

Reopening the School Cafeteria this Fall

ND DPI just released guidance on reopening schools. Find this guidance at:

<https://www.nd.gov/dpi/sites/www/files/documents/Covid-19/NDK12restartguide.pdf>

The NDDPI guidance has been adapted from the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The CDC recommendations for schools to consider reopening is available at

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>

The following are questions to consider in the foodservice areas based on the guidance for the entire school. As you work with your administration to put plans into place for kids to once again eat their lunch in the cafeteria, think about how you will address each area. Putting a plan into place now will lessen your anxiety as the opening date of school draws near. Also realize that your plan will be fluid and could/should change as the situation evolves.

Areas to plan:

Promoting behaviours to reduce the spread:

1. Staying home when appropriate

Food safety regulations mandate that food workers stay home but report to their manager if they have jaundice (yellowing of the skin and/or eyes), Hepatitis A, cough with a fever, Make sure your staff know that they should also stay home if they tested positive or have symptoms of Covid 10 or they have had recent close contact with a person who tested positive.

With the stay home policy, kitchen managers must have a longer sub list now. Work with administration to identify other school positions that would be available to sub in the kitchen during prep or serving.

2. Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

3. Cloth Face Coverings (everyone older than 2)

4. Adequate Supplies

5. Signs and Messages – The CDC have many available:

- Post [signs](#) in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, restrooms) that [promote everyday protective measures pdf icon](#) and describe how to [stop the spread pdf icon](#) of germs (such as by [properly washing hands](#) and [properly wearing a cloth face covering image icon](#)).
- Broadcast regular [announcements](#) on reducing the spread of COVID-19 on PA systems.
- Include messages (for example, [videos](#)) about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and families (such as on school websites, in emails, and on school [social media accounts](#)).
- Find free CDC print and digital resources on CDC's [communications resources](#) main page.

Maintaining Health Environments

1. Cleaning and Disinfection

Kitchen – Identify work spaces that are at least 6 feet apart.

Serving line – install sneeze guards or plexiglass partitions on the serving lines to separate servers and students

Cafeteria – some cafeterias relied on students to wipe off tables after they use them. Time should be built into the schedule for an adult(s) to sanitize tables between student use.

Continue to sanitize high touch areas like door knobs.

2. **Shared Objects** – discourage shared items or high touch areas such as plates and cutlery. Bring them behind the service area and hand students their utensils and tray as they reach the serving line.

Condiments – possibly switch to pre-packaged condiments or identify an adult to portion condiments for all students

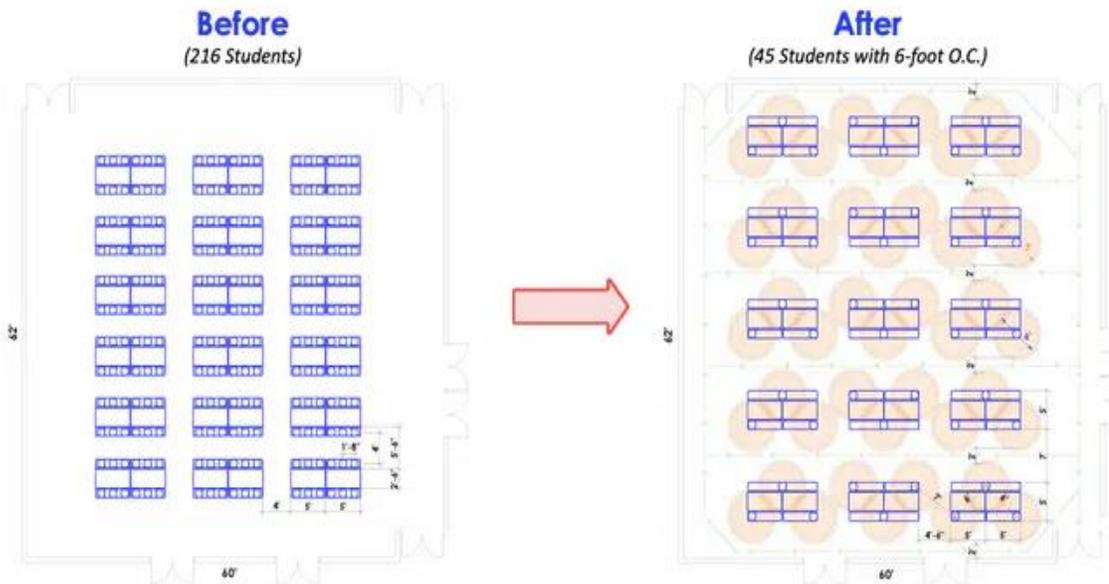
Salad bars – Either identify an adult to serve items from the salad bar or pre-portion all items into grab and go.

POS – eliminate the touch key pad with the adult entering the student into the computer or use a checklist.

3. **Ventilation** – Work with School maintenance to make sure the maximum volume of ventilation within the cafeteria and kitchen is happening.
4. **Water systems** – drinking fountains should be sanitized on a more rigorous schedule. Encourage students to bring their own water bottles rather than filling plastic cups
5. **Physical Barriers and Guides** - tape lines on the floor and tables to show 6 feet in the serving line, install sneeze guard and partitions on the serving line
6. **Communal Space** – some schools will consider serving preplated meals in the classroom, eliminating the cafeteria.

For cafeteria spacing tape off seats to keep students six feet apart.

Figure 1: A School Cafeteria using Spacing guidelines, Option 2.



(Source: Impact of CDC Guidance on School Capacity_STR.pdf, STR Partners https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Inbb_v7InvkWJSWcjDdUcziVtYWbyb_6/view).

Maintaining Healthy Operations

1. **Protection of staff and children at high risk for severe illness** – Allow students and staff that have been identified as high risk to access the lunch line first. Accommodate seating requests in segregated spaces as much as possible.
2. **Regulatory awareness** – We will communicate any new regulations from ND Dept of Health or the CDC as soon as possible.
3. **Gatherings, Visitors, Field Trips** – Limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, particularly those not from the local geographic area.
Hold virtual group events and meetings and limit the group size.
4. **Staffing** – staggering work schedules, communication of policies for leave, time off and excused absences, consider your back up staffing plan, staff also need training on physical health as well as mental health

Resources available for School Foodservice

Latest updated Guidance from CDC on Schools and Day Camps: June 1, 2020

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-day-camps.html?deliveryName=USCDC_2067-DM29601

Supporting those who are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fspecific-groups%2Fpeople-at-higher-risk.html

Using Face Masks

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

What if someone tests positive in the kitchen?

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>

What School Nutrition Professionals Need to Know about COVID-19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/school-nutrition-professionals.html>

Other Resource Sites:

www.ndresponse.gov

www.health.nd.gov

www.health.nd.gov/foodandlodging