



## **Core Principles Regarding the Safe Reopening of School Buildings**

We, as teachers and school staff, recognize the obligation to educate our students. For districts unable to open buildings in a safe manner, we believe distance learning should be followed until such time physical re-entry is safe for the entire school community.

No school shall operate at a capacity that does not allow it to meet the standards below. Connecticut state officials shall assure that every district, regardless of economic status, has all the resources necessary to comply with these requirements, and with all additional requirements set forth in current Department of Education (SDE) policy:

1. No school may open unless the district has a joint labor/management committee (specific to the COVID-19 crisis), including representatives appointed by each labor organization in the district. All bargaining units shall be consulted any time the reopening plan will be modified.

2. Masks will be required of all students regardless of grade level. If a mask cannot be worn, full and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and additional distancing will be required for and provided to all staff and students who will be in contact with the unmasked student.

- Face shields and other medical grade PPE will be worn by staff/students who are unable to practice physical distancing where close contact is highly likely, such as those students and staff who provide or receive services like OT/PT and speech.
- Gloves (non-latex) and gowns will be worn when contact with bodily fluids or other potentially infectious material can be reasonably anticipated.

3. Students and staff must maintain a distance of six feet at all times except where impossible due to specific individual student needs. In all cases where six feet cannot be maintained because of these exclusions, appropriate medical grade PPE must be provided.

4. All Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Department of Labor Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) and Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines must be followed at all times by all schools, including, but not limited to, cleaning and disinfecting supplies and protocols and PPE. COVID-effective hand sanitizers must be available in all common areas.

5. There shall be no reprisals taken by district administrators or any vendor against anyone who raises a health and safety concern or makes a complaint to their supervisor or any outside agency regarding workplace safety.

6. Fire code-compliant partitions shall be required in common work areas and between secretarial/administrative staff and students or parents.

7. In addition to strict social distancing, and following all CDC and DPH guidelines, all food service must comply with restaurant COVID-19 protocols.

8. Schools must utilize the recommended air filters and/or ultraviolet light technology. Schools are recommended to utilize outdoor settings to the extent possible. Safe minimum and maximum heat index standards must be maintained.

- HVAC and air quality report and/or progress should be shared with labor organizations at a minimum each month or as defined in the joint labor/management committee.

9. In-person learning shall not commence until there has been proper training for all staff, including permanent, temporary and substitutes on safety protocols related to COVID-19.

10. Parents and union leaders shall be informed in any instance of a student or staff member testing positive for COVID-19. Aggressive contact tracing measures shall be implemented. Anyone deemed to have been possibly exposed must quarantine for 14 days.

11. School facilities shall not be used by outside organizations and job classifications that require movement between school buildings shall be kept to a minimum and a topic of discussion for the joint labor/management committee.

12. Only trained healthcare workers may be required to administer COVID-related healthcare to students or to medically assess a student.

13. The school district shall require by contract the following from any student transportation provider or if providing bus transportation directly, shall assure:

- In addition to the bus driver, every bus must be occupied by an employee, such as a bus monitor, who will enforce all health and safety requirements.
- Student seating must adhere to the following restrictions:
  - No more than one student may be seated in a single row, unless they reside in the same household.
  - Students will be seated in a diagonal formation, in which students alternate sitting on the right and left side of the bus.