CommunitySchools

COVID-19 Sponsor Update: August 13

Office of Community Schools

Ohio | Department of Education

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted today provided the following updates on the status of the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MASKS IN SCHOOLS

Governor DeWine announced today that the Ohio Department of Health will issue a health order requiring that K-12 children wear face coverings while at school. The new mandate comes after the Ohio Children's Hospital Association and American Academy of Pediatrics Ohio Chapter issued a joint letter today recommending widespread use of masks in schools with the following exceptions:

1. Children under the age of 2 years old
2. Any child unable to remove the face covering without assistance
3. A child with a significant behavioral/psychological issue undergoing treatment that is exacerbated specifically by the use of a facial covering (e.g. severe anxiety or a tactile aversion)
4. A child living with severe autism or with extreme developmental delay who may become agitated or anxious wearing a mask
5. A child with a facial deformity that causes airway obstruction

Face Masks Order

- Still awaiting final language from Department of Health Order.

- [Known exceptions](#) (as of today):

1. Children under the age of 2 years old

2. Any child unable to remove the face covering without assistance.

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Face Marks Order

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3. A child with a significant behavioral/psychological issue undergoing treatment that is exacerbated specifically by the use of a facial covering (e.g. sever anxiety or a tactile aversion)

4. A child living with severe autism or extreme developmental delay who may become agitated or anxious wearing a mask.

Face Marks Order

- Known exceptions (as of today):

5. A child with a facial deformity that causes airway obstruction.

Exceptions could change with the final order.

Update on Fall Assessments

- Aly DeAngelo – Center for Performance and Impact

Fall Assessment Update from the Ohio Department of Education

As schools begin the 2020-2021 school year, teaching and learning will be provided through virtual, blended and in-person environments. Assessment plays a critical role in determining each student's individual needs during the reset and restart. At the same time, the unique circumstances of this year create some logistical challenges for test administration. The Ohio Department of Education is committed to working through these issues to support the needs of schools to the extent possible, including potential legislative requests for additional flexibility. The Department is providing this update on selected assessments that already are under way.

Districts should first and foremost be concerned about the safety of students and staff. Assessments should only occur if they can be done safely. Safety may be determined at the student, teacher, building, district or county level depending on the circumstances. Districts may schedule individual appointments with students to complete the below assessments if they can maintain safety for the students and teachers. While individual appointments may not be feasible for everyone, they provide an opportunity for teachers to meet with students in person and could be used as one way to get to know students.

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Revised (KRA-R). The KRA-R is a secure test, meaning direct assessment items (Selected Response and Performance Tasks) cannot be completed remotely. It is a violation of test security to transmit KRA-R items via videoconferencing. Teachers may gather observational evidence for the Observational Rubric items remotely without disclosing secure test information. Additional information about how to obtain observational evidence while maintaining test security will be posted in the Ready for Kindergarten Online system and included in new teacher KRA-R trainings. If you have questions about the KRA-R, please contact KRAHelp@education.ohio.gov.

Restart and Reset:
Attendance Considerations

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Today's Presenters

- **Marianne Mottley, Report Card Project Director**

- **Brittany Miracle, Whole Child Program Administrator**

Our Guidance to Districts

Attendance deserves careful attention

Difference between ***tracking*** and ***reporting*** attendance

Foundational Actions for Gauging Attendance in Remote Learning

- Barriers to attendance will look different during the 2020-2021 school year

- Barriers may be more significant for some students than in the past

- It is likely that Ohio's most underserved students will be disproportionately affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, increasing their risk of absences

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Guiding Principles

- Maintain contact information for students and families and build strong relationships that can endure time and distance

- Pay attention to health and safety first

- Emphasize student presence and engagement

Guiding Principles

- Use data to drive decisions

- Leverage community partnerships that address the whole system

- Use a multi-tiered system of support to support the whole child

Our Guidance to Districts

Track attendance

- **For in-person learning**, track as before (take attendance)

- **For remote learning**, create systems for gauging
  - **Synchronous**: Teachers log which students are present during lessons
  - **Asynchronous**: Capture exposure through log-ins (e.g. to the LMS) or capture completion of assignments

Our Guidance to Districts

- *Report* attendance
  - Convert tracked attendance to reported attendance (in hour increments)
  - **Attendance hours** =The number of hours a student was in attendance
  - **Excused absence** = The number of hours the student was absent for excused reasons
  - **Unexcused absence** = The number of hours the student was absent for any reasons not listed as excused, including truancy

Our Guidance to Districts

- *Report* attendance
- Continue distinguishing between **excused** and **unexcused absences**
  - Consider developing new excuse codes
    - Internet outage
    - Technical difficulties (e.g. password resets, software upgrades that occur during inopportune times
    - Students absent due to COVID-19 until alternative arrangements can be made
    - Required quarantine due to possible exposure

Update Local Attendance Policies

- Districts and community schools should update their attendance and absenteeism policies before the start of school to align with their remote learning plans or blended learning declarations.

- Superintendents should use this flexibility to create attendance policies that work for their communities with remote learning in mind.

Updates to Local Attendance Policies

Every district must have an approach to addressing attendance and excessive absenteeism outlined in their district truancy and attendance policies. Districts should update their policies to align with blended and remote learning plans and should continue to follow all attendance and truancy processes and requirements as outlined in Ohio's attendance laws (primarily Ohio Revised Code section 3321.191).

Recommended Updates to Local Attendance Policies

- Updating list of absence reasons for excused absences

- Defining the process and **timeline by which an excuse must be received** by the district or school.

- Updating **individualized education plans and 504 plans** to add **attendance accommodations** if the student experiences COVID-19, is vulnerable to COVID-19 or has a mental illness intensified by COVID-19.

Recommended Updates to Local Attendance Policies

- Prescribing processes and procedures for tracking attendance under different modes of learning and ***reporting attendance by the hour*** for all students, including those engaging in remote or blended learning opportunities.

- Monitoring daily absences of students and staff for trends.

Recommended Updates to Local Attendance Policies

- Allowing otherwise *healthy students who may be under quarantine or isolation* to continue to participate in educational activity to the fullest extent possible.

- Ensuring as much as practicable that *policies do not penalize staff or students* who contract COVID-19.

Recommended Updates to Local Attendance Policies

- Updating the definition of ***medically excused absence***.
  - ***Example of district policy language:*** "A medically excused absence occurs any time a student is out of school due to illness or medical visit (physician, dentist, mental health, etc.). Medical excuses will be accepted in the form of doctor's note within five school days of the absence or parent call-in on the day of the absence due to illness or doctor's visit. A student may have up to 10 medically excused absences without a doctor's note, but with a parent call-in. Medical excused absences will be accepted through this process for students participating both in-person and remotely. This policy will be extended beyond 10 days if the student or someone in the student's family is in quarantine due to COVID-19 or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19."

Reminders

- OEDS Verification file – August 14

- HB 166 e-school survey – August 14

- Sponsor Expenditure Report – August 17

Next Discussion

- Thursday, August 27 @ 9:30

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