

# Reopening Schools Checklist

Prepared by the South Dakota Department of Health  
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## Manage Student & Staff Health

- Remind parents to keep sick students at home. If they have a fever, keep them home until the fever is gone for three days without medication.
- Ensure students have been screened for [fever and other symptoms](#) before entering the building.
- Send students home if they become sick at school.
- Identify an isolation space to separate anyone who may begin showing COVID-19 symptoms while at school.
- Support and protect students and staff who are at [higher risk](#) for severe illness, possibly providing options for virtual learning.
- Train school nurses or other personnel in how to care for anyone who may exhibit symptoms (see: [What Healthcare Personnel Should Know About Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID-19 Infection](#)).
- Maintain confidentiality.

## Maintain Health & Hygiene

- Educate students to wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the bathroom, after blowing their nose, after coughing or sneezing, after touching high-touch surfaces, and before eating.
- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers when soap and water may not be readily available. Educate young students on how and how much to use.
- Encourage students to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Discard any supplies intended for one-time use.
- Schedule breaks in the day for hand washing/sanitizing and/or sanitizing desks, workstations, and supplies.
- Post signage reminding students of hygiene practices and include them in communication with parents (e.g. newsletters and emails).

## *Clean, Sanitize, and Ventilate*

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect classrooms and other areas using EPA-registered disinfectants. Use extra care when disinfecting high-touch areas such as floors, doorknobs, tables, handles, etc.
- Sanitize all chairs and tables used in common classrooms or areas in between uses.
- Ensure ventilation systems operate properly.
- Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors and using fans. Do not open if they pose a health or safety risk (e.g., allowing pollens in or exacerbating asthma symptoms) to students.
- Take [steps](#) to ensure all water systems (e.g. drinking fountains) are safe to use after prolonged facility shutdown in order to minimize risk of disease that may be associated with water.
- Consider eliminating the use of water fountains altogether to reduce risk of transmission.

## *Limit Sharing*

- Keep students' belongings separate in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- Ensure adequate amounts of supplies in order to limit sharing of materials or keep use to one group of children at a time while disinfecting in between.
- Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.

## *Cafeteria Guidelines*

- Use disposable materials whenever possible, including the use of disposable plates, cups, and cutlery in school cafeterias. If disposable is unavailable, sanitize reusable materials thoroughly after each use.
- Limit unnecessary staff and visitors in food service areas.
- Prohibit students from sharing their food with each other.
- Sanitize cookware, food preparation areas, and service stations regularly. Plan for food distribution that minimizes handling.
- Sanitize tables in between lunch shifts and ensure proper distancing between students OR consider closing the lunchroom and having students eat in their classrooms if possible.

## *Administrative Practices*

- When possible, stagger students and teachers to be 6 feet apart.
- Post signage at entrances stating that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 can enter.
- Post age-appropriate information around the building and in classrooms on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Maintain attendance records for necessary contact tracing.
- Establish policies that allow for remote learning for students who may have been exposed or who become symptomatic.
- Ensure that any outside organizations using school facilities follow the school's protocols.
- Limit school assemblies where large groups of students gather in one place – consider doing them virtually as a replacement.
- Train all teachers and staff in safety and hygiene practices.
- Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to any COVID-19 concerns.
- Communicate reopening plans to parents, students, and community members. Collect feedback from these groups as well.

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