



Staff Handbook

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS AND GUIDELINES

Updated: February 2021

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More questions? Visit bellingshamschools.org/covid

Key Safety Reminders



- Always wear a mask in the building.
- Maintain six feet of distancing from non-household members and limit contact time in spaces with others.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Stay home if you are sick or experiencing symptoms associated with COVID-19.
- We contact trace every case.

Watch our [Return to Work Orientation video](#) for more details and information.

Return to Work Requirements for Staff

Watch our [Return to Work video](#) for visuals and more information. Below are our [Back to Building Requirements](#).

Remember that taking care of yourself is taking care of your community.

- Do not come on site if you are sick.

Digitally sign-in and out of your work area daily, attesting that you and others in your household are not experiencing symptoms attributable to COVID-19 and not another condition.

- Signing in and out daily is the difference of us having to shut down an entire building when there is a COVID-19 case and only having to notify a few people.
- Please use the digital sign-in through the provided QR code. If you need a QR sticker, ask your building administrator.

Cloth masks are required in shared spaces and when others are present.

- If you are alone in the building or your office, you do not need to wear your face covering but have it accessible to put on quickly.
- If you are working in a group office with other people more than six feet away from you, you still need to be in a cloth mask.
- Face shields are not an alternative to cloth face masks. In low-risk environments, if needed, a face shield with no cloth face mask can be worn if the shield has a cloth extension that is attached to the entire edge of the shield. Staff should contact their building COVID 19 safety team in order to determine if this is a good option for the work environment. Shields with cloth extensions are available as part of our district PPE supply.
- If your job requires higher PPE and you do not have it, contact your supervisor or building nurse.

Always keep at least six feet of distance from non-household members.

- Do not congregate in communal spaces.
- Meals should take place in your workspace.
- Hold meetings virtually as best practice. If you need to meet in person, meeting outside with six or more feet of distance is better, and if inside meet with six or more feet of distance for short meetings.
- In shared offices desks should be at least six feet apart.

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water often. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers should be used in instances where hand washing is not available.

Do not bring in your own cleaning products. Mixing cleaning chemicals can be hazardous. Every building has access to appropriate cleaning products. If you need more, ask your custodian.

School Day Information

Watch our [Return to School video \(K/1\)](#) for visuals and more information.

Before School

Elementary

Families and students will receive messaging from their schools and the district reminding them to do a daily self-assessment of symptoms. This is called our [COVID-19 Safety Agreement for Families](#).

Families must complete a [health attestation](#) for every student in order to return to in-person learning. This can be filled out by the family or on behalf of the family by a school staff member. The health attestation is required quarterly.

Middle and High School

Students in middle and high school will use a [similar check in/out system](#) that staff do for their daily health attestation. Students can access the check in/out link on their school website under Students or by scanning a QR code using their phone. Families will also complete the quarterly health attestation as part of our [COVID-19 Safety Agreement for Families](#).

All Schools

Staff and students should not come to school if they are experiencing any symptoms associated with COVID-19.

Symptoms include:

- Fever (100.4° F or higher) or chills
- Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

- Sore throat, nasal congestion, or runny nose
- Recent loss of taste or smell
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Unusual fatigue

Staff and students should not come to school or work if they are a close contact with anyone that has COVID-19, has had a positive COVID-19 test for active virus in the past 10 days, or has within the last 14 days been told to self-monitor, self-isolate, or self-quarantine because of concerns about a COVID-19 infection.

Arrival and Departure

Whether arriving by school bus, walking, biking or by car, all staff, students, families and visitors must be wearing a mask, even while outside and physically distant. Disposable masks are available for students and staff who need them.

At this time, families and visitors will not be allowed to enter our schools. Elementary students will be greeted at the door by school staff.

While arrival and dismissal have traditionally been times for families to gather and socialize, we are asking that families keep moving and do not gather in groups. At the end of the day, we ask that students keep moving. If walking home, they need to head directly home. If taking the bus, they should head to and board the bus. If waiting to be picked up, they should be standing outside physically distanced.

Entering the Classroom

For grades K-5, as students arrive in the classroom, staff will take the student's temperature. All students will need to have their temperature checked and to wash their hands. If the student has a temperature 100.4 or above, they will be guided to the Screening Room which in most cases is the staff room.

Grades 6-12 will start with a health evaluation upon entry to their home room. During the health evaluation students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer, and in collaboration with the teacher students will attest to their own health using our daily digital check-in tool.

The Classroom

Kindergarten and First Grade

Classrooms have been reorganized to make additional space but to keep them playful and developmentally appropriate. Seating will be flexible and marks on the floor will help promote distancing. Sit spots will show where students can choose to work independently on the floor. Alternative seating like scoop chairs and rockers can also be provided.

Each child will have access to their own set of school supplies and will learn to manage their supplies independently. All children will be given a lap desk to hold their materials and provide a space to work independently.

Grades 2-12

Classroom space has been selected that allows each student to maintain physical distance and have independent workspace. This may be a different classroom or common space depending on the school building. Students use their own school-supplied computer to join remote learning.

Meals

Elementary

Students wash hands or get hand sanitizer before eating. Children will be distanced from one another at their tables for eating. Staff may help open food items wearing gloves and wearing procedural/blue mask. Face shield, if preferred by staff, can be worn. After eating students put their mask back on.

Middle and High School

Middle and high school student eating areas will be dependent on the school; in most cases, students will eat in the cafeteria with seating arranged to honor physical distancing. When possible, outdoor seating is also acceptable although students will need to keep a distance of at least six feet from each other. Students will need to practice good hygiene by washing hands before and after mealtime.

Recess

Students will still have access to the playgrounds and fields. However, play areas will be divided into zones. The focus will be on keeping appropriate space during play, and all students will wash their hands after recess.

Screening Room

If a student begins to feel unwell during the school day, they will be directed to a designated screening room. There a school nurse or trained staff member will check the child's temperature and assess their symptoms. Parents will be notified if their child needs to be picked up from school. The student's workspace should be immediately cleaned and disinfected.

We have adopted a districtwide philosophy of "all screening, all the time," where all adults are asked to be vigilant about assessing students for symptoms of illness. Watch our [Screening Video](#) to learn more.

Every family is required to have up-to-date contact information and emergency contacts in Skyward and Seesaw. Families can be directed to our [Skylert instructions webpage \(bellingshamschools.org/skylert\)](https://bellingshamschools.org/skylert) for instructions on how to update their contact information.

Riding the School Bus

Students who ride the bus to school will wear a mask. When boarding, students should stand six feet apart as they wait to enter. All riders will use the hand sanitizer mounted at the front door, and then proceed to their assigned seat. When weather permits, the windows and ceiling vents will be opened to increase air flow. When it is time to exit the bus, students will be directed to leave their seats one at a time to maintain distance.

Ventilation and Fans

Building strategies that improve air quality are part of a layered defense against COVID-19 transmission. District Safety and Operations leaders utilize recommendations from technical experts (like the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers), local health jurisdictions, OSPI, WA DOH, CDC, and public health research institutes to stay current with best practices in environmental health mitigation.

How do I know if my space has adequate ventilation?

All buildings have fresh outside air that is filtered, circulated, and re-filtered within the building. Air exchanges are monitored and measured by Buildings & Grounds using the building's mechanical HVAC systems. Classrooms have 5 air changes per hour or greater while windows are closed, with such constant air exchange and filtering reducing the likelihood of airborne COVID-19 aerosols. Be sure to keep any room vents open and clear from any blockages (like furniture or decorations) to ensure maximum system efficiencies.

Should I leave my windows open?

During moderate weather, windows can be *opened* for additional ventilation. During cold months when the heat is on, windows should be *closed* to maximize building ventilation and filtration through HVAC systems. When cold air enters the building from windows and inside temperatures drop, intake of fresh outdoor air is minimized while the system works to heat the building; this in effect reduces the amount of fresh air circulating through the building. Keeping windows closed in cold weather will help the mechanical systems work as designed in circulating plentiful fresh, filtered air throughout the building. (Note: buildings with large HVAC systems like schools are often configured differently than spaces like restaurants, where you may see different protocols in place; best practices to reduce airborne transmission are tailored to the environment, space, and engineering controls present).

Why do I have a classroom fan?

Mechanical engineering studies have shown portable air filtration measures can help reduce concentration of contaminated aerosols when no other ventilation measures exist. Each classroom is equipped with a MERV 13 filtering box fan to provide an extra layer of filtered air flow in the space. This is a supplemental and optional resource for staff who choose to use it; all classrooms have sufficient ventilation without the fan. Our Buildings and Grounds team distributed these fans months before large companies like Ford began advocating and publicizing the open-source design to the public.

When do I operate the fan?

Fans do not need to be run 24/7. Suggested times for usage include before students arrive, occasionally during breaks in instruction (like recess or lunch), or at the end of day after students have left. Do not point fans directly at people where air

crosses many bodies. When windows are open, fans can be positioned nearby to assist drawing in outside air. When windows are closed, fans can be positioned in a corner several feet from a wall for increased circulation. Use lower settings as needed to avoid ambient noise.

Can I bring in personal heaters or air filters?

There is no need to bring in personal appliances; doing so poses additional safety concerns with electrical loads and trip hazards.

Who do I talk to with questions or concerns?

Contact your supervisor who can assist in communication with Buildings & Grounds and the District COVID Safety team.

Cleaning Protocols

Best Practice

Viruses do not typically survive on surfaces for an extended period. To clean surfaces and objects wipe them down with the provided cleaner and disinfectant wipes. The most effective way to remove the virus is using a towel and cleaner to wipe it away. After cleaning, dispose of single-use towel or launder reusable towel.

Daily Cleaning

Custodians clean and sanitize used spaces daily and high use areas multiple times per day.

To ensure used spaces get clean make sure your building team is communicating with custodians on which workspaces are being used. If working remotely from the classroom, teachers should try and use one area of the classroom. If using a part of the classroom outside of your normal area, leave an obvious note for the custodian.

Cleaning Products

Do not bring in your own cleaning products. Mixing cleaning chemicals can be hazardous. Every building has access to appropriate cleaning products. If you need more, ask your custodian.

Provided Supplies

- Spray bottles of cleaner
- Disinfectant wipes
- Cleaning rags
- Gloves

Ordering Supplies

Custodians order cleaning supplies through the district work request system. Coordinate with the staff requesting supplies and the building custodian.

Case Response Cleaning

If a student begins to feel unwell during the school day, they will be directed to a designated screening room. There, a school nurse or trained staff member will check their temperature and assess their symptoms. Parents will be notified if their student needs to be picked up from school. The student's workspace will immediately be cleaned and disinfected.

Personal Protective Equipment

All staff will be provided the required personal protective equipment (PPE) for their risk-level. Staff are also allowed to wear their own as long as it fits our requirements. We have clear requirements from the Washington state Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the state Department of Health and the state Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) regarding PPE based on risk-level. All staff will have PPE and guidance available for their risk-level.

Low risk

When you are maintaining six feet of distance from others who are also wearing cloth face coverings, you are in a low transmission risk category and wearing a cloth face covering is required.

General Education Classroom: (low risk) including all staff (examples: teachers and paraeducators, administrative team, office staff, counselors, educational technology)

- Cloth mask required
- Face shields and procedural masks available

Recess: Staff and students wear mask at all times in playground zone.

Medium Risk

If you need to intermittently spend small amounts of time less than six feet from students, then you are in a medium transmission risk category and should wear either a procedural mask or a cloth face covering with a face shield.

For example, Special Education staff may be in medium to high-risk environments.

High Risk

If you are within three feet for more than 10 minutes an hour multiple times a day with a student, then you are in a high transmission risk category and a face shield and a KN95, surgical mask, dust mask, or procedural mask are required.

WHICH MASK FOR THE TASK?

<p>IF YOU CAN MAINTAIN AT LEAST 6 FEET OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING</p> 	<p>CLOTH FACE COVERINGS ARE SUFFICIENT</p> 
<p>IF YOU HAVE INTERMITTENT CONTACT (SEVERAL MINUTES) OF LESS THAN 6 FEET OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING</p>	<p>CLOTH FACE COVERINGS AND FACE SHIELDS ARE NEEDED</p> 
<p>IF YOU HAVE SUSTAINED CONTACT OF LESS THAN 6 FEET OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING</p>	<p>PROCEDURAL MASKS AND FACE SHIELDS ARE NEEDED</p> 

If you are concerned about a specific situation or student, contact your school nurse.

We are in this together.



Click to enlarge.