

Isolation rooms

Advocacy and steps to take

Collect your Data

- <https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-vdh-guidance-strong-healthy-start-school-health-rev-20200617.pdf>
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- Prior to the restart of schools, all buildings must secure two separate areas (Clean and Isolation) to serve the school population.
 - o A Health Office should serve as the school's clean office space to accommodate medication administration, triage students, health screenings, etc.
 - o The school must have separate isolation spaces (the area must be structured with a door and must allow for ventilation to the outside) to serve as an extension of a Health Office to accommodate symptomatic students and staff. Isolate symptomatic students/staff as soon as possible. Set up separate, well-ventilated triage areas and place student/staff with suspected COVID-19 in an isolation room with the door closed.
- Where feasible, the school nurse's office/isolation room should have:
 - Dedicated HVAC system
 - Dedicated restroom (ideal)
 - Exhaust directly outdoors
 - Maintain negative pressure to adjoining spaces
 - Nurse office suite design should follow health care facilities design practices as described in standards such as ASHRAE Standard 170 and other applicable guidelines and design information.
 - For more information see ASHRAE Epidemic Taskforce Schools & Universities

For your Operations Manager

- Referenced in the above guidance:
<https://www.ashrae.org/file%20library/technical%20resources/covid-19/ashrae-reopening-schools.pdf>

- Nurses Office – General Requirements • Treat as Isolation rooms – 1 bed per building – follow ASHRAE 170 and 2019 ASHRAE Handbook Chapter 9. • If retrofits are not possible recommend temporary nurse’s station trailers. • Dedicated bathrooms. • The nurse station will include Anteroom/Protective Equipment Room. • Normal non-isolation nursing office. • Provisions for Biohazard waste. • Two (2) modes of operation, (1) “Isolation Mode and (2) “Normal Mode” • For “Isolation mode” design Dedicated HVAC system. • For the “Normal Mode” the HVAC system can be (supplementary) standard HVAC system (VRF +DOAS, Fan coils, WSHP/GSHP, DOAS etc) with current design practices (ASHRAE 62.1, ASHRAE 90.1and local codes etc). • The HVAC operation will be “Isolation mode” OR “Normal Mode”. • Follow CDC guidelines for supply air return air paths, do not mix isolation room air with any other spaces. Directly exhaust isolation rooms. Follow design guidelines for location of OA intakes and exhaust air from exhaust fans. • Recommend locations of nurse’s office HVAC on an exterior wall. • Maintain pressure relationship for room, ante room and corridor.

For your administrator

- <https://www.future-ed.org/what-congressional-covid-funding-means-for-k-12-schools/#:~:text=In%20addition%20to%20direct%20stimulus,to%20improve%20distance%20learning%20and>
- Superintendents in the state meet regularly, they are already aware of what other schools are doing. Budgets are very tight, and revenue will be down next year, but if the school is opening, an effective isolation room is necessary for the safety of all faculty and students. If your school or district is refusing, use your NEA resources to stimulate interest and channel funds for isolation rooms and supplies.

CDC Considerations for Schools

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>
- What is currently known about COVID-19 among school-aged children
- The importance of going back to school safely
- What is currently known about SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) transmission in schools and its impact on community transmission
- The ways administrators for kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) schools can plan and prepare for in-person instruction and minimize the impact of potential closures

Utilize a Planning Tool

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/School-Admin-K12-readiness-and-planning-tool.pdf>
- General Readiness Assessment
- Daily/Weekly Readiness Assessment
- Preparing for if Someone Gets Sick
- Special Considerations and Resources

VDH and AOE

- <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19/schools-and-child-care-programs>
- <https://education.vermont.gov/news/covid-19-guidance-vermont-schools>
- Utilize the VDH's many resources to help advise on safe reopening and advocating for effective isolation rooms
- The AOE has a link to the document that states that an isolation room needs to be established.

Make sure you are Included

- If you have a nurse leader, utilize her/him to participate and disseminate information to all nurses in the district
- If you don't, meet and decide on a nurse in the district to be the nurse rep to attend these meetings
- If you are excluded, send information by email anyway to your principal and superintendent
- Advocate for best practice
- Inquire about your building's reopening task force and make sure you attend those meetings, if you are not at the table to advise and advocate for the best possible solution for an isolation room now, administrators will be unlikely to listen to your critiques later. It is important to be involved as early as possible.
- Advise as the medical professional on all things COVID related, don't give up, send emails, keep communicating, make suggestions
- Ask for a meeting with the superintendent to talk through the guidance and problem solve, be a part of the solution
- Ask for a meeting with the Operations Director or other person in charge of building and maintenance, recommend consulting an engineer to assess current ventilation system
- Advise on effective isolation rooms
- Be knowledgeable of all current legislation and guidance, be prepared, new health guidance and extracurricular guidance is supposed to be coming out this week for the governor, so things may change again, be sure you are knowledgeable of any changes and discuss with administrators as soon as possible