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MUSIC

Re-opening Schools

Five Step Process

The re-opening of previously closed school buildings following a pandemic requires careful planning and consideration. As state and federal authorities evaluate and begin to loosen shelter-in-place orders and other restrictions, your risk management, human resources, and operations teams should work together to develop an action plan that addresses potential challenges to protect your people, your property and your school.

STEP ONE: Determining Eligibility to Re-Open

Determining when to re-open or modify your current operations is an important decision. Understanding your eligibility to re-open is a critical first step that should be informed by credible resources from the [White House](#), CDC recommendations and directives by Missouri Governor and local entities.

STEP TWO: Implementation of Employee Policies and Procedures by Role & Function

Employees are a critical part of your school districts success. Keeping them safe is crucial throughout any transition back into the workplace. Once you have established a timeframe for re-occupying your facility(s) employee-specific policies, procedures and controls need to be implemented to ensure the safety of your people. Policies and procedures to consider:

- **Hygiene:**
 - Train staff on healthy hygiene practices so they can teach these to students.
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth to prevent infection.
 - Ensure handwashing includes washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - Provide an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 70% alcohol, if soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty.
 - Ensure adequate supplies (e.g., soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, tissue) to support healthy hygiene practices.
 - Train staff on potential use of additional personal protective equipment (PPE), especially custodial staff. This may include face mask, eye protection and gloves.
- **Screening:**
 - Employees should be screened prior to entering the building.
 - Temperatures should be taken. Anyone over 100.4° should be sent home.
 - Questions to consider-
 - Have you had a fever in the last 3 days?
 - Are you experiencing any respiratory symptoms?
 - Do you have any symptoms such as chills, muscle pain, new loss of taste or smell, vomiting or diarrhea, and/or sore throat?



- Have you traveled internationally in the last 14 days?
- **Social Distancing:**
 - Stagger staffing or schedules to reduce in-person interaction.
 - Assign students to one classroom. Subject specific teachers to rotate into that classroom.
 - Consider canceling or postponing special events such as festivals, holiday events, and special performances.
 - Consider whether to alter or halt daily group activities that may promote transmission.
 - Keep each group of children in a separate room.
 - Limit the mixing of children, such as staggering playground times and keeping groups separate for special activities such as art, music, and exercising.
 - Cafeteria
 - Consider increased staggering of lunch periods
 - Limit mixing of students over multiple lunch periods
 - Incorporate social distancing
 - Limit common touch points of items (fountain drinks, utensils, condiments, etc.)
 - Plan for nap time, ensure that children's naptime mats (or cribs) are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Consider placing children head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread.
 - Consider staggering arrival and drop off times.
- **Assess group gatherings and events:**
 - Limit/cancel events and meetings that require close contact.
 - Consider postponing non-critical gatherings and events.
 - Ensure you have a clear understanding of all upcoming gatherings and large events for your school community (e.g., assemblies, field days, spirit nights, athletic events). Give special consideration to events that might put students, staff, or their families in close proximity to others from communities that may have identified cases of COVID-19.
 - Consider whether any of these events should be canceled. Speak with local health officials to help determine the best approach.
 - Consider limiting or restricting outside organizations use of facilities.

Additional resources

For more information on how to prepare your employees to return to the workplace visit,

How to Spot Covid-19 <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

How Covid-19 Spreads <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

Hand washing <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

STEP THREE: Implementation of Facilities Sanitization, Life Safety, Building System and Social Distancing Policies

Once you have decided to re-open, physical facility preparation will need to begin. It's important to follow current and future CDC recommendations. Documentation of the steps you are taking to prepare your facilities and communication to employees continues to be a critical part of the process. Facility



design may require adjustments as well as occupancy limitations to maintain compliance with key authorities.

When returning staff and students to school, there may be hesitations or concerns about the health and safety of your facility. It is imperative that as an employer you are ready to listen and take appropriate steps to reassure them they are returning to a stable, safe and clean workplace.

- **Facility Preparation/ Startup procedures:**
 - Follow procedures similar to the start of school for equipment start-up.
 - All Life Safety Systems should be checked to ensure proper operation
 - Fire Alarm
 - Emergency Lighting Systems
 - EXIT Lights
 - Fire Extinguishers
 - Suppression Systems
 - Emergency Exit Access
 - All critical building systems should be checked for proper operation
 - HVAC Systems
 - Power Systems
 - Security Systems
 - Communication Systems
 - Water Supply – flush the systems
- **Cleaning and Disinfecting:**
 - Custodial staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, common areas, door handles, and handrails) prior to resumption of school.
 - Clean all surfaces using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
 - For disinfection follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time).
 - Diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
 - Additional information on cleaning and disinfection of community facilities such as schools can be found on CDC's website.
 - Plan and train to close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- **Kitchens:**
 - Remove ice from all ice machines and disinfect per CDC guidelines.



- Clean and disinfect all kitchen equipment to meet CDC and health department guidelines.
- **Transportation:**
 - Clean and disinfect all buses and other school vehicles.
 - Plan on additional sanitation of school buses. Perhaps even put a hand sanitizer station on the bus.
 - Equip buses with COVID-19 signage.
 - Train drivers and bus aids in proper PPE usage. This may include face mask, eye protection and gloves.
 - Consider temperature checks prior to entry. Anyone over 100.4° should not ride the bus.
 - Train Drivers and bus aids how to recognize potentially sick students and procedure following.
 - Consider requiring the use of facemasks for all riders.
 - Consider social distancing guidelines on the bus
 - Reconsider the physical driving portion of driver education or use similar guidelines found above.
- **Isolation Room**
 - Prep Isolation Rooms
 - Plan to have areas where these individuals can be isolated from well students and staff until they can leave the school.
 - Consider private restroom and exterior entrance if possible to isolation room.
- **Social Distancing**
 - Classrooms may need to be rearranged
 - Consider the use of barriers to comply with the social distancing guidelines

Additional Resources

For more information on how to prepare your physical facilities:

School Isolation Room Guidelines (Available upon request)

School Transportation Guidelines (Available upon request)

Overflow Childcare Center Safety Checklist (Available upon request)

Cleaning and Disinfecting (Available upon request)

STEP FOUR: Assess and Manage Supply Chain & Third-Party Vendors

For your school to function properly, new considerations must be made for the globally impacted supply chain. The vendor marketplace has changed and may necessitate the need to partner with new or additional vendors and implement contingency plans should a vendor be impacted during recovery. This may involve increasing inventory levels of high volume products/services. Ensure vendors and chain of supplies are in compliance with protocols and provide proper documentation to indicate ongoing safety checks.



- **Food Service:**
 - Determine district wide need for disposable condiments, etc.
 - Determine district wide need for select hard to acquire food supplies.
- **Nurse:**
 - Ensure an adequate supply of PPE (Gloves, Eye Protection, Masks and Gowns).
 - Complete Inventory to ensure adequate medical supplies.
- **Maintenance:**
 - Determine district wide need for soap, sanitizer, and tissues.
 - Determine staff need for PPE (mask, gloves, eye protection).
- **Transportations:**
 - Determine need for driver PPE (face mask, gloves)
 - Determine need for student PPE (face mask)
 - Determine need for hand sanitizer on bus.

STEP FIVE: Maintaining Student, Staff, and Parent Relationships

Students, Staff, and Parents should be aware of the safeguards you have put in place to ensure their safety. Actively monitoring feedback from these stakeholders will help validate the safety measures put in place. A regular review of the changing safety recommendations from the CDC, local, state and federal authorities, and other governing bodies within your jurisdiction will help ensure your organization's compliance with health and safety mandates and requirements.

Now is the time to evaluate your communications channels with your student, staff and parents. Designate a point of contact or team that can facilitate responses to questions, concerns and responds in a timely fashion. Transparency and consistency is key to maintaining trust in these relationships.

- **Communication:**
 - Schedule Modifications Communicate with student, staff and parents.
 - Coordinate with local health officials to communicate dismissal decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure.
 - Communication to the school community should align with the communication plan in the school's emergency operations plan.
 - Plan to include messages to counter potential stigma and discrimination.
 - In such a circumstance, it is critical to maintain confidentiality of the student or staff member as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.
- **Parent Communication:**
 - Practice and reinforce good prevention habits with your family.
 - Plan to keep your child at home if sick with any illness.
 - Keep track of school dismissal updates.
 - Talk to your school about options for digital and distance learning.
 - Discourage children and teens from gathering in other public places while school is dismissed to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in the community.
 - Seek guidance from your school administrator to determine when students and staff should return to schools.



- **Superintendent:**
 - Communication Templates (Link Below)
 - Soft Opening Considerations
 - Schedule Modifications

Additional resources

For more information on how to maintain relationships with students, staff and the parents, visit *Communication Templates*

https://docs.google.com/document/d/138UfhiGLSV2ZS0xADOz_PzFYhX34SZV5u3GYNUWlj5Y/edit#heading=h.hgy2gf6vel1b

MUSIC will continue to provide easy to understand, meaningful guidance you can use today and in the future as pandemic conditions change. If you are re-opening your operation after being closed for an extended period, modifying your current workplace strategy or having to conduct temporary closures in the future, MUSIC is here to provide guidance to assist you in making your own critical business decisions.

If you have additional questions or need additional guidance please contact your MUSIC Risk Control Consultant:

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