



DUKE SCHOOL

# RETURN TO SCHOOL POLICIES

COVID-19 Prevention Strategies for the 2021-22 School Year

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## **BACKGROUND FOR OUR RETURN TO SCHOOL**

During the 2020-2021 school year, Duke School and its Clinical Advisory Group (CAG) developed detailed protocols based on the Governor's executive orders, Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations, and North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) recommendations. Duke School successfully conducted in-person teaching and learning for the entire school year without community transmission. As we prepare for the 2021-2022 academic year, Duke School remains committed to ensuring the delivery of a robust, comprehensive, and mission-consistent educational program on campus. While we cannot predict the impact of any new COVID-19 virus variants or the rate of community spread this fall, we remain optimistic about the school year for many reasons, including:

- your adherence to Duke School's community commitment,
- the vast body of knowledge we now have about prevention of community transmission with in-person instruction,
- the increasing rates of vaccination across the region and country and the success of the vaccines in preventing spread and serious illness in adults and children 12 years of age and older, and
- the most recent recommendations by the CDC for K-12 schools.

## **UPDATED CAMPUS-WIDE PREVENTION STRATEGIES**

For the 2021-2022 school year, Duke School has reviewed the updated state orders and recommendations from NCDHHS and CDC, taking into consideration our substantial student population (preschool through sixth grade) who are not yet eligible for vaccination. These protocols will be updated based on guidance from NCDHHS, CDC, state, and local ordinances throughout the year when appropriate and based on input from the CAG.

## **FLEXIBILITY REMAINS KEY**

Duke School recognizes that layered, specific COVID-19 prevention strategies will vary, based on community transmission levels, vaccination coverage, and local policies and regulations. At this time, consistent with CDC recommendations, Duke School will continue to require layered prevention strategies.

# LAYERED PREVENTION STRATEGIES

To begin the 2021-2022 school year, Duke School will require these layered prevention strategies:



## FACE COVERINGS

**Indoors:** Universal masking will be required for all students, faculty, and staff when indoors, regardless of vaccination status. Masks will be available to students and employees who forget to bring their own.

**Outdoors:** Masks will be optional when outdoors except during activities when social distancing is difficult to achieve for a sustained period (activities that call for students to be less than three feet apart for 15 or more minutes). For preschool students, who may not yet be able to independently and consistently distance themselves, masks will be required during outside time, including recess. Exceptions include nap-time, stationary meal times or designated mask breaks.

**Physical Education and Athletics:** Students will wear masks for indoor physical education, athletics, and extracurricular activities. For students in Kindergarten through Eighth Grade, masks are optional for outdoor physical education, athletics, and extracurricular activities where physical distancing of 3 or more feet can be maintained.



## PHYSICAL DISTANCING

**General:** Three (3) feet of physical distance between students within classrooms will be maintained, consistent with CDC recommendations based on [studies](#) from the 2020-2021 school year.

**Meals/snacks:** Meals and snacks will occur outdoors daily, with students maintaining a physical distance of 3 feet and remaining stationary while eating. In instances of inclement weather, such as downpours or times when advisories are issued, students may dine indoors. When dining indoors, students should maintain a physical distance of six (6) feet.

**Meetings/gatherings:** Faculty, staff, and other agents of the school may resume in-person meetings while maintaining layered protocols. Where required physical distancing is not possible, meetings or gatherings will be held virtually. Student gatherings will occur outdoors whenever possible. Indoors, students should maintain the multi-layered strategies outlined in this document.



## HYGIENE, CLEANING, AND VENTILATION

**Hand Hygiene:** Students, faculty, and staff should practice hand washing/hand sanitizing and [respiratory etiquette](#) (covering coughs and sneezes) to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses including COVID-19. Faculty and staff will reinforce these behaviors with students, and Duke School will provide adequate hand washing and hand sanitizing supplies. Students, faculty and staff will be reminded to [wash hands frequently](#).

**Meals/snacks:** Students will bring their own snack, lunch, and water bottle, with students attending After School or Prime Time bringing an additional snack. The water fountains will be unavailable for use. Sharing of foods/drinks will not be permitted. Surfaces that come in contact with food will be sanitized before and after meals.

**Enhanced Sanitization:** As recommended by the CDC, our facilities and maintenance teams will clean surfaces at least once daily to remove potential virus that may be on surfaces and will continue to sanitize high touch surfaces with increased frequency. If someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 24 hours has occupied a space at Duke School, we will close, clean, AND disinfect the space immediately.

**Ventilation:** In 2020, Duke School made changes to its HVAC and filtration systems to improve ventilation, an important COVID-19 prevention strategy that can reduce the number of virus particles in the air. In classrooms, it is not necessary to open multiple doors and windows, as our improved HVAC systems are optimally filtering air. Duke School will follow guidelines for athletic event bus transportation, opening windows in buses.



## SCREENING AND STAYING HOME WHEN SICK

Prior to arrival to campus, a daily health check using the [Base Camp Health Questionnaire](#) will be required for every student. If the health assessment indicates the student is “ineligible,” due to symptoms of infectious illness such as [influenza \(flu\)](#) or [COVID-19](#), the student should stay home. During the school day, anyone exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home. In either instance, the student should visit their healthcare provider for testing and care. Parents should contact their division director to follow up with diagnostic information from the child’s health provider. Parents should contact the division office ([Lower School](#), [Middle School](#)) to follow up with diagnostic information from

the child's health provider. Questions about the Base Camp Health Ascend Questionnaire may be directed to our [Business Office](#).

If a student tests positive for COVID-19, the parent/caretaker should report this information to the student's division director. The family should then follow steps as outlined in the Criteria Table for Return to School (NCDHHS) on page 9 of this document. If a member of a student's household tests positive for COVID-19, the parent/caretaker should report this information to the division office. The family should then follow steps as outlined in Criteria Table for Return to School (NCDHHS) on page 9 of this document.



## CONTACT TRACING IN COMBINATION WITH ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE

Duke School will collaborate with state and local health departments, to the extent allowable by privacy laws and other applicable laws, to confidentially provide information about people diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19. The Head of School or her proxy will notify, to the extent allowable by applicable privacy laws, those faculty, staff, or families of students who were close contacts as soon as possible after they are notified that someone in the school has tested positive. Isolation and quarantine procedures are included in a table at the end of this document.

[Fully vaccinated](#) people who were in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 but do NOT have COVID-19 symptoms are not required to quarantine, but must continue to adhere to the layered infection prevention strategies, including universal masking in indoor settings. Individuals are encouraged to have post-exposure testing at day 5 even if vaccinated.



## VACCINATION

The CDC states that *vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection. A [growing body of evidence](#) suggests that people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are less likely to have an asymptomatic infection or transmit COVID-19 to others than people who are not fully vaccinated. In most settings, people who are [fully vaccinated](#) can safely resume activities they did before the pandemic, except where prevention measures are required by federal, state, local, tribal,*

or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. The CDC reminds the public that [people 12 years and older are now eligible for COVID-19 vaccination](#).

Duke School encourages both the influenza (flu) vaccination and the COVID-19 full vaccination for approved age groups as they have similar symptoms, and to prevent community spread, prevent widespread absences, and keep vulnerable community members safe. Please consult your child's primary care physician with any questions regarding these vaccines and your child(ren)'s health.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Gathering Vaccination Information:** We are asking Duke School families whose students have been fully vaccinated to submit a copy of their vaccination card to the [Middle School Division Office](#) by September 7. Sharing of this information will remain confidential. This information is helpful as the school makes determinations in instances of exposure risk and need to quarantine [see Criteria Table for Return to School (NCDHHS) on page 9 of this document]. If we do not receive this documentation we will assume that a child is not vaccinated and follow quarantine protocols for unvaccinated individuals.

**Duke School Community Commitment:** The key to our success during the worst of the pandemic was your cooperation in not sending sick or exposed children to school. Daily vigilance by parents in the home will remain essential to keeping COVID-19 virus from coming to campus. We will ask families and employees again this year to follow our Duke School Community Commitment outlined at the end of this document.

**Provisions for Learning from Home if in Quarantine:** If your student is quarantined, both school divisions have established procedures to learn from home. Of course, if your child feels sick then they should rest and recover. Each situation is unique and should be worked out with the classroom teacher. Please direct any questions to the respective Division Director.

**Volunteers:** Parent volunteers and guest experts must report to the division or department office for clearance and review of procedures prior to entering any building with students. Volunteers should follow the strategies outlined in this document at all times. Volunteers will be welcome for outdoor activities and gatherings with school staff will be held outdoors at this time.

# PROTOCOLS FOR A CONFIRMED POSITIVE COVID-19 CASE AT DUKE SCHOOL

**Isolation** is required for all presumptive or confirmed cases of COVID-19. Faculty, staff or students should disclose and stay at home or go home if:

- They are showing COVID-19 symptoms, until they meet criteria for return described in the Criteria Table for Return to School (NCDHHS) on page 9.
- They have tested positive for COVID-19, until they meet criteria for return described in the Criteria Table for Return to School (NCDHHS) on page 9 of this document.

**Quarantine** is required for an individual who has been a close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes cumulatively over a 24-hour period) of someone who is determined positive with COVID-19 either through testing or symptom consistent diagnosis, with the following three exceptions:

- Individuals who are fully vaccinated and do not have symptoms do NOT need to quarantine after a close contact with a person who is NOT a member of the vaccinated individual's household. The individual should get tested 3-5 days after exposure and wear a mask around others until receiving a negative test result.
- People who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months and recovered and do not have symptoms do NOT have to quarantine.
- **Students who are not fully vaccinated after a close contact in a classroom or other school setting if masks were being worn appropriately and consistently by both the person with COVID-19 and the potentially exposed person** do NOT need to quarantine. This is based on updated CDC guidance and studies that have shown extremely low risk of COVID-19 transmission in classroom settings when face masks were being used appropriately by both the person with COVID-19 and the potentially exposed person, as well as multiple layers of prevention measures in place to prevent transmission in school settings. This applies to exposures in classrooms, other in-school settings, and school transportation but does not apply to exposures during extracurricular or athletic activities. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.
- An additional potential exception to quarantine are persons **who are not fully vaccinated and have tested antibody positive within 3 months before or**

**immediately following a close contact** may not need to quarantine if they have limited or no contact with persons at high risk for severe COVID-19 illness, including older adults and persons with certain medical conditions. Since this may be difficult or impossible to assess, NCDHHS generally recommends that individuals who do not meet the three exceptions listed above should still quarantine after a close contact even if they tested antibody positive. Exemption from quarantine based on a recent positive antibody test can be considered case-by-case if approved by the local public health department.

- CDC continues to recommend quarantine for 14 days after last exposure. However, as of December 2, 2020, the CDC has offered options to reduce the duration of quarantine in either of the following two scenarios:
  - 10 days of quarantine have been completed and no symptoms have been reported during daily at home monitoring;
  - 7 days of quarantine have been completed, no symptoms have been reported during daily at home monitoring, and the individual has received results of a negative antigen or PCR/molecular test on a test taken no earlier than day 5 of quarantine.
  - If quarantine is discontinued before day 14, the individual should continue to monitor symptoms and strictly adhere to all non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g. wear a mask, practice physical distancing) through 14 days after the date of last exposure.
  - Schools should follow the recommendations of their local public health department regarding quarantine. Local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last in the communities they serve, based on local conditions and needs.

**Testing:** Duke School is actively investigating COVID-19 state testing resources and will update the community in September on our course of action, additionally sharing with you recommendations for testing sites and preferred home antigen tests.

# CRITERIA TABLE FOR RETURN TO SCHOOL (NCDHHS)

From the North Carolina’s Department of Health and Human Service’s [StrongSchoolsNC: Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#) Interim Guidance | Published June 2020; Updated August 10, 2021

Exclusion Category	Scenario	Criteria to return to school
Diagnosis	Person has tested <b>positive</b> with an antigen test <b>but does not have symptoms</b> of COVID-19 and is not known to be a close contact to someone diagnosed with COVID-19.	If the person has a repeat PCR/molecular test performed in a laboratory within 24 – 48 hours of their positive antigen test, and that PCR/molecular test is negative: the positive antigen test can be considered a false positive and the person can immediately return to school; OR If the person does not have a repeat PCR/molecular test, or has one within 24 – 48 hours and it is also positive, the person can return to school 10 days after the first positive test, as long as they did not develop symptoms. The person is not required to have documentation of a negative test in order to return to school.
Diagnosis	Person has tested <b>positive</b> with a <b>PCR/molecular test</b> but the person does not have symptoms.	Person can return to school 10 days after their positive test.
Symptoms	Person <b>has symptoms of COVID-19</b> and has tested <b>positive</b> with an <b>antigen test or PCR/molecular test</b> .	Person can return to school when It has been 10 days since the first day of symptoms; AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND</li> <li>• Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.</li> </ul> The person is not required to have documentation of a negative test in order to return to school.
Symptoms	Person has symptoms of COVID-19 but has not been tested for COVID-19 nor has visited a health care provider. Therefore, the person who has symptoms is presumed positive for COVID-19 due to the presence of a clinically compatible illness in the absence of testing.	Person can return to school when <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has been 10 days since the first day of symptoms; AND</li> <li>• It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND</li> <li>• Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Symptoms</b></p>	<p>Person has symptoms of COVID-19 but has received a negative test for COVID-19* or has visited a health care provider and received an alternate diagnosis that would explain the symptoms of COVID-19.</p> <p>*In a person with symptoms, a negative test is defined as either (1) a negative PCR/molecular test or (2) a negative antigen test if the person has a either a) low likelihood of SARS-CoV-2 infection (e.g., the person has no known or suspected exposure to a person with COVID-19 within the last 14 days or is fully vaccinated or has had a SARS-CoV-2 infection in the last 3 months.) See CDC antigen algorithm for interpretation of antigen tests.</p>	<p>Person can return to school when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND</li> <li>• They have felt well for at least 24 hours.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: The health care provider is not required to detail the specifics of the alternate diagnosis.</i></p>
<p><b>Exposure</b></p>	<p>Person who is not fully vaccinated and has been in close contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19. (Fully vaccinated persons and persons who have tested positive in the last 3 months and do not have any symptoms after a close contact do not need to quarantine.)</p>	<p>Person can return to school after completing up to 14 days of quarantine. The 14 days of quarantine begin after the last known close contact with the COVID-19 positive individual. Alternatively the person may complete a <b>10-day quarantine if the person is not presenting symptoms of COVID-19</b> after daily at-home monitoring, or they may complete <b>7 days of quarantine if they report no symptoms during daily at-home monitoring, and the individual has received results of a negative antigen or PCR/molecular test on a test taken no earlier than day 5 of quarantine.</b></p> <p>Duke School will follow the recommendations of the Durham County public health department if someone at school should quarantine. Local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last in the communities they serve, based on local conditions and needs.</p> <p><b>If quarantine is discontinued before day 14, the individual should continue to monitor symptoms and strictly adhere to all non-pharmaceutical interventions</b> (e.g. wear a mask, practice social distancing) through 14 days after the date of last exposure.</p> <p><i>Note: NCDHHS recommends that schools not require an individual</i></p>

		<p>who is fully vaccinated (at least 2 weeks after getting their second dose in a 2-dose series or one-dose of a single-dose series) or tested positive for COVID-19 in the StrongSchoolsNC: Public Health Toolkit (K-12) Interim Guidance • Published June 8, 2020; Updated August 10, 2021 18 past three months to quarantine if they have had no symptoms after being a close contact to someone with COVID-19, and they do not live in a congregate setting (such as a shelter).</p>
<b>Exposure</b>	<p>K-12 student who is not fully vaccinated but has been in close contact, within 3 to 6 feet, with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19, in which both individuals were wearing a mask the entire time.</p>	<p>NCDHHS does not recommend quarantine of students following exposures in school settings if masks were being worn appropriately and consistently by both the person with COVID-19 and the potential exposed person. This applies to exposures in classrooms, other in school settings, and school transportation but does not apply to exposures during extracurricular or athletic activities. This option should only be utilized in settings where masks are consistently worn. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.</p>

#### Members of Duke School's Clinical Analyst Group (CAG)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethan Basch, M.D., Oncologist, Physician-in-Chief of NC Cancer Hospital, University of North Carolina School of Medicine</li> <li>• Michael Cohen-Wolkowicz, M.D., Pediatric Infectious Diseases clinician and clinical researcher, Head of Pediatrics at the Duke Clinical Research Institute</li> <li>• Sarah Lewis, M.D., Adult Infectious Diseases physician,</li> </ul> | <p>Hospital Epidemiologist and Medical Director of Infection Prevention at Duke Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Susanna Naggie, M.D., Adult Infectious Diseases clinician and clinical researcher, Vice Dean of Clinical Research Duke School of Medicine</li> <li>• Bimal Shah, M.D., Duke cardiologist, CMO of Teladoc Health; Chair of Board of Trustees at Duke School</li> </ul> | <p>Leadership Team Members of CAG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lisa Nagel, Duke School Head of School</li> <li>• Russell Rabinowitz, Duke School Director of Finance and Operations</li> <li>• Kathy Bartelmay, Duke School Director of Curriculum and Professional Development</li> </ul> |
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## DUKE SCHOOL COMMUNITY COMMITMENT 2021-2022

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, was declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization in 2020. COVID-19 is an extremely contagious communicable illness and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person interactions. As such, responsibilities for public health are shared by all. The Duke School Community Commitment, including an Acknowledgment of Responsibilities and an Assumption of Risk, is a direct extension of our core values. **The goal of the Commitment is to create an environment to maximize comfort working and learning in person during a pandemic. Personal responsibility and care for all is crucial to establishing the trust necessary to come together.**

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

As a member of the Duke School Community, you acknowledge and agree that your family and your Duke School student(s) will abide by all expectations put forth by Duke School in its efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19, including not only the current expectations set forth below, but also additional expectations that may be established by Duke School in the future as circumstances change.

1. Complete a daily pre-visit check using the Base Camp Health Ascend questionnaire and agree not to bring your child to campus if the health assessment indicates “ineligible.”
2. Consider self-identifying to Duke School if your child (or household contact like a caregiver, parent/guardian or grandparent) has a health condition that could put your child at higher risk from COVID-19, including by way of example the conditions listed below, so that we can discuss how best to keep your child as safe as possible:
  - Moderate to severe asthma,
  - Compromised immune system,
  - Severe obesity (body mass index of over 40),
  - Other underlying medical conditions such as diabetes.
3. Follow safety procedures and hygiene protocols as described in the Return to School Policies document, including the mandate that every student, teacher, staff and family member must wear a face mask or suitable alternative indoors when on campus as described in the Return to School Policies document.
4. Follow campus access expectations, including:
  - Abiding by all communicated and posted movement and gathering limits,

- Entering and exiting buildings only through designated points,
  - Limiting your on-campus presence to what is absolutely necessary for educational and business purposes
5. Inform the school should you or anyone in your household receive a positive test for COVID-19, so that the school can follow guidance from local health authorities, communicate as necessary while also respecting your privacy, and so that the school can implement the protocols described in the Return to School Policies document.
  6. Follow NCDHSS protocols for quarantining should you be exposed to COVID-19, or have a confirmed or suspected case.

The above parent/guardian and student responsibilities are based upon the most current available guidance including, but not limited to, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services's Public Health Strong Schools Toolkit (K-12), and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control ("CDC") for operating schools in the current environment. As circumstances and/or guidance may change in the future, you understand and agree that these parent/guardian and student responsibilities will also need to change accordingly in the future. Thus, another important parent/guardian and student responsibility will be to abide by all future expectations established by Duke School.

As a member of the Duke School community, you agree that your entire household will comply with the recommended best practices that will mitigate the spread of COVID-19, both at school and at home. You agree to a common baseline understanding of the mitigation strategies that all within the Duke School community will take during this time for the greater good. Finally, you understand that, while some will do more, and some will do a little less, the common understanding is that all will be supported with compassion and kindness.