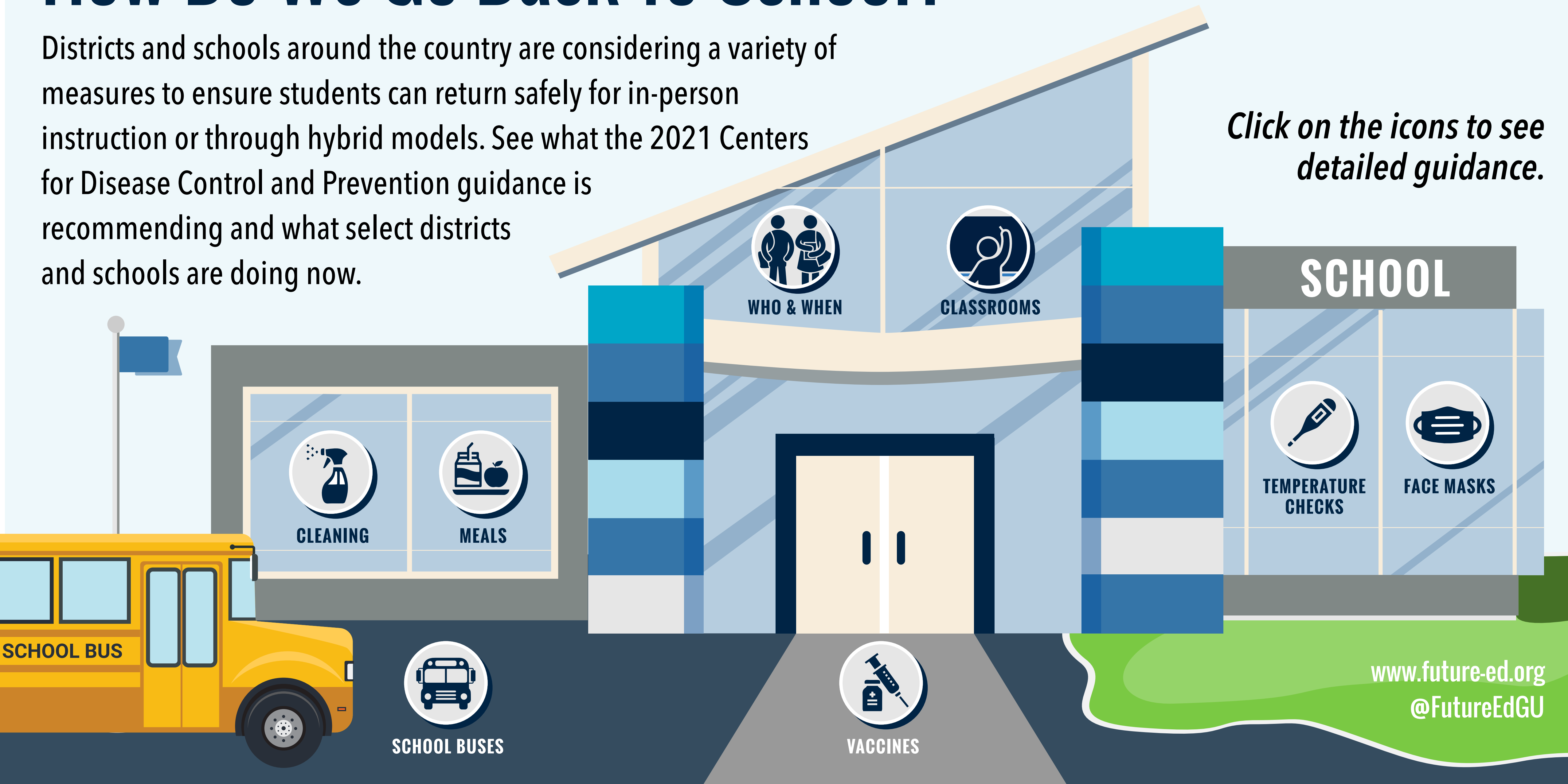


How Do We Go Back To School?

Districts and schools around the country are considering a variety of measures to ensure students can return safely for in-person instruction or through hybrid models. See what the 2021 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance is recommending and what select districts and schools are doing now.

Click on the icons to see detailed guidance.



CLEANING AND SANITIZING

Proper cleaning and sanitizing of schools and up-to-date ventilation systems are critical for keeping students healthy and in the classroom. Read what the CDC is advising and what measures schools and districts are taking:

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces — playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, toilets, drinking fountains — at least daily or between use as much as possible; install handwashing stations in classrooms; provide hand sanitizer; consider ventilation system upgrades or improvements to increase the delivery of clean air and dilute potential contaminants.

WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE BEEN DOING

Shoreline, WA: Disinfect all touchpoints at least once each week in addition to daily cleaning of door handles, push bars and more.

Little Rock, AR: Clean common areas; provide disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer for all students entering and exiting classrooms; encourage frequent handwashing.

Blount County, TN: Replace old HVAC units, install bipolar ionization technology to clean air in ventilation systems with new round of Covid-19 relief aid.



CLEANING

Sources: Shoreline Public Schools, Little Rock School District, The Daily Times.

SCHOOL BUSES

Social distancing has proven to be an effective measure for curbing coronavirus on school buses. Read what the CDC is advising and what measures schools and districts are taking:

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Limit the number of students on bus, creating distance by seating students one to a row, facing forward and skipping rows between students; regularly clean frequently touched surfaces.

WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE BEEN DOING:

Houston, TX: Require students to sanitize their hands and scan badges upon boarding; fill seats from back to front, sitting one per seat by the window; sanitize buses after each drop-off; keep 4-6 windows down whenever possible for circulation

Tampa, FL: Load buses from back to front and keep students socially distanced as much as possible; wipe down high-touch areas between each run.

Stamford, CT: Require cleaning contractors to keep logs of their sanitizing completions.



SCHOOL BUSES

Sources: Houston Independent School District, Hillsborough County Public Schools, The Connecticut Post.

MEALS

At lunch time, students typically gather in a cafeteria, which could contribute to Covid's spread. Read what the CDC is advising and what measures schools and districts are taking:

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Avoid any self-serve food or drink options; ensure students remain physically distant, including staggered meal times and meals in the classroom or outdoors; serve pre-packaged meals; clean tables and chairs between each use.

WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE BEEN DOING:

Booneville, AR: Split students into two groups, each eating in the cafeteria for one week and in the classroom for the next.

Inverness, FL: Use touchless, barcode scanning system for students; spread students out as much as possible, facing in one direction.

South Burlington, VT: Serve meals in classrooms for Pre-K through 5th grade students and in cafeterias for middle and high school students; package meals in recyclable, covered, meal trays or containers.



MEALS

Sources: Booneville Democrat, Citrus County School District, South Burlington School District.

WHO GOES WHEN

To maintain effective social distancing, many schools are using hybrid models of in-person and at-home learning. Read what the CDC is advising and what measures schools and districts are taking:

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Keep students in cohorts or pods to minimize exposure across the school, using hybrid, alternating or staggered schedules when necessary; prioritize returning elementary students to schools first.

WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE BEEN DOING:

Dallas, TX: Bring students into schools for in-person classes twice a week and engage in remote learning three days a week.

Little Rock, AR: Give all students the choice of virtual or on-site instruction.

Jericho, NY: Bring elementary students in full time and secondary students on alternating days



WHO & WHEN

Sources: Dallas Independent School District, Little Rock School District, Jericho School District.

IN THE CLASSROOM

With limited space in classrooms, schools have varied approaches to limit the number of students. Read what the CDC is advising and what measures schools and districts are taking:

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Adjust classroom to allow physical distancing of 6 feet when possible; maximize space by turning desks to face the same direction; discourage sharing items; install physical barriers and tape or arrows; create a “teacher zone” to isolate the teacher from students.

WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE BEEN DOING:

Des Moines, IA: Provide physical distancing to the extent possible, even if 6 feet of distance is not feasible.

San Antonio, TX: Keep students in small cohorts with staggered arrival and drop-off times; leverage outdoor learning spaces; use physical barriers such as plexiglass and distancing guides and signage.

South Burlington, VT: Remove furniture and other items from classrooms to provide open space for physical distancing.



CLASSROOMS

Sources: Des Moines Public Schools, San Antonio Independent School District, South Burlington Public schools.

TEMPERATURE CHECKS

With fevers being a common symptom, some schools are using temperature checks to control the spread of COVID. Read what the CDC is advising and what measures schools and districts are taking:

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Avoid daily school-based symptom screening of all students and staff; encourage families to check their children's health and keep them home when they are sick; consider weekly testing of students and staff when community transmission is at moderate or higher levels.

WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE BEEN DOING:

Tacoma, WA: Require students and staff to fill out symptom screens before arrival; isolate students without screens until parents fill out forms.

Washington, DC: Ask students, visitors, and staff members to show a photograph of a thermometer reading or verbally confirm that their temperature was lower than 100.4 degrees; or take temperatures at the door, preferably using a no-contact thermometer.

Laramie County, WY: Conduct daily temperature checks for all students and staff after parents and students fill out a daily symptom screen using a QR code.



TEMPERATURE CHECKS

Sources: The News Tribune, District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Schools, Education Week.

FACE MASKS

Face masks are another effective measure to avoid the spread of the disease. Read what the CDC is advising and what measures schools and districts are taking:

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Require consistent and correct use of face masks, by all students, teachers and staff even after teacher and staff vaccinations.

WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE BEEN DOING:

Frankfort, KY: Require students to wear a mask if they cannot be 6 feet apart and in heavily populated areas like hallways or buses.

Billings, MT: Require masks for all staff, volunteers, visitors, and school-aged students, regardless of vaccination status. Require masks at outdoor school activities with 50 or more people, where social distancing is not possible or observed.

Cobb County, GA: Provide disposable masks to students without face coverings; send home students who refuse to wear masks and schedule conferences to discuss digital instruction.



FACE MASKS

Sources: Frankfort Independent Schools, Billings Gazette, Cobb County School District.

VACCINES

With vaccines now available, many local and state governments are giving priority to school staff members in the early phases of vaccination schedules. Read what the CDC is advising and what measures schools and districts are taking:

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Vaccinate teachers and school staff as soon as supply allows as a mitigation strategy.

WHAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE BEEN DOING:

Baltimore, MD: Partner with Johns Hopkins Medicine to vaccinate at least 500 school employees a week.

Denver, CO: Give teachers in high-poverty schools first priority for vaccinations.

Marin County, CA: Grant school employees priority status for vaccinations.



VACCINES

Sources: Maryland Matters, ABC News, Colorado Chalkbeat.