



North Lake School District #14

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Frequently Asked Questions for Families – Respiratory Illness including COVID-19

How will parents and families be informed about respiratory disease outbreaks at school?

At North Lake School, we will use post information to the North Lake School District Face Book page, the district website (www.nlake.k12.or.us), and use our robo-call system to communicate information.

How else will the district communicate the latest information about COVID-19?

In emergency situations, North Lake School District relies on three methods of communication:

1. Robo-calls originating from the district office.
2. Our district website homepage for alerts and notifications.
3. The North Lake School District Face Book page.

What defines high levels of COVID-19 transmission at my child's school?

Schools and our Local Public Health Authority (LPHA) have partnered to provide support for respiratory disease outbreaks long before the COVID-19 pandemic. At this stage of the pandemic, we are returning to pre-pandemic protocols for respiratory disease outbreak management. Our schools will monitor unusual absenteeism or illness within a cohort and notify the LPHA about unusual respiratory disease activity if the following thresholds are met.

- a. At the school level: $\geq 30\%$ absenteeism, with at least 10 students/staff absent.
- b. At the cohort level: $\geq 20\%$ absenteeism, with at least 3 students/staff absent.

When a threshold is met, LPHA partners will begin an outbreak investigation based on these respiratory disease thresholds and report the outbreak to the Oregon Health Authority. Some public health *recommendations* may include universal use of face coverings while an outbreak is active, utilizing the enhanced testing program within cohorts, or other infection prevention and control measures.

Why won't the school share information about the student who is ill with a communicable disease?

We value protecting the identities of individuals and are required to protect student privacy under the federal FERPA law. Schools are discouraged from providing any personally

identifiable information and should consider the cohort size when notifying a small group of direct exposure.

Note: Schools are responsible for protecting privacy and should consult with legal counsel, or review [FERPA requirements](#) in light of their own tools for communication. *Schools continue to be able to share students/staff specific information with the LPHA as needed for case investigation.

Will I know whether there was a sick person in my child's classroom?

No, the school will not inform families when an individual in your student's classroom is ill. Staff and students who are in a cohort that includes individuals at higher risk of severe illness will be offered an at-home rapid antigen test when a COVID-19 case is known to have been present in their cohort. Protecting the identities of individuals is important. In some schools and locations, disclosing health information could lead to identification of individuals who test positive or may be ill. Sharing the identity is an unauthorized disclosure of personal health information and could result in stigmatization of these individuals and their families.

Why isn't school closing?

Our school has taken the following steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- We will continue to wash our hands frequently, follow required exclusion guidelines and encourage students to stay home when symptomatic with any communicable disease.
- We will follow the vaccination guidelines for teachers, school staff and volunteers.
- We will remain vigilant about health and safety in order to protect in-person instruction for students and staff. One of our greatest challenges is maintaining a full staff, so keeping everyone healthy is of utmost importance.

What if my student gets COVID and gets behind in school?

North Lake staff will work with your student to get caught up on their assignments. We encourage you to remain in regular contact with the school, and individual teachers to help facilitate completing assignments at home, when possible, and getting extra help when they return if they still have work to complete.

What is an epilink?

An epilink, or epidemiological link, is a particular place or individual that people who are ill have in common, such as a workplace, co-worker or family member. It serves as a link or connection between people who are confirmed to have a communicable disease.