



# **Dolgeville Central School District**

## **2021-2022 In-Person Instructional Plan**

### **Revised - Effective March 2, 2022**

#### **1 – Maintaining In-Person Instruction**

The Dolgeville Central School District is prioritizing efforts to maintain in-person instruction in the safest, most equitable manner possible. Following guidance received from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) that is based on recommendations from the United States Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics, Dolgeville CSD is implementing a layered approach to preventing the spread of COVID-19 in its school buildings. By combining these layers of protection Dolgeville CSD is providing as safe an environment for in-person learning as possible during the current phase of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Based on the dynamic nature of local community transmission of the COVID-19 virus, local vaccination rates, and mandates from New York State these efforts have changed and may change again throughout the year. COVID-19 Community Levels and the current level in the County can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>.

#### Capacity

Each building in the district was canvassed to identify existing and potential additional instructional spaces to maintain room occupancy that meets physical distancing recommendations.

Dolgeville CSD has maintained a direct line of communication with the local health department to monitor the capacity of local and regional hospitals.

### Physical Distancing

Dolgeville CSD has developed a written protocol to ensure all persons in school buildings maintain appropriate social distance and keep social distance of at least three (3) feet whenever possible.

The recommendations for distancing, as of March 2022 are, three (3) feet in all directions, but may be increased or decreased based on the availability of other strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This distance may change throughout the school year based on various factors, including the level of community transmission and local hospital capacity.

The district will maximize the amount of space to the greatest extent possible when individuals are in the school cafeteria and prohibit the sharing of food and beverages.

Students will never be excluded from in-person learning based on distancing requirements.

### PPE/Masks

As of March 2, 2022, the state requirement for universal masking in P-12 school settings has ended.

NYSDOH recommends students, staff, and teachers wear a well-fitted mask when:

- They feel more comfortable wearing a mask for personal reasons.
- They were in the same room within the school as someone diagnosed with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or longer.
- They are known to have been exposed to COVID-19 in any setting within the last 10 days.
- They are moderately-to-severely immunocompromised and have discussed the need to mask with their doctor.

Masks are no longer required on school buses or vans, unless the person is required to be masked for another reason.

Dolgeville CSD will train all Students, Faculty, Staff, contractors, and vendors on how to adequately put on, take off, clean, and discard PPE, as needed.

### Hygiene/Cleaning, and Disinfecting

Dolgeville CSD has developed a written protocol to instruct Staff and Students in appropriate hand and respiratory hygiene. This protocol will be reinforced with signage in various, conspicuous locations in its buildings.

Students and staff will be instructed on how to practice good hand hygiene to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. The district will plan time in the school day schedule to allow for hand hygiene, at the start of school, after using the restroom, before/after eating, after recess, at the start and end of PE class, and before leaving school, etc.). Hand hygiene includes:

- Traditional hand washing (with soap and warm water, lathering for a minimum of 20 seconds)

- Use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers (60% alcohol or greater) when soap and water are not available, and hands are not visibly dirty
- Providing hand sanitizer throughout common areas (e.g., entrances, cafeteria), near high touch surfaces, and use touch free dispensers when able
- Signage will be placed near hand sanitizer indicating visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water
- Students or staff who are unable to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers for health reasons will be permitted to wash their hands with soap and water

Additionally, since COVID-19 virus spreads from person to person in droplets produced by coughs and sneezes, Students and Staff will be instructed on how to practice good respiratory hygiene to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. This includes:

- Instructing Students and Staff cover their mouths or noses with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and dispose of the tissue appropriately
- Providing a supply of tissues and trash cans nearby should be available in each room

If no tissue is available, Students and Staff will be instructed to use the inside of the elbow (or shirtsleeve) to cover the mouth or nose and to always perform hand hygiene after sneezing, coughing and handling dirty tissues or other soiled material.

Dolgeville CSD will ensure adherence to cleaning and disinfection recommendations from the CDC which can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

Students will not be present when disinfectants are in use and will not participate in cleaning and/or disinfection activities.

#### Extracurriculars

If Dolgeville CSD is fully closed for in-person instruction during the school year due to an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases, school sponsored sports and extracurriculars will be suspended until in-person education is resumed.

#### Transportation

In order for full-time, in-person instruction to take place, no capacity limits will be implemented on Dolgeville CSD's school buses. Masks are no longer required on school buses or vans, unless the person is required to be masked for another reason. Dolgeville CSD may implement assigned seating on each bus.

#### Food Service

Dolgeville CSD will continue to provide school breakfast and/or lunch to students who were previously receiving school meals.

For students on-site, Dolgeville CSD will provide meals while maintaining the maximum physical distancing between students as possible.

Dolgeville CSD faculty and staff will stress the importance of proper hand hygiene before and after eating. Sharing of food will be discouraged. If Dolgeville CSD can utilize a common area to eat, it will be cleaned and disinfected according to CDC guidelines.

All food service activities in the school buildings will operate in accordance with the latest guidance.

#### Mental Health/Behavioral/Emotional Support Services and Programs

The mental health and well-being of the students, faculty, and staff of Dolgeville CSD are of the utmost importance, especially during the COVID-19 Pandemic and as the district transitions back to full-time, in-person learning. In order to address those needs, Dolgeville CSD has the following resources available for its school community:

- Connected Community Schools
- United Way Neighborhood Center
- Catholic Charities

#### Communications

Dolgeville CSD will communicate the importance of adhering to guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control, as well as applicable protocols to Students, Parents, Legal Guardians of Students, Staff, and potential visitors.

This information will be shared in a variety of ways, including letters sent home, emails, social media posts, and through the use of the district's "all call" messenger system. Dolgeville CSD has also developed a COVID-19 Information website <https://dolgeville.org> the topics covered in the communications and on the website will include:

- Face Covering and Social Distancing requirements
- Trainings the district will be providing related to COVID-19
- Weekly Testing Program, Including Test to Stay, etc.

Specific messages related to potential changes to protocols/requirements will be sent as needed and added to the district's website.

Dolgeville CSD has designated a district employee as a COVID-19 Safety Coordinator with identified responsibilities that include:

- Continuous compliance with all activities of Dolgeville CSD's reopening plans
- Monitoring and reporting data to the NYSDOH, Herkimer County Public Health Department, and coordinating the District's weekly testing program.

The COVID-19 Safety Coordinator is a district representative and will coordinate activities with the local Public Health Department and the Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES Safety Service to ensure consistency across the region. The COVID-19 Safety Coordinator will serve as:

- The main point of contact upon identification of positive COVID-19 cases and responsible for subsequent communication (see section 2 "Monitoring")

- Responsible for answering questions from Students, Faculty, Staff, and Parents/Legal Guardians regarding the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency and plans implemented by the school.

## **2 – Monitoring Health Conditions**

In order to keep our students and staff safe and healthy and maintain full-time, in-person learning, Dolgeville CSD will be proactive regarding students and staff who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

Students and staff should stay home if they are showing signs and symptoms of COVID-19 until tested. Parents should screen their children for COVID-19 symptoms before sending them to school each day. Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| ● Fever or chills                             | ● Headache                   |
| ● Cough                                       | ● New loss of taste or smell |
| ● Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | ● Sore throat                |
| ● Fatigue                                     | ● Congestion or runny nose   |
| ● Muscle or body aches                        | ● Nausea or vomiting         |
|   | ● Diarrhea                   |

The CDC maintains an updated list of COVID-19 symptoms here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Students, teachers, and staff who exhibit new or worsening COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home and should not return until standard criteria for attendance or the following are met:

- They receive a negative COVID test,
- Remain home for five (5) days.

### Testing Protocol & Responsibility

Without a statewide mask requirement, COVID-19 testing remains a recommended public health strategy to find infected individuals quickly so that they can isolate and avoid spreading COVID-19 further.

Whenever someone in school (student, staff, or teacher) is determined to have been exposed, they should be tested for COVID-19 as follows:

- Immediately upon learning of the exposure,
- At least five (5) days after the last date of exposure (regardless of vaccination status),
- If not fully vaccinated, asymptomatic, and attending or working at school after an exposure more frequent (every other day, twice within 5 days, etc.) testing is strongly encouraged.

Students, teachers, and staff who test positive and symptomatic individuals should stay home for five (5) days. Upon returning to school, those individuals must wear a well-fitting mask for another five (5) days.

Exposed individuals, regardless of vaccination status, may remain in school by appropriately wearing a well-fitting mask and undergoing recommended testing and may participate in school-based extracurricular activities.

Dolgeville CSD operates as an approved site under Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES' Limited-Service Laboratory License, and may offer diagnostic COVID-19 testing on an as needed basis, free of charge.

According to a New York State Department of Health determination, Dolgeville CSD will conduct weekly screening testing of its staff (teachers, subs, student teachers, administrators, support staff, bus drivers, and paraprofessionals). Staff who are fully vaccinated (14 days post final vaccination injection) may opt out of this testing.

### **3 – Closure of School Facilities**

The goal of the 2021-2022 school year will be to maintain full-time, in-person learning for as many students as possible for as long as possible while maintaining a safe and healthy environment.

In the unlikely case the local situation changes dramatically, and in order to be prepared and provide a safe, high quality educational experience for its students, Dolgeville CSD has developed contingency plans, protocols, and procedures for decreasing the scale or scope of in-person education, or closing its buildings to in-person activities and/or instruction as a result of increased numbers of COVID-19 cases, community transmission, exposures, etc.

#### Operational Activity

Dolgeville CSD will make all decisions based on which operations will be decreased, or ceased and which activities it may conduct remotely as informed by guidance from appropriate governmental agencies and current COVID-19 Community Levels as indicated by the CDC. This could be any of the following, depending on the situation:

- Canceling of Extracurricular Activities/Sports
- Limiting capacity of buses
- Implementing screening COVID-19 testing protocols for unvaccinated students
- Switch to Remote Learning (fully or hybrid)
- Closing of Building(s) to all outside visitors

### Communication

Dolgeville CSD will communicate internally and externally in a variety of ways regarding potential changes in the way it is operating, including letters sent home, emails, social media posts, and through the use of the district's "all call" messenger system - Parent Square. Dolgeville CSD has also developed a COVID-19 Information website <https://dolgeville.org> that will include needed information regarding closures to in-person learning and/or the phased closure of school activities.