



SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021: RCSD TOGETHER

JULY 2020



TO THE ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY:

Ending the 2019 – 2020 school year in the midst of a global pandemic was nothing anyone in Rochester could have imagined. Yet the RCSD community has shown its ability to navigate through this fluid situation with creativity and forward thinking.

Looking ahead to upcoming school year, a lot of questions still remain about what school will look like and when will we “return to normal.” While some of those questions can’t be answered as of this writing, the District has been working hard to prepare students, families, and staff for a safe return to school for 2020 – 21. The health and safety of all students, staff, and school communities remain our top priority.

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the New York State Department of Health have released guidelines to help school districts as they plan to reopen, whether that occurs in person, remotely, or a combination of the two. These guidance documents outline strict parameters that districts must follow in order to reopen schools safely. In the meantime, the RCSD has moved forward with its own planning to ensure the safe return to school for everyone. With that in mind, the District will continue to follow guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control, NYSED, New York State, and Monroe County. We thank our partners at all levels of government, including Governor Andrew Cuomo, County Executive Bello, and County Health Director Dr. Michael Mendoza, for their guidance. Our initial plans to return to school include three scenarios – in-person learning, digital learning, and a hybrid of a return to brick and mortar buildings while some students will still engage in digital learning. No final decisions have been made, as we are working closely and collaboratively with area superintendents on back-to-school plans.



This document details all of the safety precautions the District is undergoing to ensure a safe and healthy return to school. As always, we ask for your patience when visiting a school building as protocols and procedures may be different due to COVID-19. In order to keep everyone safe, please adhere to the guidelines and measures listed within this document.

Thank you for your support and partnership as we work together to maintain a healthy learning environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesli C. Myers-Small". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lesli Myers-Small, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



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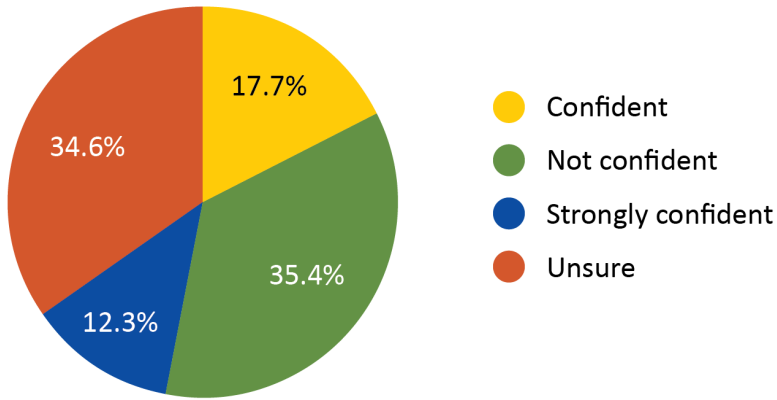


INPUT AND ENGAGEMENT

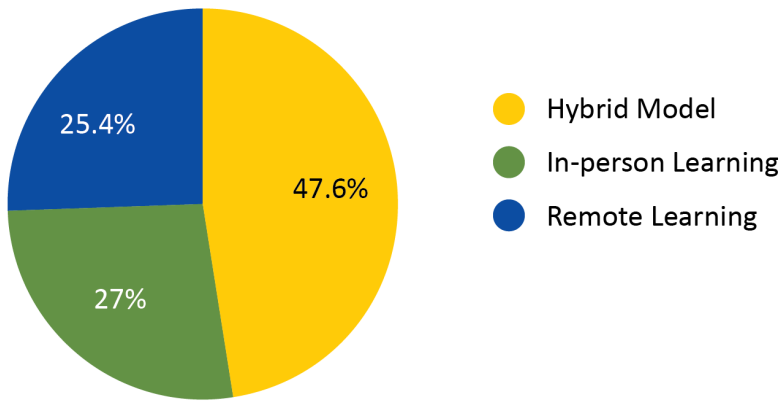
Feedback from varied internal and external stakeholders is an essential part of our planning. An online survey was launched the first week in July to help us better understand the concerns and questions individuals have as we consider a safe return to our school buildings. The survey reflects the range of initial options we are exploring, which are included in the sections to follow. This feedback will help us prioritize and refine these options in conjunction with guidance from Governor Andrew Cuomo, New York State health officials, Monroe County, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the New York State Education Department. On the next page are just a few of the survey results, [for all survey results please click here.](#)

STAFF RESULTS

As we prepare for the reopening of schools under the guidance of the governor, Monroe County and NYS health officials, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the NYS Education Department, how confident are you in returning to work if RCSD reopens school buildings in September?

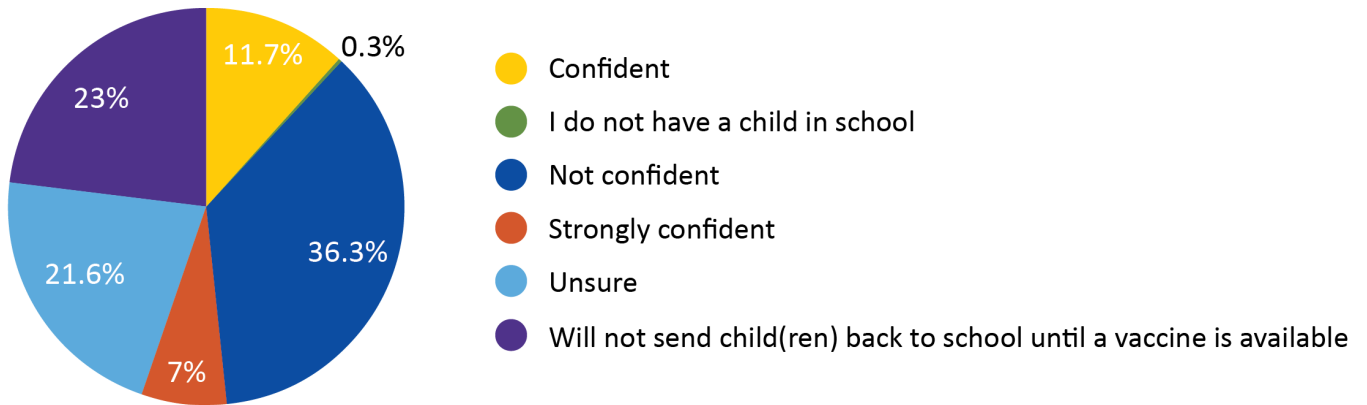


In your opinion, which model would best meet the needs of our students as we plan for reopening in the midst of Covid-19?

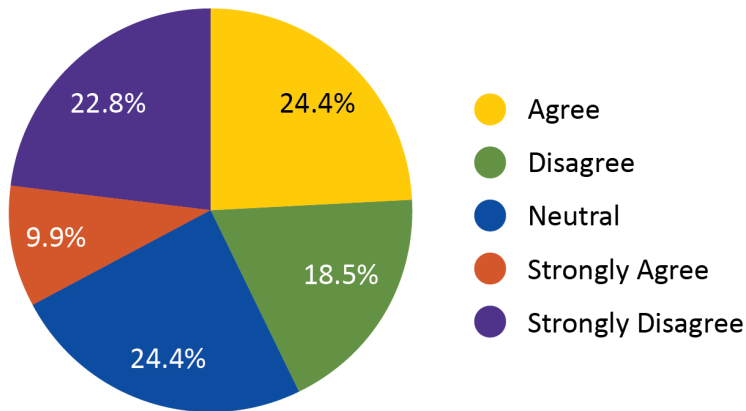


FAMILY RESULTS

The District continues to follow guidelines from the Monroe County and NYS health departments and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to provide a safe and healthy school environment. Knowing this, how confident would you be in sending your child back to school in the fall if the District reopens school buildings?



I believe in-person school should resume in September, with a modified schedule in place that includes both in-person and remote learning.

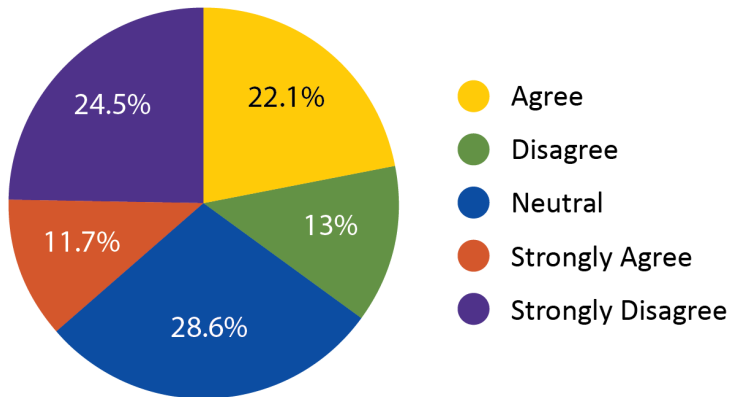


STUDENT RESULTS

The District continues to follow guidelines from the Monroe County and NYS health departments and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to provide a safe and healthy school environment. Knowing this, how confident would you be attending school in the fall if the District reopens school buildings?



I believe in-person school should resume in September, with a modified schedule in place that includes both in-person and remote learning.



EDUCATION

The Rochester City School District continues to provide all students with access to high-quality grade-level instruction. While we understand distance learning has not been easy, teachers, administrators, and support staff will continue to work hard to ensure that your children have the materials and supports necessary to be successful. This section will provide information regarding the initial planning of what school may “look” like once classes resume whether it is brick and mortar in-person learning, distance learning, or a hybrid model (a combination of in-person and distance learning).

RCSD recognizes that students may have experienced challenges and varied levels of learning loss due to the extended COVID-19 school closure. The Teaching and Learning team is working to meet the instructional needs for students in two facets: addressing the learning loss while accelerating the new learning.



The 2020-21 curriculum will address the gaps that may have occurred during the extended school closure, by identifying the key priority standards and skills that students must know and be able to demonstrate understanding in order to be successful with the new learning expected. Pacing and key instructional strategies will be identified within the curriculum. These instructional strategies will be used during in-person learning and distance learning.

RCSD continues to review the possible hybrid models. It is our goal to determine a model that will meet the needs of all students, staff, and families, while ensuring that guidelines are followed as outlined by the New York State Education Department, Monroe County and NYS health departments, and the Centers for Disease Control. Within the hybrid model, students will be grouped in a heterogeneous manner to ensure inclusiveness, equity, and access for all. Groups will be balanced across all demographics and sub group categories as outlined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Whenever possible, the groups will be determined based on households within a given school.

As we consider the reopening of schools, there continues to be discussion on how best to meet the needs of our Students with Disabilities who demonstrate significant academic and social emotional needs. RCSD recognizes the unique programmatic supports required for Students with Disabilities who receive their instruction in special classes, which may require more frequent face-to-face contact with teachers to minimize regression of skills. Therefore, classes that have a size range of 6 – 15 students may meet the guidance in regards to the number of students that can be in a classroom at any given time. Within this regulation, RCSD would provide some of our students with the most unique learning needs a greater number of face-to-face contacts by having the students meet with their teachers up to four continuous days, with one day of distance learning. Individual students' needs must be considered for related service delivery models that could be done in a hybrid model (in-person and/or distance learning) when feasible. Students with Disabilities who receive their instruction in a general education setting must also receive Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in accordance with their Individualized Education Program (IEP). RCSD must carefully plan for the programmatic needs and service delivery model for all Students with Disabilities to ensure necessary supports are provided.

RCSD understands that no matter which model selected when classes resume, there will be a need to address the social emotional needs of our students. This will include in-person contact, tele-therapy sessions, and outreach with families. Throughout the summer, students and families will be able to reach out to the District for supports with social emotional needs. This can be done through contacting the RCSD Hotline (585-262-8700), the Special Education Hotline (585-262-8220), or school staff.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

School buildings must be safe places in order for students to learn effectively. Having healthy students and staff are not only critical to the education children receive, but also to the teachers and staff who deliver that high-quality education. A healthy and safe return to school will include the District aligning its protocols with guidance from the State, federal, and local levels. The Office of Student Support Services and Social Emotional Learning is leading the District's Health and Safety response, and you will find a number of helpful tools to assist you and your family should you have questions about the return to school.

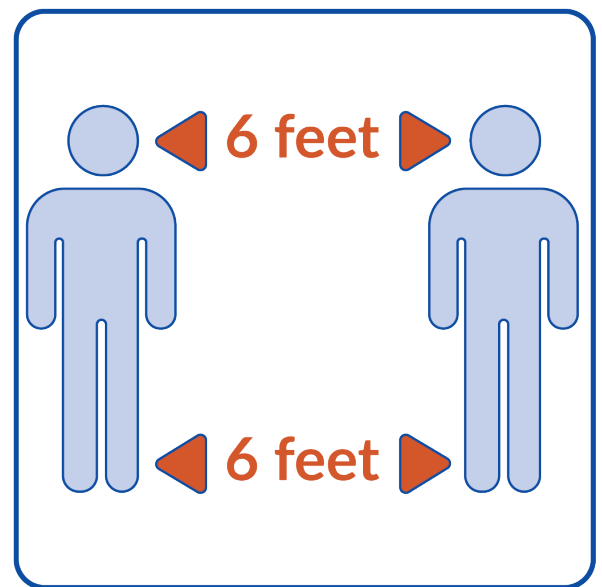
EMPLOYEE SAFETY

To ensure employee safety and to comply with State requirements, the Rochester City School District will do the following:

- Ensure social distancing of six feet between all employees at all times, unless a specific task requires a shorter distance.
 - Any time personnel are less than six feet apart from one another, personnel must wear acceptable face coverings that covers both the mouth and nose.
- Provide face coverings for all employees.
- Provide hand hygiene stations and encourage employees to wash hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol will be provided.
- Encourage employees stay home when sick. Sick employees will not be allowed to stay at work.
- Ensure any other required personal protective equipment (PPE) is available.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS

- Six feet distance between personnel will be maintained, unless safety or core function of the work activity requires a shorter distance. Any time personnel are less than six feet apart from one another, personnel must wear acceptable face coverings.
 - Some common situations that may not allow for six feet of distance between individuals:
 - Custodial and Maintenance Work
 - Bus Maintenance and Repairs
 - Food Preparation and Distribution
- Tightly confined spaces will be occupied by only one individual at a time, unless all occupants are wearing face coverings. If occupied by more than one person, occupancy will be kept under 50% of maximum capacity. Examples include elevators, copy rooms, storage spaces, and vehicles.
- Limit office-based work to a maximum of 50% of a buildings occupancy. This will require staff to work on an alternate schedule or continue to work from home.
- Office workstations will be arranged so that employees are at least six feet apart. This may be accomplished by leaving workstations empty or installing physical barriers. Physical barriers can include: strip curtains, cubicle walls, polycarbonate or another impermeable divider. A six foot distance marker may be placed around workstations.
- Shared workstations will be discouraged and should only be used when no other option exists. If a shared workstation is used, it must be cleaned and disinfected before and after by the user.
- Post social distancing markers using tape or signs that denote six feet of spacing in commonly used and other applicable areas on the site (e.g. clock in/out stations, health screening stations, reception areas).



- Limit in-person gatherings as much as possible and use telephone or video-conferencing whenever possible. Essential in-person gatherings (e.g. meetings) will be held in open, well-ventilated spaces with appropriate social distancing among participants.
- Establish designated areas for pick-ups and deliveries, limiting contact to the extent possible.

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- The Rochester City School District will provide employees with an acceptable face covering at no cost to the employee and will have an adequate supply of coverings in case of replacement.
- A cloth or disposable face covering will be provided.
 - Face coverings must be cleaned or replaced after use or when damaged or soiled, may not be shared, and should be properly stored or discarded.
 - An information page of how to wear and care of a face covering will be provided on how to wear and care for the face covering. This will include:
 - How to Wear Face Covering Appropriately
 - How to Put On/Remove Face Covering
 - Proper Care of Face Coverings



HYGIENE AND CLEANING

To ensure employee safety and compliance with hygiene and cleaning requirements, the Rochester City School District will do the following:

- Adhere to hygiene and sanitation requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) and maintain cleaning logs on site that document date, time, and scope of cleaning.

HANDWASHING & SANITIZING

- Provide and maintain hand hygiene stations for personnel, including handwashing with soap, water, and paper towels, or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing 60% or more alcohol for areas where handwashing is not feasible.
 - Handwashing supplies will be provided in all bathrooms.
 - Hand sanitizing stations will be provided at the main entrance of each building and throughout buildings as needed.
 - Employees that are not assigned to a building will be supplied hand sanitizer.



TRAINING

- Provide staff training to promote healthy hygiene practices.
Training will include, but is not limited to:
 - Proper handwashing techniques.
 - Use of hand sanitizer.
 - Respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
 - Proper use of cloth face coverings.
 - Encouraging staff to stay home when sick.

SCREENING

To ensure employee safety and to comply with screening requirements, the Rochester City School District will do the following:

- Implement a mandatory health screening assessment before employees begin work each day and for essential visitors, asking about:
 - COVID-19 symptoms in past 14 days
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Positive COVID-19 test in past 14 days, and/or
 - Close contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case in past 14 days.

This list is not all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

- Assessment responses will be reviewed every day and such review must be documented. If the answer to any of these are YES, the employee/visitor should not be allowed to enter and should be directed to contact their healthcare professional.

SCREENING ASSESSMENT

- When a Safety Security Officer is present, he or she will be in charge of maintaining the Continuous Log & Screening Assessment of each staff member or visitor who enters the site. Community members at food sites do not need to be assessed. When a Safety Security Officer isn't present, the log will be maintained by identified site supervisors.
- If any employee screens YES, they will be directed to leave immediately and contact their healthcare professional. The employee must also contact Human Resources and their direct supervisor.
- If an employee becomes sick at work, the employee should notify their supervisor and leave immediately. Human Resources must also be notified.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Schools have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. We know much uncertainty exists in all aspects related to this crisis, including the process of recovery as schools begin resuming activities. Recovery will take time and should be considered in a holistic manner given the scope of processes, people, and places affected by COVID-19.

Psychological and emotional recovery often focuses on identifying students and staff who need crisis counseling or are otherwise exhibiting signs that they are struggling with adjustments after a major trauma. Mental health needs after a disaster should be addressed as part of the recovery plan. During a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, it is common for everyone to experience increased levels of distress and anxiety, particularly as a result of social isolation. The Rochester City School District is fortunate to have staff members who are trained in trauma and grief response.

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR LOSS OF ANY STAFF, STUDENTS OR FAMILY

- Contact Student Support Services in order to initiate Trauma, Illness, Grief (TIG) team to provide emotional and psychological support.
- If school community has experienced a loss of life, establish "safe rooms" as needed within each facility for counseling service provision.
- Announce counseling support services available to faculty and staff via Employee Assistance Programs that are available.
- Hold faculty and staff meetings to provide information on signs and symptoms to observe in students.
- Identify and provide information on safe room function and location.
- Communicate counseling support services available to students.

- Have available for staff, parents, and families educational materials on loss and grief and ways to cope with stress.
- Work with faculty and staff on identifying families in need of long-term physical and mental health support and intervention and provide resources to families.
- Work with Safety and Security on how to handle commemorations, memorial activities, and permanent marker establishment, if allowed.
- Determine how memorial activities will strike a balance among honoring a loss, resuming school activities and class routines, return to schedules and maintaining hope for the future facilities.
- Determine social distancing requirements, if any, to determine allowable seating and capacity for supports.

RCSD'S TRAUMA, ILLNESS & GRIEF TEAM (TIG)

- Consultation to building-level Mental Health Teams around supports (safety, trauma and anxiety) and resources.
- Building-level support as appropriate and related to the death of a student, family member or staff member.
- Consultation and collaboration with families around support needs.

OPERATIONS

Operations ensures that all health, safety, and security measures are being implemented when you visit a District building. Visitors may be coming to a building and staff will inform them of any screening procedures that must be followed prior to entrance into a school. Operations is also responsible for the maintenance of all buildings. Additional measures can be found within this section to ensure proper internal protocols are followed.

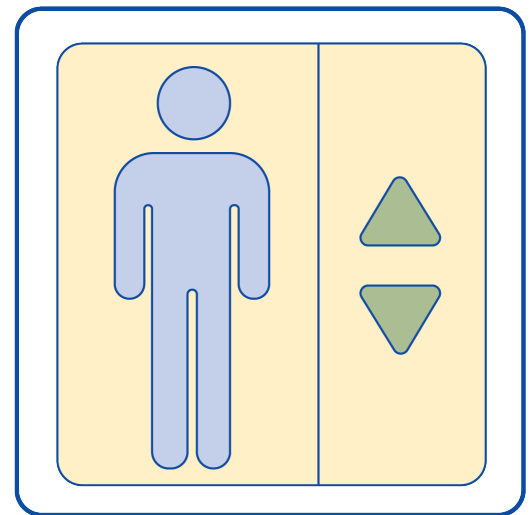


ENGAGEMENT WITH VISITORS

- Visitors will follow the six-foot social distancing mandate and follow regulations for wearing face coverings to limit the spread of illness while on site.
- Nonessential visitors will be limited to all district buildings, including school buildings, district offices and facilities.
- In-person student placement will be performed by appointment only.
- When possible, parent meetings and other meetings will be held as phone/virtual conferences.
- There will be no permits issued for inside building use. Outside use will be through permit only. Only activities approved by the State will be allowed and must adhere to all CDC and DOH requirements.
- The use of shared writing utensils and clipboards for sign-in will be minimized. Shared items will be disinfected between use.
- When necessary, a protective barrier will be provided for reception areas. Social distancing markers will be placed.
- Reception seating areas will be limited and set up to allow for social distancing.

ELEVATOR USE

- Whenever possible, only one person should ride an elevator at a time.
- Riders in an elevator cannot exceed 50% of the elevator capacity. This will be posted on the outside of the elevator at each call button.
- Staff must wear a face covering whenever riding in an elevator.
- The use of stairs will be encouraged.



RESTROOMS

- Restrooms will not be occupied by more people than stalls.
- Six feet of space must be maintained unless in a stall.
- Signs will be posted to wash hands before and after using the restroom. (Restroom Handwashing)
- Paper towels will be provided in restrooms.
- Open top trash containers will be provided whenever feasible.



DAILY CLEANING

- Occupied areas of all buildings will be cleaned and disinfected every evening and periodically throughout the day as needed.
- High-touch areas will be cleaned and disinfected more frequently. Additional cleaning will take place as necessary.
- A log will be signed daily by the head custodians.
- A log will be kept of all cleaning done as the result of a positive case of COVID-19.
- Employees will be instructed to clean shared frequently used high-touch items before and after each use. A cleaner and disinfectant will be available. When a cleaner or disinfectant is not appropriate, a hand-sanitizing station and/or gloves will be provided.
- Disinfectants provided will be on the EPA List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2.

DISINFECTION OF CONTAMINATED AREA

In the case of an employee testing positive for COVID-19, CDC guidelines will be followed regarding cleaning and disinfecting the building or facility if someone is sick:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- The building does not necessarily need to close operations, if affected areas can be closed.

- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
 - Disinfectants used must be listed on EPA List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and copiers.
- Vacuum the space, if needed. Use vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, if available.
- Do not vacuum a room or space that has people in it. Wait until the room or space is empty to vacuum, such as at night for common spaces, or during the day for private rooms.
- Consider temporarily turning off room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility.
- Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
- Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.
- If it is more than seven days since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
- Continue routine cleaning and disinfection.

SIGNAGE

- Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, proper respiratory etiquette, how to properly wash hands, and how to properly wear a face covering.
- Communications will develop required signage and be produced by the RCSD Print Shop
 - Signage will be placed by custodial staff.

CONTINUOUS LOG

To ensure employee safety and to comply with requirements, the Rochester City School District will do the following:

- The Safety Security Officer at each building will be in charge of maintaining the Continuous Log & Screening Assessment. They will ensure each person has a face covering. Community members at food sites do not need to sign in.
- If the building is closed and no Safety Security Officer is present, limited staff will have access to the building. Staff will be tracked by key card access. A report can be generated as needed to identify building occupants. If there are any visitors to the building, they will be tracked by an identified site representative.
- Maintenance staff will record locations daily on the Weekly Sign-Out Log.
- Food Service Staff (Service Center) will be logged by the nurse responsible for taking staff temperatures on the Continuous Log & Screening Assessment.
- Food Service Staff (building-based) will be logged by the Kitchen Manager.

- Transportation Staff will be logged through a spreadsheet available from the Director of Transportation .
- Central Office
 - The Safety Security Officer will keep a log of all visitors.
 - Card access will be required to enter the building. Staff entering the building will be tracked by swiping to gain access to the building. A daily report will be generated.

