

COVID-19 School Nurse Update

DATE: 4/1/2020

MINUTES PREPARED BY: TRACY SCHULTZ

LOCATION: WEBEX; SLIDES WILL BE PROVIDED

Presenters:

- Susan Klammer, MDH Epidemiologist and School Liaison
- Erika Yoney, MDH State School Health Consultant
- Mary Cathryn Ricker, Commissioner of Education

Agenda

- Key Messages, Resources and FAQs
- Moderated Q & A

Meeting Notes

1. Welcome and purpose of the call
2. Erika Yoney, Presenter: Key Messages, Resources and FAQs
 - Next week a member of the MDE staff will join us to address questions related to the education side of things (IEPs, 504s, etc.).
 - Who needs to be in the building?
 - In MN it varies district by district based on school and student needs.
 - When possible please consider working at home.
 - While staff is in the building please continue to practice social distancing.
 - Reference labor agreements when needed.

Mary Cathryn Ricker, Commissioner of Education

Thank you for your leadership – we appreciate you. You are integral to the health and safety of our students and we need you to meet students’ needs. School leaders turn to you for advice and guidance and you continue to ensure your school is following public health guidance. Thank you for partnering with MDH and being a trusted resource in your schools.

3. Employee Screening
 - This is being handled differently from district to district.
 - Please implement monitoring while still respecting employees privacy.
 - Ask simple screening questions and/or have the employee screen at home and report back while reassuring the employee that they will continue to get paid.
4. Masks
 - Masks are not required for working with a well population.

- There is no evidence that a mask will protect a person from transmission.
- Masks merely hold in germs when a person coughs or sneezes.
- MDH has released interim guidance on the use of cloth masks: [MDH Interim Guidance on Alternative Face Masks \(PDF\)](#)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/masksalt.pdf>)
- We want to keep in mind that we are working with children and the use of masks can build fear so please address their use with the children if needed.

5. Playgrounds

- Are not included in the shelter in place order.
- We recommend that childcare centers continue to use their playgrounds and get outside for fresh air and movement.
- Break into smaller groups (10 or fewer) and keep a schedule so that you are not intermixing different groups of children.
- Wash hands before and after use of the playground.
- If possible wipe down heavy touch areas in between each groups use.
- Use active recess strategies and kits without the need for equipment when appropriate.
- Whether your playground is open to the public or not would be handled within each district as would the handling of total closures.

6. Nebulizers

- The guidance pertains to those who have COVID and/or a suspected case of COVID.
- [MDH Interim Guidance on Nebulized Medication \(PDF\)](#)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/aerosol.pdf>)
- Partner with the family and primary care provider to determine the child's need for the treatment and their ability to be in a public space – increased risk.

7. Childcare Staff Lists

- Childcare workers are in a priority group for COVID-19 testing, but due to the national supply shortage priority is still being given to those hospitalized, healthcare workers and those in congregate living facilities.
- For childcare centers with additional availability to provide service – DHS is assembling a list to share, and will be in touch with you if they have not been already.

8. CDC Updates and Changes

- [COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Country](#) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notice.html#travel-1>)
- [Domestic Travel Advisory for NY, NJ, and CT](#) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-in-the-us.html>)
- [Cleaning and Disinfecting your Facility](#) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-building-facility.html>)
- We are working with the CDC on clarity related to cleaning and closures after a positive case.

- [Updated Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html)
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>)
9. **When a student is excluded, if a family obtains a note from provider that they are clear to return, but there is no indication of what the diagnosis is/was can they return?** A physician’s note following clinical evaluation indicating there is no evidence of infection can be accepted as a form of alternative diagnosis, and the student could be allowed to return per the provider order. However, in the absence of a clinical evaluation and physician’s note, individuals with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath) and their household members should follow MDH exclusion guidance. General exclusion guidance of return to school within 24 hours after fever is not appropriate during this state of emergency.
 10. **If child 1 goes home because of a fever and siblings go home as well for 14 days, then child 2 develops symptoms does the 14 days start over?** Have the family increase monitoring, but the 14 days don’t need to necessarily start over. We can work with you on a case like this should it occur.

Moderated Q&A

- **Recommendation for wearing masks when screening children coming into child care centers?** We would like healthy students and staff coming in. Making the assumption that you are interacting with a healthy person for a short period of time at this time we do not recommend use of a mask.
- **Playgrounds** – the governor did not indicate playgrounds are closed with the shelter in place order. Each city and facility however can make the decision for themselves. Follow what is happening in your city. If you can have a conversation with your municipality around this please do so.
- **Active recess kits?** We will look into this and review next week.
- **How do we determine if it is absolutely necessary for the child to be onsite based on parent tier 1 status/need?** MDE has direction on their website in childcare guidance – provided specifically for those who do not have a parent at home to provide care. [MDE COVID-19 Updates: https://education.mn.gov/mdeprod/idcplg?IdcService=GET_FILE&dDocName=MDE032187&RevisionSelectionMethod=latestReleased&Rendition=primary](https://education.mn.gov/mdeprod/idcplg?IdcService=GET_FILE&dDocName=MDE032187&RevisionSelectionMethod=latestReleased&Rendition=primary)
- **Are our time studies on hold?** We will look into and review next week.
- **Can you update the one-pager on exclusion criteria to include muscle aches and sore throat?** For screening we are focusing on the three symptoms consistent with COVID-19. We can discuss with epidemiology whether there are more to include.
- **We have masks and gloves in SPED that may not be used – do we have direction on what to do with them? Can they be donated?** There is a nationwide shortage and if you are able to donate please do. Contact State Emergency Operations Center to direct a donation: hsem.ppe@state.mn.us
- **Did you say if 1 child is sent home all sibling go home?** Yes – review [COVID-19 Exclusion Guidance: Decision Tree for Symptomatic Individuals in Schools & Childcare Programs \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf>)
- **It was reported yesterday that sometimes the one and only symptoms can be gastrointestinal – should we include these in our screening?** In terms of screening we can take it back to the group, but again the 3 main symptoms are fever, shortness of breath, and cough. We don’t have enough evidence and data to date to add other symptoms to the list at this time. The exclusion criteria are

fluid, and may change as we move forward. If a child is sick – they should stay home and continue to follow the Infectious Diseases Manual for other symptoms not consistent with COVID-19. Make sure you are following a trusted scientific source of information to guide your decisions. If you come across something and you would like to confirm validity before you share you can always send it to us for review.

- **If you have a symptomatic student do you need a N95 mask?** If you see a student who is producing a lot of droplets and you are concerned you can, but isolation and social distance and a mask for the student would be helpful while you wait for the student to be picked up.
- **When using a temporal thermometer do you need a probe cover or can you clean it with alcohol?** I can't speak to the effectiveness of cleaning with alcohol, but we will review.
- **Is the employee screening tool on the MDH site now?** Yes: [MDH Screening Guidance for Emergency Child Care Centers \(PDF\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ccscreen.pdf)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/ccscreen.pdf>)
- **It sounds like employee screening has changed? Do we now need to screen everyone?** Be cautious. The goal is to create an environment with well individuals. Encourage employees to screen themselves or do it yourself, but no one should be entering the building if they meet any of the exclusion criteria.
- **How do we access slides and notes?** They will be posted to Basecamp after they are checked for accuracy and accessibility. They will also be emailed to the identified health emergency contact at your school.
- **What are the hours we should be offering for child care and/or is there a requirement?** Not that we are aware of, but we will find out and review next week.
- **Is MDH not recommending a notification for clinically diagnosed cases?** We have template language available upon request because we would like to hear of these types of cases. We are concerned with communications being sent out without context. Difficult situations have arisen from well-intentioned situations. Please communicate with us directly to access the information and refine the messages before they are shared. Help people think more generally about the presence of COVID related to community spread and encourage the actions that should be taken regardless of status.
- **How would we find out we need to close our building and inform staff and families?** MDH is still contact tracing for lab confirmed cases of COVID-19 and we would reach out to your school directly on next steps related to, cleaning, screening and closure. We see substantial community transmission everywhere and it's hard to say right now what would lead to a building closing for a period of time. It will be done on a case by case basis and MDH will direct next steps. For clinically diagnosed cases please reach out to us directly and we can talk through potential next steps.

For more information, please contact:

For Educational Questions Email MDE: covid-19.questions.mde@state.mn.us or call the MDE Hotline: 651-297-1304. You can also sign-up for MDE's COVID-19 updates on the web:

https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNMDE/subscriber/new?topic_id=MNMDE_1704
(<https://education.n.gov>)

For Public Health Questions Email MDH: Health.schools.covid19@state.mn.us