Interim Guidance on Phased Re-entry Planning

This document is intended to guide schools on or near the Navajo Nation in their continued development of their School Reopening Plans. Specifically, this is an accompanying document with guidance on the recommended phased approach to reopening schools in the Fall 2020. Following the Executive Orders from the OPVP of the Navajo Nation, the Department of Diné Education (DoDE) is in the process of developing additional guidance for the safety of all Diné students. As better data and research become available, expect this guidance to be updated to better meet the needs of our students.

Schools are recommended to consider creating the following policies, protocols, or procedures that are age and ability appropriate:
- Social (Physical) Distance Policy that includes:
  - Communication, education, and reinforcement of appropriate social distancing practices in ways that are developmentally appropriate for students, teachers, staff, and parents.
  - Physical distancing guides, such as tape on floors and signs on walls, creating "one-way routes" in hallways; and physical barriers such as partitions, to promote social distancing.
  - Physical distancing guides to support healthy distancing. Example guides for all students include marking the places they will need to line up in the halls, cafeteria, etc.
- Develop appropriate COVID-19 accommodations, modifications, and assistance for students with special health needs or disabilities, according to student's Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. Provide opportunities to collaborate with parents and/or guardians to ensure appropriate implementation of any accommodations and modifications that are needed for students to access the general or modified curriculum, as stated in their IEPs.
- Support healthy hygiene behavior
  - Provide adequate personal protection equipment (PPE) and disinfectant supplies including soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, and masks.
  - Develop a protocol to ensure there is an adequate inventory of cleaning and disinfectant supplies available including the correct use and storage of cleaners and disinfectants, including storing products securely away from students.
  - Develop a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces.
  - Show visible signs of proper hand washing and social distancing, as well protective behaviors to prevent COVID-19.
  - Provide educational materials about COVID-19 prevention to staff, community members, students and their family members.
- Health protocols

- Develop a plan to conduct daily health checks (temperature screening and/or symptom checking) of staff and students in accordance with applicable privacy laws and regulations. This plan should include physical distancing and ways to prevent grouping of students/staff waiting to enter building.
  - Develop plans to train staff on all safety protocols, including infection prevention and control practices, psychological, first aid, etc. Conduct training virtually or ensure that social distancing is maintained during training (virtual/e-trainings recommended).
- Develop a proactive plan for when a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19.
  - Educate staff, students and their families when they should stay home if they have COVID-19 symptoms, are awaiting test results, or have been exposed to someone with symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case, and when they can return to school.
  - Policies and procedures should include contact information of local healthcare facilities and steps to follow in the event of a suspected or confirmed case. School administrators will notify local health facilities, staff, and families immediately of any COVID-19 case while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with applicable law and privacy policies.
- Contingency plans due to an outbreak.

<u>Regardless of phases of occupancy, the following adaptations should be considered to protect staff and students:</u>

- If there is funding and personnel available, it is recommended that these controls and changes be made as appropriate:
  - Increase building ventilation and update ventilation systems as needed. If not possible, replace conventional air filters with HEPA filters.
  - Install physical barriers in areas where appropriate, especially in high traffic areas such as the front desk, libraries, and in classrooms.
- Implement flexible work schedules and arrangements.
  - Based on student schedules, stagger employee work schedules to reduce the number of employees at the school building and on campus at any given time.
  - Hold meetings by telecommunications as much as possible.
- Arrange for staff members who are able to telecommute where it makes sense.
  - Delay bringing high risk employees (as defined by Center for Disease Control and Prevention) back to the school building; reconfigure schedules to allow telecommuting.
  - Provide employees with flexible leave policies pertaining to COVID-19. This could include if they need to care for a sick family member, take sick leave (whether for physical or mental health reasons) themselves, or work from home if they are at higher risk with underlying medical conditions
- Protocols in place for visitor check-in and wellness checks, with clearly posted signs to direct how to enter the building safely.

- Utilize Sign in sheets to ensure building capacity is adhered to.
- Have policies in place to address non-compliant visitors, families, or students who refuse to abide by physical distancing, face coverings, or other health policies.

Regardless of phase of occupancy, the following adaptations should also be considered to ensure equity:

- Curriculum is adjusted to ensure accessibility for all students, with worksheet packets as a last resort.
- Virtual meeting schedules are staggered to support families with multiple kids who need to share available devices.
- Parent guidance documents are provided on a weekly basis to explain log-on procedures and accompanying instructions for what will be covered on a daily basis.
- Grading systems and policies are updated to meet needs for all students and teachers. Competency based education and standards based grading systems all high recommended.
- Attendance is done in accordance with state laws and guidance provided by state entities.

Based on Navajo Health Command Operations Center, Executive Orders provided by NN OPVP, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for schools, schools should consider aspects of reopening using a phased approach. In this document, the following phases are set to a color-coding system, with phase 0 being the most restrictive. The phases found within the following phased approach are based on the Navajo Nation Reopening Plan to ensure alignment and unification, and do not supersede any other color-coding system designed and released by other entities. The Navajo Nation Reopening gating criteria are determined by the NHCOC to inform the opening of the Navajo Nation private businesses. Schools and local governance ultimately make the final decisions regarding reopening of services, including the criteria to do so; however, it is highly recommended that these decisions be made in consultation and agreement with this plan. This is especially true if there is a resurgence or outbreak in their communities.

Navajo Nation Reopening Plan

The Navajo Nation shall be monitoring COVID-19 and will reopen in accordance with a colored-coded status schedule throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The Nation's status will be determined by NHCOC. NHCOC will make its decision about reopening status based on specific "gating criteria" as well as general public health considerations. This reopening schedule will be binding on the public and private sector.

   A. Gating Criteria and Other Considerations in Determining the Nation's Reopening Status
   The decision to move between the phases will be dependent upon the rate of new COVID-19 cases, availability of testing, and hospital capacity. Before advancing to a less-restrictive status, NHCOC will determine whether or not certain "gating criteria" have been

satisfied. The gating criteria are based on the "Guidelines for Opening up America Again", issued by the White House and CDC. They appear in the table below:

	Cases	Testing	Hospitals
Gating Criteria for Reopening	Decrease of COVID-19 cases	Positive tests are decreasing, and testing is accessible	Capacity to treat all patients without crisis care

In addition to the gating criteria, NHCOC will also consider the following:

- *Rate of new cases by service unit.*
- *Testing availability at all health facilities.*
- *General hospital capacities.*
- *Available contact tracing and case management resources.*

B. Status Schedule

The reopening status is indicated by a color-coded status schedule. Restrictions are eased gradually as status advances in the schedule, in the following order: red, orange, yellow and green. The Nation may move from a less restrictive to a more restrictive status if it becomes apparent to NHCOC that the Nation's COVID-19 cases are rising or becoming less manageable in any way

Red Code	Orange Code	Yellow Code	Green Code
High Restrictions	Moderate-High Restrictions	Moderate-Low Restrictions	Low Restrictions

Table 1. DoDE Guidance for Phased approach to physical re-opening of school buildings.

	Phase 0	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Disease Spread	Extensive Community Spread Disease Risk High	Substantial Community Spread Disease Risk High	Minimal to Moderate Community Spread Disease Risk Moderate	Zero to Minimal Community Spread Disease Risk Low
Recommended Control Effort to Reduce Spread	Shelter in place	Aggressive	Moderate	Baseline
School Volume	25% of classroom capacity (Essential staff only onsite)	25% of classroom capacity (staff only onsite)	50% of classroom capacity (staff and select students who have special needs or needs that can only be met only on campus and/or stated in IEP of 504 plan; students who have needs for credit recovery or CTE; students who require additional oversight due to family situations that are documented by related services such as Social Services).	75% of classroom capacity (staff and students)
Type of instruction	Virtual Instruction	Virtual Instruction	Hybrid model [Additional guidance for residential programs will be provided in separate document.]	Hybrid model
Community Mitigation Strategies				
Physical School Building and Campus	• Closed to the public, students, and families. Only open to less than 25% of the classroom. • Staff travel is not recommended (Ex: to DoDE). • Essential personnel only on site. Principal, Business Manager, Clerk/Registrar, Maintenance, Custodial, and other employed staff whose work cannot be conducted off-site.	All Phase 0 (RED) are continued and implemented. In addition: • Closed to the public, large groups of students, and families. Only open for 25% of the classroom capacity. • School personnel.	• Closed to the public. Open for select students, and school staff. Not to exceed 50% of classroom capacity. • Staff travel approved by administration for essential purposes only.	• Open to the public. Open for students, and school staff; total capacity not to exceed 75% of classroom capacity. • School personnel and all students not engaged in homeschooling are allowed on the campus, provided the 75% classroom capacity is not exceeded. • All staff travel is approved by administration (Ex: To DoDE).

	Phase 0	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Academics	• All instruction is done in a virtual manner, with both synchronous and asynchronous work. • All instructional staff works virtually or in accordance to 25% of classroom capacity, including essential personnel onsite. • Teachers that are in classrooms to deliver virtual instruction (zoom, google meet, etc.) should not share the space. • PPE and necessary training is provided to essential staff who are in building.	All Phase 0 (RED) are continued and implemented. In addition: • Instructional staff who are at higher risk for severe illness should continue to work virtually if possible. • Teachers who are in classrooms to deliver virtual instruction (zoom, google meet, etc.) and in person instruction are provided with PPE and necessary training.	All Phase 0 (RED) are continued and implemented. • Implementation of a hybrid model of instruction with up to to 50% of classroom capacity for staff and select students, • Select students can be incorporated into onsite learning experiences. • Class sizes and cohorting guidance will vary with phase and grade levels. • Instructional staff who are at higher risk for severe illness should continue to work virtually if possible. • Teachers who are in classrooms to deliver virtual instruction (zoom, google meet, etc.) and in person instruction are provided with PPE and necessary training.	• Virtual, hybrid, and in person instruction are being implemented with purpose. • Hybrid models of instruction can be implemented with varying amounts of virtual and in person instruction, given the classroom capacity limits.

In addition to the physical school buildings and academic facets of school plans, schools might consider the additional pillars of school governance. Note: All Phase 0 applies to Phase 1 unless specifically noted in all areas.

Table 2. Guidance for phased approach to re-opening for school governance.

	Phase 0	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Community Mitigation Strategies				
School Governance	• No in-person school board meetings are held. • Board procedures and policies are updated to include new ways of operating.	Closed to the public. Only open for 25% of the classroom capacity.	• In person school board meetings can be held in accordance with CDC guidance and mitigation strategies (face	• In person school board meetings can be held in accordance with CDC guidance and mitigation strategies (face coverings, physical distancing, etc.)

	• Board norms are created to ensure board members are aware of all policy changes and abide by norms during virtual meetings (example: all meetings must be attended via zoom or call in options, mute when on call, etc.). • Board travel is not considered essential travel and therefore is not recommended. • Policies for stipends regarding attendance to meetings, including special meetings or virtual meetings will be updated as appropriate.		coverings, physical distancing, etc.) • Board travel is limited to only essential needs for the operation of the school. • Policies are followed regarding norms, travel, attendance, stipends, etc..	• Policies are followed regarding norms, travel, attendance, stipends, etc..
Finance	• Only staff responsible for financial operations of the school are able to access the building. • Flexible work schedules are developed in accordance with CDC guidance and mitigation strategies. • PPE is set aside for financial operations staff as telework may not allow for all tasks to be completed.	• Closed to the public. Only open for 25% of the classroom capacity.	• Flexible work schedule developed in accordance with CDC guidance and mitigation strategies • PPE is set aside for financial operations staff as telework may not allow for all tasks to be completed.	• Flexible work schedule developed in accordance with CDC guidance and mitigation strategies • PPE is set aside for financial operations staff as telework may not allow for all tasks to be completed.
Human Resources	• Policies and procedures are updated to include ways to receive documents for new hires and employee needs (email, scanned documents, uploading procedures, fax, etc.). • Staff handbook is updated with new norms for virtual learning, staff telecommuting, and	• Closed to the public, Only open for 25% of the classroom capacity.	• Policies and procedures are updated to include ways to receive documents for new hires and employee needs (email, scanned documents, uploading procedures, fax, etc.). • Protocols are in place for exposures, positive tests, and alternative work settings for	• Policies and procedures are updated to include ways to receive documents for new hires and employee needs (email, scanned documents, uploading procedures, fax, etc.). • Protocols are in place for exposures, positive tests, and alternative work settings for those personnel identified as high risk

	onsite behavior and expectations. • Protocols are in place for exposures and positive tests among personnel. • Alternative work settings for those personnel identified as high risk and those personnel unable to access their regular work setting.		those personnel identified as high risk and those personnel unable to access their regular work setting.	and those personnel unable to access their regular work setting.

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