ACT 9 of the 2020 First Extraordinary Legislative Session requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) not later than July 15, 2020, to adopt emergency rules informed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines to provide **minimum standards, policies, medical exceptions and regulations to govern the reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 school year to ensure that students, faculty, staff and others on school property are protected to the extent possible and practical from COVID-19.**

Prior to the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, each public school governing authority shall implement policies, rules and regulations in accordance with the rules and regulations adopted by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.
Resources for Reopening Schools
In partnership with the Louisiana Department of Health and the Resilient Louisiana Commission, the Louisiana Department of Education developed guidance for school reopening. These resources were created to guide local decision-making for our school leaders who know what works best in their communities.

**Louisiana Education By the Numbers**

- Schools: 1,683
- Students: 816,138
- Public School Teachers: 47,799
- Public School Employees: 100,409
- Per National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in 2017-18, 17.9% of Louisiana public school teachers were 55 years of age or older. Assuming ~50,000 teachers in the state, this equates to roughly 9,000 teachers over the age of 55 in 2017-2018.
Resource Development Process
The Louisiana Departments of Education (LDOE) and Health (LDH) have worked collaboratively over the past month to develop public health guidelines and best practices to support school reopening in 2020-2021. This included consultation with the:

- SREB Reopening Task Force
- Superintendent advisory group
- Public health response team
- Resilient Louisiana Commission’s (RLC) K-12 Subgroup
- National Governors Association
- RLC’s Education and Workforce Development Task Force & RLC adoption
- Ochsner, Children’s Hospital New Orleans and Tulane Medical School
Superintendent Advisory Group

David Alexander - Ascension
Blaine Dauzat - Avoyelles
Mitch Downey - Bossier
Ben Necaise - East Baton Rouge
Arthur Joffrion - Iberville
Tiffany Delcour - Orleans
Don Coker - Ouachita
Ken Oertling - St Charles
Patrick Jenkins - St Landry
Allen Blanchard - St Martin
Paul Nelson - Tensas
Richie Strong - West Carroll
John Gullat - Franklin
Public Health Response Team

Dr. Jennifer Avegno, Director, New Orleans Department of Health
Dr. Alexander Billioux*, Assistant Secretary, LDH
Jonathan Brouk, Vice President of Strategy, Children’s Hospital New Orleans
Dr. Susannah Craig, Deputy Commissioner, BOR
Dr. Leron Finger, Chief Quality and Safety Officer, Children’s Hospital New Orleans
Dr. Veena Goud, Assistant Professor, Center for Healthcare Value and Equity, LSU Health Sciences Center
Dr. DeAnn Gruber, Director, Bureau of Infectious Diseases, LDH
Dr. Jimmy Guidry*, State Health Officer, LDH
Dr. Joseph Kanter, Assistant State Health Officer, LDH
Omar Khalid, Chief of Staff, Office of Public Health, LDH
Dr. Kim Hunter-Reed, Commissioner, BOR
Dr. Frank Welch, Medical Director, Bureau for Community Preparedness, LDH
Amy Zapata, Director, Bureau of Family Health, LDH

* Final approval
K-12 Subgroup Members and Meeting Participants

**Task Force Members**
Hannah Dietsch, Chair, Louisiana Department of Education  
Ken Bradford, Co-Chair, Louisiana Department of Education  
David Alexander, Ascension Parish School System  
Larry Carter, Louisiana Federation of Teachers  
Preston Castille, BESE  
Patrick Dobard, New Schools for New Orleans  
Ashley Ellis, BESE  
Michael Faulk, Louisiana Association of School Superintendents  
Patrick Jenkins, St. Landry Parish School System  
Linda Johnson, Former BESE member and education advocate  
JoAnn Matthews, Louisiana Department of Education  
Tia Mills, Louisiana Association of Educators (LAE)  
Dana Peterson, Louisiana Department of Education  
Caroline Roemer, Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools

**Ex-Officio Members**
Ava Dejoie, Secretary, Louisiana Workforce Commission  
Kim Hunter Reed, Commissioner of Higher Education, Louisiana Board of Regents  
Children’s Hospital New Orleans  
Jonathan Brouk, Vice-President of Strategy  
Dr. Leron Finger, Chief Quality and Safety Officer  
Louisiana Department of Health  
Dr. Frank Welch, Office of Public Health  
Louisiana Department of Education Staff  
Nicole Bono  
Ryan Gremillion  
Cindy Millard
Reopening Resources
Resource Documents

Guidelines: Baseline public health requirements for school systems to follow when reopening school facilities to students in fall 2020.

Best Practices: Supportive guidance and resources for implementing guidelines

Planning Template and Checklist: A template with questions to guide school systems in planning for reopening, with an accompanying checklist for reopening

FAQ Document: LDOE released and is maintaining a dynamic FAQ document for implementation support.

Self Monitoring Checklist: School system checklist to ensure BESE adopted requirements are being met
Reopening Instructional Resources: Strong Start 2020 Teaching and Learning Toolkit

The **Strong Start 2020 Teaching and Learning Toolkit** will be released today. This toolkit supports school leaders and teachers and includes high-level actions to implement the priority along with samples and models for implementation. It is structured around implementing the following teaching and learning priorities:

- Assessments and individual student plans
- Continuous core, non-core and CTE instruction
- Student and staff well-being
- Professional development
- Adaptive and flexible staffing plans and schedules
- Strategic communications plans
- 1:1 device and access
Supports from Key Partners

The Children’s Hospital New Orleans Hotline for School Wellness and Virtual Care (504-837-7760) offers guidance to school nurses and school administrators.

The Children’s Hospital New Orleans Town Hall Series for Schools is being conducted every two weeks through July and August.

Regional Public Health Officers are able to provide one-on-one consultation to school system leaders with public health/operational questions.

GOHSEP in coordination with LDOE will assist school systems in securing appropriate PPE (face coverings, thermometers, sanitizer) where shortfalls or hardships exist. Requests will be made through Parish OHSEP offices.
Public Health Guidelines
Three Key Principles

1. Wash Hands Often
2. Wear a Face Covering
3. Practice Social Distancing
The **maximum group size** that may convene indoors in a single room, irrespective of room size, or outdoors at any given time are as follows:

**Phase 1:** 10 individuals

**Phase 2:** 25 individuals

**Phase 3:** 50 individuals

Younger students who are unable to wear face coverings or maintain a physical distance from other students or adults should be assigned static groups.

The composition of a group may change if students are able to maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from other students and adults in a classroom or indoor setting, to the greatest extent possible.
Physical and Environmental Standards

1. If a group convenes indoors, it must convene in a room enclosed by a wall or partition. This includes large rooms, such as a gymnasium or auditorium, which may include more than one group if each group is separated by a wall or partition.

2. If groups convene outdoors, a physical barrier is not required, but each group must remain separated.

3. To the greatest extent possible, schools must limit crowding at entry and exit points and maintain maximum group sizes and physical distance recommendations.

4. If a room is used by more than one group in a single day, high-touch surfaces contained in that room must be cleaned before and after use by each group.
Physical and Environmental Standards

Monitoring Students and Adults for Symptoms of COVID-19

- Each school must establish an area used to isolate anyone showing signs of being sick.
- Upon arriving at the school facility, each adult and student must be assessed for symptoms of COVID-19, as defined by the CDC. This includes an initial temperature check.

Environmental Cleaning and Personal Hygiene

- High-touch surfaces must be cleaned multiple times per day, including bathrooms.
- Students must wash or sanitize hands upon arrival at the school, at least every two hours, before and after eating, before and after using outdoor play equipment and before exiting the school facility.
Physical and Environmental Standards

**Face Coverings** -- While inside the school facility, all adults, including but not limited to teachers, administration, support staff, and other adults/visitors on campus, and students in grades 3 through 12 must wear a face covering to the greatest extent possible and practical within the local community context. While inside the school facility, students in grades prekindergarten through 2 may wear a face covering. While inside the school facility, the face covering requirement does not apply for children under two years old and individuals with respiratory issues or other disabilities that prevent mask wearing.

* Medical or disability impact exceptions will be addressed on an individual basis by the school system in accordance with local policies.

**Hygienic Supplies** -- School employees must be provided adequate access to hygienic supplies, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfectant wipes or spray, paper towels and tissues. Face coverings should also be provided when needed.
School buses used to transport students must not exceed the following maximum capacity requirements:

**Phase 1:** 25 percent, including adults, of the school bus manufacturer capacity

**Phase 2:** 50 percent, including adults, of the school bus manufacturer capacity

**Phase 3:** 75 percent, including adults, of the school bus manufacturer capacity

Passengers on a school bus must be spaced to the greatest extent possible
Students with disabilities must continue to receive special education and related services in the least restrictive environment. School systems must factor in any additional service providers who may need to enter the classroom, students who receive services outside the classroom (e.g. resource, APE) and/or students who receive services through alternate instructional methods.
Other Resources
Best Practices: Highlights

The LDOE’s best practices includes supportive guidance and resources for implementing LDH guidelines, including:

- Specific strategies for **physical distancing** and facility use, including entry and exit procedures
- How to safely **monitor symptoms** among students and staff, and how to respond to symptomatic individuals
- **Personal hygiene** and cleaning protocols, including the use of face coverings
- **Food preparation and meal service** guidance
- **Transportation** safety, hygiene and cleaning guidance and references
- Multiple reopening scenarios: **traditional, hybrid, distance/remote learning**
Responding to Positive Cases

WHAT ARE THE STEPS WHEN A STUDENT IN SCHOOL TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19?

1. If a school becomes aware of a presumptive positive or positive case of COVID-19, the child should not attend school until determined to be non-infectious by their doctor.

2. Parents may be notified by the Office of Public Health if their child may have been exposed to the case of COVID-19, along with any next steps.

3. If it is determined that a school was the focus of infection for COVID-19, the school superintendent, in consultation with the Office of Public Health, will determine if the school should remain open or close for a period of time. A positive case of COVID-19 does not necessarily warrant classroom or school closure.

Example of an assurance school systems can use to ensure parents are aware of their obligation to immediately pick up sick students.
LDOE Implementation Protocols
Community concerns regarding reopening procedures and implementation can be submitted to LDOE and will be shared with local school system leadership and board chairs for follow-up.

Prior to the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, each local school board must adopt reopening policies and submit a plan to LDOE addressing each phase of reopening.
LDOE Implementation Protocols

Systems must also develop and submit to LDOE the following:

- Student learning (distance, hybrid, face-to-face)
- Alternate scheduling
- Staff and student attendance
- Transportation and meals
- Personal hygiene and cleaning
- Communications plan for families and school system employees
Questions