virus, even if they don't have symptoms.
- **Ouarantine** is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others.
- Symptoms of COVID-19: Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus and can include:
 - \circ Fever (100.4°F or higher) or chills
 - o Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

- o Fatigue from unknown cause
- o Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- This list does not include all possible symptoms and children and youth with SARS-CoV- 2 infection may experience any, all, or none of these symptoms.

For student or staff with a positive test:

• Ensure the positive individual is aware that they should isolate, meaning stay home and away from others until it has been at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared (or for asymptomatic individuals, from their test date) and at least 24 hours with no fever (without using fever-reducing medications) and improved symptoms, whichever is longer.

For students or staff with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19:

- CDPH strongly recommends testing for all staff and students with new onset of symptoms of COVID-19 not attributed to allergies or a pre-existing condition (see *Symptoms of COVID-19* above and https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IDPH-COVID19-Exclusion-Decison-Tree.pdf).
- If a student, staff, educator, contractor, or volunteer is identified on campus or in a daily symptom screening check with COVID-like symptoms, administrators should take the following steps:
 - Regardless of the person's vaccination status, take immediate action when someone with COVID-like symptoms is identified on campus.
 - Separate the symptomatic person from other students/staff and ensure the symptomatic person and anyone they have contact with wears a mask, until transportation home or to a healthcare provider can be arranged. This will require a dedicated area in the facility and disinfection afterward. See guidance on <a href="https://www.whatto.org/
 - Quickly refer the person with COVID-like symptoms to a healthcare provider to receive clinical evaluation and <u>diagnostic testing</u> for SARS-CoV-2. People being evaluated for COVID-19 should inform their healthcare provider of their vaccination status at the time they arrive for care.
- If a student or staff member tests positive, they should be instructed to isolate (see "For students or staff with a positive test" section above)
- If a student or staff member tests negative, ensure it has been 24-hours with no fever (without fever-reducing medication) and with improved symptoms before allowing them to return to school.
- If a student or staff member has symptoms of COVID-19, and it is determined by a medical provider that the individual likely does NOT have a COVID-19 infection, the student or staff member still needs to be tested and may only return to school if the following are met:
 - Documentation of a negative test for COVID-19; AND
 - o It has been 24-hours with no fever (without fever-reducing medication).

- Only if the two above criteria are met would a note from a medical provider documenting an alternate diagnosis be acceptable if the student or staff member continues to be symptomatic for another reason besides COVID-19 infection (e.g., other viral illness).
- If a symptomatic student or staff member does not get tested for COVID-19, CDPH does not recommend relying on a medical provider's note alone without a negative COVID-19 test result to allow a symptomatic student or staff to return to school. COVID-19 cannot be ruled out by symptom history or clinical exam alone. Only the right test done at the right time can rule out COVID-19.
 - School administrators should contact CDPH at <u>covidschools@chicago.gov</u> if they are seeking to isolate a child without a test result.
 - Schools should quarantine household members of a symptomatic student or staff member who also attend the school pending the results of testing.

Quarantine for students or staff with an identified close contact exposure:

- Students or staff with close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 should be quarantined, meaning excluded from school and monitored for symptoms. If close contacts develop symptoms, they should be evaluated and tested for COVID-19.
 - **Exceptions**: Students or staff with close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 who meet the following criteria do NOT have to quarantine.
 - Someone who has been <u>fully vaccinated</u> and shows no symptoms of COVID-19. However, fully vaccinated people should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even they don't have symptoms and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative.

OR

- Someone who has COVID-19 illness within the previous 3 months and
- Has recovered and
- Remains without COVID-19 symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath)
- Options available for unvaccinated students to return to school from quarantine after an
 exposure (note: school districts may determine which of these options are available for
 their students):
 - Option 1:1 Quarantine at home for 14 calendar days. Date of last exposure is considered day 0. Student should be tested immediately after being notified of exposure, and if negative, be tested again after 5-7 days, per CDC guidance.
 - Option 2:² Quarantine for 10 calendar days after the close contact's last exposure to the COVID-19 case. Date of last exposure is considered day 0.
 - The individual may end quarantine after day 10 if no symptoms of COVID-19 developed during daily monitoring.

Revised 8/23/21, subject to updates. Please visit www.chicago.gov/coronavirus for the latest version.

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¹ See CDC guidance on when to quarantine: "Stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19."

² See <u>CDC guidance on when to quarantine</u>: "Your local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last, based on local conditions and needs. Follow the recommendations of your local public health department if you need to quarantine. Options they will consider include stopping quarantine after day 10 without testing."

- Student should be tested immediately after being notified of exposure, and if negative, be tested again after 5-7 days, per CDC guidance.
- The individual can always maintain physical distancing and masking when returning to school; for classrooms where <u>masking is strictly</u> <u>adhered to as required</u>, physical distance of 3 to 6 feet is acceptable for return.
- Option 3:3 Quarantine period is for seven calendar days after the last exposure if:
 - No symptoms developed during daily monitoring AND the individual has a negative SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic test (PCR) that was collected within 48 hours of exposure day 7 (starting on day 6 or after).
 - The individual is responsible for obtaining a copy of the negative results for documentation purposes.
 - The individual can maintain physical distancing and masking at all times when returning to school; for classrooms where <u>masking is strictly</u> <u>adhered to as required</u>, physical distance of 3 to 6 feet is acceptable for return.
- Option 4: Test to Stay Strategy, as has been documented by CDC,⁴ if schools test close contacts, as defined above, on days one, three, five, and seven from date of exposure by a PCR or rapid antigen or molecular emergency use authorization (EUA)-approved test, close contacts are permitted to remain in the classroom as long as the results are negative. (See IDPH's Interim Guidance on Testing for COVID-19 in Community Settings and Schools for specific details on testing in schools.)
 - Test to Stay is only applicable when both the COVID-19-confimed case and close contact were engaged in consistent and correct use of wellfitting masks, regardless of vaccination status (universal masking), as required by <u>Executive Order 2021-18</u>.
 - Test to Stay may be used for any indoor exposure, with the exception of household exposures, for both students and staff who are not fully vaccinated.
 - Students or staff who are not fully vaccinated and engaged in Test to Stay
 after an exposure may participate in extracurricular activities. Local
 health departments have the authority to order a classroom-only Testto-Stay protocol after assessing the risk of an individual situation.
 - However, if the close contact is identified five days or more from the date of exposure, adjust testing accordingly, ideally on days five and seven after the last exposure.
 - When testing in the outlined cadence is not possible due to weekends and holidays, students and staff who are not fully vaccinated should be tested at the earliest possible opportunity.

³ See <u>CDC guidance on when to quarantine</u>: "Your local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last, based on local conditions and needs. Follow the recommendations of your local public health department if you need to quarantine. Options they will consider include stopping quarantine... after day 7 after receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later)."

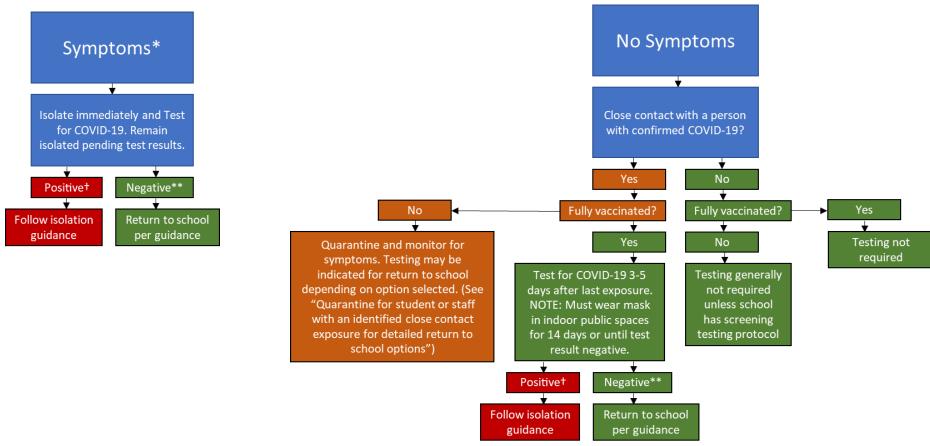
4Lanier, W. A., Babitz, K. D., Collingwood, A., Graul, M. F., Dickson, S., Cunningham, L., Dunn, A. C., MacKellar, D., & Hersh, A. L. (2021, May 28). COVID-19 testing to sustain in-person instruction and extracurricular activities in high schools – Utah, November 2020-March 2021. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 70(21), 785-791. http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7021e2

- At the conclusion of the Test to Stay modified quarantine period, the school should notify the local health department that the individual has successfully completed testing and remained negative.
- Local health departments have the authority to assess high-risk exposures and order a traditional quarantine without the option for Test to Stay.
- If at any time the student tests positive or becomes symptomatic, they should be immediately isolated and sent home, and the local health department notified.
- Regardless of when an individual ends quarantine, continue to daily monitor symptoms for 14 days after the exposure.
 - Individuals should continue to adhere to recommended mitigation strategies, including proper and consistent mask use, physical distancing, hand hygiene, cough hygiene, environmental cleaning, and disinfection, avoiding crowds and sick people, and ensuring adequate indoor ventilation.
 - If any symptoms develop during or after ending quarantine, the individual should immediately self-isolate and follow the instructions outlined in "For student or staff with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19" above.

Recommendations for Students and Staff Following Travel

- See Chicago's Travel Advisory, for the most recent information on the travel advisory
 - Vaccinated persons (returning travelers who live or work in Chicago, or visitors to Chicago)
 who have travelled domestically are not required to quarantine if they are: asymptomatic;
 and fully vaccinated.
 - It is recommended that you bring a copy of your COVID-19 vaccination records while traveling.
 - Unvaccinated persons traveling from states and territories that are on the travel advisory are advised to obtain a negative COVID-19 test result no more than 72 hours prior to arrival in Chicago or quarantine for a 10-day period upon arrival.

Figure 1. COVID-19 Testing Guide for Students and Employees of PreK-12 Schools Located in Chicago



^{*} New onset of symptoms not attributed to allergies or a pre-existing condition including fever (100.4°F or higher), new onset of moderate to severe headache, shortness of breath, new cough, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of sense of taste or smell, fatigue from unknown cause, muscle or body aches from unknown cause. (https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IDPH-COVID19-Exclusion-Decison-Tree.pdf)

[†] A positive result on any single viral test (antigen, rapid molecular or PCR) with appropriate pre-test probability as determined by the clinician should be considered positive for public health purposes. Subsequent negative tests do not change requirements for quarantine and isolation.

^{**} Clinicians should choose an appropriate test based on their clinical suspicion of COVID-19. For example, if high clinical suspicion exists due to clinical appearance or risk factor (e.g. contact with a confirmed case), and an antigen or other rapid test is negative, healthcare providers may consider obtaining a PCR test. See supplemental figure: "CDC Antigen Test Algorithm" for testing options related to pre-test probability.

[§] Schools should ensure that symptom monitoring and testing if symptoms develop continue. Test again only if symptoms develop during the remaining quarantine period.

Notifications

- Notify the identified close contacts that they were exposed to someone with COVID-19 at the school. It is recommended that you notify exposed staff and the families of exposed students via a preferred, successful method of communication at your school. A sample close contact notification template is included at the end of this document and downloadable at www.chicagohan.org/covid-19 for those you may be unable to reach by other means or if you choose to send a written notification.
 - Instruct them to quarantine and get tested for COVID-19 as appropriate based on vaccination status and return to school guidance detailed above.
 - Close contacts should monitor their symptoms and contact their medical provider if they develop symptoms of COVID-19.
- All staff and students of the school, regardless of whether they are close contacts or not, should
 be notified of the positive case, while maintaining confidentiality. You may use the general
 notification letter template at the end of this document and downloadable at_
 www.chicagohan.org/covid-19 as a guide.

Cleaning

Perform enhanced cleaning and disinfection after persons suspected/confirmed to have COVID-19 have been at the school. Follow <u>CDC cleaning and disinfection recommendations (updated 6/15/21)</u>. **Full school closures are not automatically required for cleaning if appropriate cohorting has occurred.**Any decisions about full school closures should be made in consultation with CDPH. Refer to <u>IDPH Public Health Interim Guidance for Pre-K-12 Schools and Day Care Programs for Addressing COVID-19</u> for additional instructions on environmental cleaning and disinfection.

What Schools Can Expect After Reporting a Case

- 1. After receiving a report, CDPH will contact your school to discuss infection controls in place at your school and ways to protect your staff and students.
- CDPH will call the positive staff member or family of the student once the positive lab result is received from a healthcare provider and conduct household and community contact tracing outside of your school.
- You should notify CDPH if additional positive cases are identified in your school by filling out the CDPH COVID-19 confidential <u>online case report form</u> (select option 2 "Community congregate setting: single case or cluster of 2 or more cases").
- 4. Refer to the following resources for further information:
 - a. www.chicago.gov/coronavirus
 - b. CDC Guidance for Schools
 - c. CDC School Mitigation Toolkit
 - d. ISBE/IDPH FAQs (6/7/21)
 - e. IDPH Guidance for Child's Face Covering Medical Tolerance
 - f. IDPH/ISBE guidelines (5/4/21) with exclusion decision tree
 - g. ISBE Phase 4 Guidance
 - h. www.chicago.gov/reopening
 - i. IDPH Guidance for Pre-K-12 Schools and Day Care Programs for Addressing COVID-19

Notification Templates (available for download at www.chicagohan.org/covid-19)

CLOSE CONTACT COMMUNICATION

Subject: Exposure to COVID-19 Case at _(SCHOOL)_

Dear _(Individual's Name)_,

We are writing to update you on a recent development regarding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). We have learned that a _(SCHOOL)_ community member has been diagnosed with COVID-19. You were identified as a close contact of this individual.

You/your child should monitor your health starting now through _(DATE of 14 days after last exposure to positive case, depending on which quarantine option your school uses)_. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.

You/your child should not go to work or school and should avoid public places during this time.

If you/your child develop symptoms of COVID-19, please contact your medical provider to discuss evaluation and testing. Any individuals who are sick with or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home and away from others for at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared and at least 1 day (24 hours) with no fever (without using fever-reducing medications) and improved symptoms, whichever is longer. See the Chicago Department of Public Health's guidance on what to do if you are sick. If your symptoms are severe, such as difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or difficulty waking up, or bluish lips or face, please seek the closest emergency department or call 9-1-1 immediately.

If you/your child do not have symptoms, it is recommended to be tested 5 to 9 days after your exposure to a positive case, which was _DATE_. Close contacts of positive cases are encouraged to call their healthcare provider to arrange for testing. If other testing options are needed, refer to the Chicago's coronavirus testing website. Remember that even if you test negative, you must still complete the full 14-day quarantine. If you test positive, you must stay home for at least 10 days after your test date.

For any additional COVID-19 questions or support, please visit www.chicago.gov/coronavirus for the most reliable information. If you do not find the information you need on the website, email coronavirus@chicago.gov.

The health and wellness of our staff and students are the highest priority of _(SCHOOL)_. We continue to follow Chicago Department of Public Health and CDC guidelines as we ensure proper protocols and preventative measures are in place for the health and safety of our staff and students. Please contact us at _(SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION)_ if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE

(SCHOOL LEADERSHIP NAME)

GENERAL COMMUNICATION

Subject: Confirmed COVID-19 Case at _(SCHOOL)_

Dear Staff and Families.

We are writing to update you on a recent development regarding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). We have learned that a _(SCHOOL)_ community member has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

[The individual was last at the school on (DATE) - only to be included if it can be done without obviously identifying the individual. If needed, give a broad date like "the week of_____."] To ensure the health and safety of our families and staff, following CDC guidance, _(SCHOOL)_ [will ensure/has conducted] appropriate cleaning and disinfection of our school.

Students and staff who have been identified as having been in close contact with this individual [will be/have been] notified via a separate communication. As a reminder, close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of an infected person for a total of 15 minutes or more. Those who had brief, casual contact with an infected individual are not considered at great risk of transmission and, for most people, the illness is generally mild and can be safely managed at home. As always, everyone should monitor their health and stay at home if they develop symptoms. Anyone who develops severe symptoms should seek medical care immediately.

We continue to follow Chicago Department of Public Health and CDC guidelines as we ensure proper protocols and preventative measures are in place for the health and safety of our staff and students.

Public Health Guidance

Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. If you or your child develop symptoms of COVID-19, please contact your medical provider to discuss evaluation and testing.

For severe symptoms, such as difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or difficulty waking up, or bluish lips or face, please seek the closest emergency department or call 9-1-1 immediately.

Any individuals who are sick with or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must stay home and away from others for at least 10 days since their symptoms first appeared and at least 1 day (24 hours) with no fever (without using fever-reducing medications) and improved symptoms, whichever is longer.

For any additional COVID-19 questions or support, please visit www.chicago.gov/coronavirus for the most reliable information. If you do not find the information you need on the website, email coronavirus@chicago.gov. The health and wellness of our staff and students are the highest priority of _(SCHOOL)_. Please contact us at _(SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION)_ if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE (SCHOOL LEADERSHIP NAME)