

Duquesne City School District

Health and Safety Plan Summary 2023-2024

Initial Effective Date: July 1, 2023

Date of Last Review: June 8, 2023

Date of Last Revision: July 1, 2022

The following information outlines the district's health and safety plan related to COVID-19. Please note the district is required to review this document every six months and update if necessary. In addition, the district is required to review and update this plan whenever there are significant changes to the CDC recommendations for K-12 schools.

Duquesne City School District is committed to fully opening our schools for the 2023-2024 school year and remaining open. The district is also committed to offering two different learning pathways to provide students and families with options so they can determine what will best fit their individual needs. These two options are for full in-person instruction or our own Cyber Program, for students in grades K-8.

The Duquesne City School District also completed a major renovation project over the summer of 2021. During this renovation, the district had a new HVAC system installed that is state of the art to remove airborne particles. The district also purchased air purifiers for every classroom and office with grant monies. This will help keep the students and staff as safe as possible.

The school district administration will continue to review the current recommendations from the CDC and the Pennsylvania Department of Health each week. After reviewing the recommendations, the district administration will seek clarifying information, if needed, from the school's district doctor and the Allegheny County Health Department.

Based on the information reviewed, recommendations are provided to the Receiver acting as the Board of School Directors (hereinafter Receiver). The Receiver, which is appointed by PDE and the Allegheny County of Common Pleas, retains its statutory authority over the operation of the schools, facilities, and programs of Duquesne City School District. If circumstances change, the Receiver, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, will modify this Safety Plan, as needed, to meet the educational and safety needs of its students, employees and the large school community.

Based on the current information the school district has, we intend to begin the school year with the following strategies in place.

Masks: Masks will be optional by the Duquesne City School District. However, any individual who wishes to wear a mask is welcome to wear one. It is highly recommended that if a student or staff member is not vaccinated. We will follow the quarantining update that indicates that an individual who tests positive only needs to quarantine for 5 days and may return to school with a mask for another 5 days.

Social Distancing: The district intends to operate a regular 5-day instructional schedule for the 2023-2024 school year. Should cases of COVID-19 increase, the school district will return to social distancing wherever possible, limits student movement in grades K-8 and increase physical distance at lunch by having lunch in the classrooms.

Hand washing and Respiratory Etiquette: Signage and reminders will also be provided to classrooms with a bathroom and in the hallway bathrooms. Hand sanitizing stations will also continue to be stationed outside each classroom and office doors and outside of the cafeteria.

Cleaning: The district will continue its current cleaning strategy including disinfectant areas where an individual with a confirmed case was present. All staff will be encouraged to open windows in classrooms, if applicable. The new HVAC system is set to bring the maximum amount of outside air in as possible.

Contract Tracing: The district will contract trace only when told to do so by the Allegheny County Health Department.

Diagnostic Screening: The district will provide diagnostic testing by the CSN and she will also have rapid tests available to all students and staff as needed.

Vaccines for the School Community: The Duquesne City School District will continue to provide information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine availability within the community.

Appropriate Accommodations: The Duquesne City School District works to support ALL students. The Director of Special Education is authorized to work with special education teachers, IEP teams and parents/guardians to make needed accommodations for the welfare and inclusion of students

Coordinate State and Local Health Officials: The district will continue to participate in monthly meetings, held in conjunction with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, when called and/or scheduled. The district does participate in state webinars if they are scheduled. The school nurse received “Health Updates” directly from the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Allegheny County Health Department.

To ensure Duquesne City School District is meeting the individual needs of all students, the district hired a Coordinator of Mental and Behavioral Health and a social worker to meet the needs of our students and staff. The district will continue to implement PBIS/Restorative Practices and Second Step. The PBIS/Restorative Practices and Second Step guidelines provide guidance for all staff regarding creating a consistent SEL foundation on which academics will be built. The district also intends to provide an SEL lesson at least once a week provided by the school counselor. In addition, the district is continuing its relationship with Auberle and Mon Yough to support students with mental health needs.

The district also works closely with our food service provider to ensure all students have access to meals. During the summer (2023), families may pick up meals for their children at the district offices or students may stop in to receive lunch. When school is in session, students in school will be provided both breakfast and lunch free off costs. Additionally, students may access meals at school or via pick up if they are learning remotely in our Duquesne City Cyber program.

**** Disclaimer: As we continue to navigate the pandemic and the new variants that have been presenting them selves, the items listed above can change at a moments notice as more cases present themselves. This could mean that masks may be mandatory during all parts of the day and/or the school may need to close if a number of positive cases are identified.**