



Reopening New York



Guidelines for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools

This guidance is intended to address all types of public and private (both secular and non-secular) elementary (including pre-kindergarten), middle, and high schools authorized to provide in-person instruction. In addition to the requirements described herein, school districts, boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES), charter schools, and private schools must develop and submit plans to the New York State Department of Health (DOH) and the New York State Education Department (NYSED), or the State University of New York (SUNY) for charter schools authorized by SUNY, for reopening and operating during the COVID-19 public health emergency. Please see ["Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools"](#) and ["Checklist for Pre-K to Grade 12 School Reopening Plans"](#) for more information.

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, district superintendents (for school districts and BOCES) and heads of school (for private and charter schools) are accountable for staying current with any updates to local, state, and federal requirements related to Pre-K to Grade 12 education and activities, and incorporating those changes into their operations.

	Mandatory	Recommended Best Practices
Social Distancing and Face Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure that social distancing (of at least 6 ft. or a physical barrier) is maintained between individuals while in school facilities and on school grounds, including in the cafeteria, unless safety or the core activity (e.g. moving equipment, using an elevator, traveling in common areas) requires a shorter distance or individuals are of the same household. ✓ If social distancing is not possible, individuals must wear acceptable face coverings; excluding students who are unable to medically tolerate a face covering. ✓ Be prepared to don a face covering if another person unexpectedly cannot socially distance; for this reason, individuals – including students – must wear face coverings in common areas, such as entrances/exits, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Face coverings are strongly recommended at all times, except for meals and classroom instruction with social distancing. Consider requiring face coverings even during instruction, especially in areas with higher community infection rates. ✓ Develop plans for face covering breaks for students when they can socially distance, particularly if the reopening plan requires face covering usage at all time. ✓ Consider assistance to students who may have difficulty in adapting to wearing a face covering. ✓ Faculty may use alternate PPE (i.e. face coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth) for instruction that requires visualization of the movement of the lips and/or

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