

Appleton Village School

Safe Return to In-Person Learning 2022-2023

(COVID-19 Pandemic)

Health & Safety Protocols for 2022-2023
(COVID 19 Pandemic)
Public Comment zoom 8/11/2022

Board Approved: August 22, 2022

Reviewed: April 24, 2023 AVS School Committee

This plan is being provided as a resource for the school community outlining the plan for the 2022-23 school year in continued response to the pandemic caused by COVID-19. The plan was approved on August 22, 2022, and is subject to change as conditions change.

We recognize the unprecedented times in which our schools operate and the fluidity of our public health situation. The Health and Safety team will meet every six months or sooner if needed, to review up-to-date information provided by the CDC. Coordination with the Maine Department of Education, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Knox County Emergency Management, the Appleton Town Health Official, and school physician, Margaret Kloby (Penobscot Bay Pediatrics) will occur as needed.

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INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW:

The purpose of this document is to address the concerns associated with the highly infectious and transmissible virus COVID-19, which is currently impacting the world, our nation, and our community. These health concerns precipitated the need for a comprehensive plan to control the spread of this virus in our schools. This document serves as a means to address the health and safety considerations that impact our students, staff, and community members to allow safe access to our school and in-person learning environment. These health and safety guidelines are a means for Appleton Village School to continue its pursuit of educational excellence. The highest priority is to have in-person learning for as long as possible for as many students as possible.

Government agencies/programs and acronyms referenced in this document:

- AVS - Appleton Village School
- Maine DOE - Department of Education, Maine division
- CDC - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- DHHS - Department of Health and Human Services

References:

Websites to Maine DOE & US CDC, etc. that helped guide these protocols

1. [CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#)
2. [Cleaning Guidance for COVID-19](#)
3. [COVID Data Tracker Weekly Review | CDC](#)

HEALTH GUIDELINES & PROTOCOLS

Daily Health Check

The daily health check is one of the most important features to continue safe in-person learning at our school. It is critical that all students and staff conduct this health check **EVERY** morning before entering the school. Visitors will also be expected to complete this health screening before entering the building. A copy of this checklist will be posted on the AVS Website and sent home to families.

- All staff and families will be provided a copy of the Daily Health Self-Check Form.
 - Any person showing COVID-like symptoms, despite vaccination, must report their symptoms to the school nurse and stay home.
 - Refer to Appendix A - Daily Health Self-Check Form

Each student (or parent on behalf of the student) and staff member should go through this Daily Check-List **before** coming to school/work to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- Refer to Appendix A - Daily Health Self-Check Form

Symptoms of COVID-19

Outlined by the Maine CDC, signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose (not related to chronic allergies)
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure**.

Individual Presentation of Symptoms

If a staff member or student is at school presenting with COVID-like symptoms:

- The school nurse will isolate the individual and notify the parent/guardian/staff member's emergency contact to have the individual sent home immediately. If the student has signed consent, BinaxNOW Ag testing will be performed.
- They will be advised to contact their primary care physician and begin isolation.

Quarantine, Isolation, and Contact Tracing

There will be times when a mask will need to be worn by individuals in the building.

- If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, they must isolate at home for 5 days. Testing with a rapid antigen test on day 6 is recommended by the CDC, although not required to return to school. If the individual tests positive on day 6, they shall continue to isolate for 5 additional days.
- When the individual returns to school, they must wear a mask on days 6-10, inside the school except when eating or drinking. They are welcome to remove their masks outside when distanced 3 feet apart from other individuals.
- If an individual is living with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 the individual will need to wear a mask at school for 10 days, regardless of vaccination status.
 - If a student is living with a positive family member, parents/guardians are encouraged to test their child with a rapid antigen test daily before sending their child to school.
- Official contact tracing will no longer take place at AVS.

COVID-19 Reporting

Daily staff and student absence due to any COVID-like illness must be reported to the Maine CDC when 15% of the school population is absent. The school nurse will be responsible for COVID-19 reporting.

Communication & Confidentiality

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the community will be notified in a manner that maintains confidentiality and privacy for all parties. This is essential to avoid unnecessary communication and panic in the AVS community.

- The identity of all confirmed cases of COVID-19 will be filtered through the school nurse. Notification of a positive COVID-19 test after school hours must be reported to the school nurse by email (sandy.fuller@fivetowns.net) or telephone at (207) 790-0758 (voicemail or text).
 - If a staff member tests positive the school nurse and principal will be notified.
- If/when there is a positive COVID-19 case in the school the parents/guardians of the affected classroom will be notified in writing through Swiftreach.

BinaxNOW COVID-19 Antigen Testing

Appleton Village School has the capability to offer free COVID-19 antigen testing using Abbott's BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card to students and staff per the [STATE OF MAINE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES STANDING ORDER FOR COVID-19 TESTING](#)

- Students and staff who become **symptomatic** during the school day have the opportunity to be tested with **written consent**. Consent forms will be sent home with students on the first day of school. If a student with a signed consent on file meets the criteria for COVID-19 antigen testing, an attempt to call the student's parent/guardian(s) will be made before the test is administered. Parents are welcome to come to the school to be present for testing if desired.
- Staff will be required to complete a consent form valid for the entire school year.
- Visit [BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card - Patient Fact Sheet](#) for more information about Abbott's BinaxNOW COVID-19 antigen testing.

Vaccination in School Communities

AVS will continue to collaborate with the Penobscot Bay Medical Center Pharmacy and Penobscot Bay Pediatrics to offer vaccination clinics at AVS, when applicable. Families are encouraged to visit [COVID-19 Vaccine Sites in Maine](#) for more information on COVID-19 vaccination.

SAFETY GUIDELINES & PROTOCOLS

As always, AVS strives for a facility that is maintained to the highest standards. Due to CDC guidelines and expectations, many of these standards have been enhanced to eliminate the spread of COVID-19 germs throughout the school. Currently, Maine

Schools get COVID-19 guidance and recommendations from the federal CDC as the Maine CDC has retired previous guidelines used in the 2022-2023 school year.

Facilities & Individual Classroom Considerations:

Mask/Face Coverings: Per the Maine DOE and CDC, school districts will need to make their own local policies about masking policies. At this time, masks/face coverings are optional **except** for individuals on days 6-10 of current COVID-19 infection **OR** individuals living with positive household members.

- Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/HowtoTakeOff.pdf> for information on the correct technique for wearing masks.

Physical Distancing: AVS will maintain physical distance to the extent possible between and among staff and students. Physical barriers are available for installation if needed throughout the school year.

Students in grades 3-8 may return to eating lunch in their classrooms if an increase of COVID-19 cases is noted in a single classroom. If there is a rise in COVID-19 cases, students will be cohorted in their homeroom and teachers will rotate to the student's homeroom.

Hand Hygiene: All students and staff members must wash hands or sanitize hands in the following situations:

- Upon entering the school
- Before and after eating
- Before and after putting on or removing a face mask/covering, if worn.
- After using the restroom
- Before and after use of playgrounds and shared equipment
- Before and after riding school transportation

Signage is posted throughout the school and students and staff is trained in proper hygiene procedures, which are reviewed weekly for all grades.

Cleaning and Disinfecting: All facilities and classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized to meet CDC guidelines to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- Cleaning will occur as directed on a daily basis.

- Every classroom will have an ample supply of disinfectant wipes. There will also be a hand sanitizer dispenser available in every classroom.
- High-touch surfaces, such as door handles, toilet handles, stair railings, and faucets will be sanitized multiple times per day by custodial staff.
 - Other surfaces will be sanitized on a daily basis by custodial staff.
 - Each classroom will be sanitized daily by custodial staff.
- In the event of a COVID-19 outbreak, the entire facility will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized prior to staff and students return.
- Throughout the year, teachers will educate students on health and safety protocols related to the spread of germs. There will also be posters up around the school.

Ventilation: Adequate ventilation is required for all classrooms and teaching spaces. MERVE 13 filters have been installed in all HVAC units within the building.

- The ventilation system is set to use 100% outside air. This setting will be used as long as there are students in school.
- Facilities personnel will consult the school nurse to determine when windows will be more effective than ventilation systems and will share information with staff.

Accommodations for children with disabilities: Accommodations for children with disabilities will be strictly followed as per the student's IEP and/or 504 plan. [Disability Rights | U.S. Department of Education](#)

CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

Students' academic, social-emotional and mental health needs will be addressed through multiple pathways.

- Title I Reading Services
- Math Interventionist
- Tutoring
- Summer Program
- School Counselor
- Licensed Social Worker

- School Nurse

Food Service will provide free breakfast and lunch to all students. In addition, AVS participates in the weekend backpack program.

Staff social-emotional and mental health needs can be addressed with the school counselor, social worker, and school nurse. In addition, Anthem Blue Cross also offers a variety of services for employees.

Appendix A - Daily Health Self-Check Form

Appleton Village School - Union #69
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Appleton, ME 04862
(207) 785-4504

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to persist, it is important for parents and guardians to put their students through a health screening each morning at home before their student comes to school. A “YES” answer to any one screening question shown below means the student MUST stay home, even if the student has been vaccinated. **If your student is sick please keep them home.**

DAILY HEALTH SELF-CHECK

- o Does my child feel unwell today?*
- o Does my child have a fever?*
- o Does my child have a cough or sore throat?*
- o Does my child have shortness of breath?*
- o Does my child have a loss of taste or smell?*
- o Does my child have a headache, body aches, chills, fatigue, runny nose/congestion (not related to chronic allergies), nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea?*

If the answer is YES to any of these, keep your child home and notify the school nurse by phone or email.

Appendix B - Site Map & Occupancy Numbers

All counts are factored in with each Student/Teacher having a desk and not sitting at tables.



