

Osage County's Guidance for K-12 Schools



Considerations and Recommendations for Osage County's Schools

With permission from the Georgia Department of Education and Georgia Department of Public Health, the following guidance has been adapted to support Osage County schools in determining their plans and strategies for continuing education throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. *Osage County's Guidance for K-12 Schools* provides a tiered approach with clear, actionable steps that are applicable throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

This approach is built upon the guidance and recommendations of health officials. It is strongly aligned to the reopening guidelines that have been provided by our state and federal leaders. It is designed to help Osage County schools prioritize the health and safety of students and teachers as they deliver instruction for the 2021-2022 school year.

The Osage County Health Department will continue to provide guidance and recommendations to schools on navigating the academic, social, and emotional effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on students and employees.

Osage County's Guidance for K-12 Schools provides considerations, recommendations, and best practices to ensure a safe and successful 2021-2022 school year. This guidance is not mandated, or state required. Schools have the authority and flexibility to meet their individual needs and be responsive to their school communities, which may include closing school buildings and/or classrooms

Addressing Spread in K-12 Schools

Osage County's Guidance for K-12 Schools not only provides considerations for school leaders as they develop their own plans for restarting school this fall, but provides a flexible framework to address challenges that may develop throughout the 2021-2022 school year. Instead of a one-size-fits-all approach, this guidance provides instructional models and responses classrooms/buildings/schools can adopt to ensure the continued success and safety of students and staff members.

Substantial Spread Large uncontrolled transmission within the school community.	Moderate Spread Sustained transmission within the school community; potential for rapid increase in positive cases.	Low Spread Isolated cases within the school community; minimal exposure to others in the school community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend students/staff who are not fully vaccinated wear masks while indoors. Classrooms or School buildings that are closed, implement distance/remote learning (see <i>Serving School Meals and Supporting Teaching and Learning</i>). Eliminate field trips, student assemblies, and school-wide parent meetings. Establish a protocol for student pick up and drop off: staggered entry and release (by grade, class, or bus numbers), marked spacing for pickup. Screen students and staff (to the extent practicable). Alternative serving models include serving meals in classrooms and/or pre-packaged boxes or bags for each student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify close contacts and notify parents of potential exposure. Quarantine of close contacts is recommended. Implement 3 feet of social distancing measures (see <i>Transitioning, Large Group Gatherings, and Teaching and Learning</i>) Isolate and deep clean impacted classrooms and spaces Consider that students/staff who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask while indoors. In transit, utilize spaced seating (to the extent practicable) and minimize congregation of children from different households. Limit field trips (to areas of limited/low transmission). Restrict nonessential visitors and volunteers. Limit unnecessary congregations of students and staff. Serve meals in cafeteria with spaced seating and serving lines. Limit mingling of students between tables. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain communication with local health officials. Identify close contacts and notify parents of potential exposure. Quarantine of close contacts not required. Post signage to communicate how to stop the spread, COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols. Establish a protocol for visitors.
<p>When moving to a higher level of spread, continue to follow recommendations from previous level(s) or whichever is more restrictive.</p>		