



Innovation Science and Technology Academy  
13001 Central Ave NE Blaine, MN 55434  
763-339-0642

September 11, 2020

Dear Innovation Academy Parents,

Our school has developed a COVID-19 response plan as required by the State of Minnesota. Information from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) were used to shape the plan. This plan should be considered a living document as it will change in response to updated recommendations, research, and numbers. When updates or changes are made, you will receive a message and can look for the updated version on our school website.

COVID-19 is contagious and we expect there will be positive cases during the school year. We are ready to partner with you during those times. Innovation Academy will follow MDH guidelines for contacting families, and those specifics can be found in the response plan.

An important piece of stopping the spread is to closely monitor your child(ren) before sending them to school. Please take the time familiarize yourself with the screening process attached and make it part of your daily routine. Please remind your students to wear their masks at school.

Thank you for your help in keeping our students safe and healthy.

Dr. Olatoye  
Executive Director  
763-339-0642

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STEM Coordinator  
COVID Coordinator  
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**Minnesota Department of Health**  
**Home Screening Tool for COVID-19 Symptoms**  
**For school, child care and youth programming**

*Answer these screening questions **each time** you are going to send your child to school, childcare, or other youth programs. If you answer “yes” to any question, your child should stay home.*

**Screening Question 1:**

**Does your child have one or more of these symptoms?**

- Fever of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Difficulty or trouble breathing
- New cough or a cough that gets worse
- New loss of taste or smell

If a child has one or more of these symptoms, they must stay home and should stay away from others as much as possible, including family members. Parents or caregivers should notify the school and consider calling the child’s doctor or other health care provider.

If none of those symptoms are present, please go to the Screening Question 2.

**Screening Question 2:**

**Does your child have at least two of these symptoms?**

- Sore throat
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Excessive fatigue (extreme tiredness)
- New or severe headache
- New nasal congestion or runny nose

If a child has at least two of these symptoms, they must stay home and should stay away from others as much as possible, including family members. Parents or caregivers should notify the school and consider calling the child’s doctor or other health care provider.

If none of those symptoms exist, go onto the next three questions.

**3. Has your child been diagnosed with COVID-19 since they last went to their school, childcare, or youth program?**

No: the child can go to their school, childcare, or youth program.

Yes: the child must stay at home in isolation and away from others as much as possible for at least 10 days (counting from the day their symptoms first started or the day they were tested), and until their symptoms get better and they have not had a fever for 24 hours (without taking medicine to lower the fever). Even if they feel better, they must stay home for the full 10 days. If your child has tested positive for COVID-19 but has no symptoms, they can return 10 days after the date of their test.

**4. Has your child had close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, or has any health department or doctor or other health care provider contacted you and said your child should stay home (quarantine)?**

No: the child can go to their school, childcare, or youth program.

Yes: the child must not go to their school, childcare, or youth program. The child can return 14 days after the last time they had close contact with someone with COVID-19, as long as the child has not developed symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19. Close contact means being 6 feet or less for at least 15 minutes from a person who has COVID-19. Even if your child has tested negative, they cannot go back until it has been 14 since they had close contact.

**5. Is your child or any other household member who is symptomatic (has symptoms consistent with COVID19) currently waiting for COVID-19 test results?**

No: the child can go to their school, childcare, or youth program.

Yes: the child must stay at home until they get their test results. Brothers, sisters, and other children living in the house must also stay at home until test results are known. If the test result is negative, children can return to school or childcare. If the test result is positive, children remain at home and begin a 14-day quarantine period starting on the last day they had close contact with the positive case.

**Thank you for your cooperation.**

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## COVID-19 Guidelines

Innovation Science and Technology Academy opened in a hybrid model on September 8, 2020. The number of COVID-19 cases in Anoka County and recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) could alter the instructional plan. This document will change based on updates and current information.

Innovation Academy has created these guidelines to meet these important principles

- Keep students and staff healthy
- Follow recommendations and requirements of MDE and MDH
- Make decisions in conjunction with the expert advice from MDE, MDH, and Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

## Instructional Scenarios

There are three instructional scenarios that may be utilized during the pandemic.

- **In-person learning for all students.**  
In this planning scenario, schools should create as much space between students and teachers as is feasible during the day, but will not be held strictly to enforcing six feet of social distancing during primary instructional time in the classroom. This scenario may be implemented if state and county COVID-19 metrics continue to stabilize and/or improve.
- **Hybrid learning with strict social distancing and capacity limits.**  
In this planning scenario, schools must limit the overall number of people in school facilities and on transportation vehicles to 50% maximum occupancy. Sufficient social distancing with at least six feet between people must occur at all times. Innovation Academy will plan to send home meals and school materials for school days that students and staff are not in the school building. Innovation Academy is implementing an A/B/A/B schedule with Friday distance learning for all students. Pre-K will attend every day for half-day sessions M - Th with at-home learning activities for Friday. There will be no students in the school on Friday.

**Distance learning only.**

Students receive instruction off-school sites. This scenario will be implemented if state and county COVID-19 metrics show increased numbers or there is high community spread.

## Health and Safety

Innovation Academy will follow the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines regarding safety measures provided in school.

Required health practices must be implemented by all Minnesota public schools. These practices are foundational to minimizing the risks of exposure to COVID-19 for students, staff, and families. Recommended health practices are additional strategies that Innovation Academy is using to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Innovation Academy recognizes there are diverse learning environments and uses the thoughtful guidance from MDH and MDE to meet the health and safety needs of all students and staff.

There is no blame or fault when a test comes back positive. According to MDH, there is a high probability that COVID-19 will eventually be contracted by everyone. By implementing safety procedures, we can mitigate or slow the spread. Please be assured that Innovation Academy will work with you to meet the needs and concerns around this pandemic.

The safest environments will be made possible through cooperation from students and employees in alignment with the following measures:

### Home screening for students and adults

Before adults or students come to school, a home screening should occur. If any of these questions are answered yes, adults and children should stay home.

Are you, or your child, experiencing

- A fever or feeling feverish?
- Chills?
- A new cough?
- Shortness of breath?
- A new sore throat?
- New muscle aches?
- New headache?
- New loss of smell or taste?

While those symptoms are common in other illnesses, they are also common in COVID-19 cases. In an effort to keep students safe, please keep your child home if any of those symptoms appear. Please call or email the school to report your child's absence. You may call 763-339-0642 or 763-339-0487. You may also email [oolatoye@innovationsta.org](mailto:oolatoye@innovationsta.org) or [lpeterson@innovationsta.org](mailto:lpeterson@innovationsta.org). A staff person will call you back to gather more details if needed.

### Limited building access to visitors

Access for parents/guardians and volunteers will be limited in schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. Because visitors are limited, the addition of plastic barriers near the front office area is not being pursued. Students and employees will use other safety measures such as social distancing and face masks instead.

### Face coverings

Face coverings are required in school facilities following a July 22 state order and in compliance with MDH and CDC guidelines. Innovation Academy will resource face coverings to visitors (including students and employees) as needed.

### Passive barriers and signage:

Innovation Academy will coordinate a system to direct safe behaviors using passive barriers such as floor markings along with signage to communicate safety measures and expected behaviors to protect public health.

### Classroom management/desks:

Classrooms will limit capacity to the MDH and CDC guidelines. The goal will be to create as much space as possible for each student and follow the 6 foot recommendation. There will be minimal sharing of high-touch materials. Each student will keep school supply items for individual use.

### Passive temperature screening:

Each visitor (including students and employees) is expected to monitor their health conditions and not enter a school building if they are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19. Temperature checks may be conducted if staff or students are not feeling well.

### Social distancing:

Maintaining a six foot distance between persons is the most effective safety measure. Innovation Academy will include visible reminders and encourage a culture that supports social distancing. Employees will be monitoring student arrivals and dismissals to remind students not to congregate.

Whenever possible, physical education and music classes will be held outside allowing students to spread out. Visual cues will help demonstrate physical spacing.

### Hand hygiene:

Innovation Academy will teach and reinforce hand washing using soap and hot water for 20 seconds on a regular basis. Soap and water are the best way to clean your hands according to the CDC. A hand hygiene routine will be in the daily school schedule for all students and staff, including handwashing and sanitation breaks during or between classroom activities. Handwashing will be reinforced during key times including but not limited to: arrival and dismissal; before, during, and after preparing or eating food; after

using the bathroom; after blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing; after touching objects with bare hands that have been handled by other people.

School employees will provide hand sanitizing wipes or hand sanitizer to students when soap and water are not available or feasible. Use is to be supervised by an adult.

Hand hygiene posters and teacher directed lessons will be used to help students understand the importance of hand washing. More details can be found on [Hand Hygiene](#) from MDH

#### Touchless meal delivery:

School meals are catered and will be served in individual packaging. Distribution of meals will be handled by an adult. Students will eat breakfast and lunch in the classroom under socially distanced guidelines.

#### Disinfection and cleaning:

Innovation's contracted professional maintenance employees will coordinate enhanced disinfection and cleaning of common areas such as restrooms, hallways, and door handles. Students will not be present or permitted to use chemicals for disinfection due to safety concerns. Teachers will regularly wipe down frequently touched surfaces and be encouraged to keep doors open. Open doors decrease the frequency with which door handles need to be touched and increases air circulation.

#### Case management:

Education on COVID-19 will occur with both students and employees. Symptoms will be self monitored throughout the day by all. Those who become ill during the day, will report to health services, and be isolated and evaluated. They'll either go home or return to class/assignment after assessment. Self isolation and quarantine will be followed per the MDH guidelines. Notifications to the community will occur after consultation with the MDH. Mental health concerns will be addressed through risk assessment and referral as appropriate.

#### Building Safety

Hand sanitizer bottles will be at the front counter and inside each door of every classroom.

Air purifiers will be in each classroom to help remove air particles.

The heating and ventilation air circulation system has had clear air filters installed and is routinely maintained.

## **Face Coverings**

**All students, staff, and other people present in school buildings and riding on school transportation vehicles are required to wear a face covering.**

Face coverings are required by all who enter district schools or facilities following the direction from the state. These can be paper or disposable, cloth, scarf, bandana or a religious face covering. Temporary removal of coverings to eat or participate in activities are acceptable.

The covering should cover the nose and mouth completely, should not be overly tight or restrictive, and should feel comfortable to wear. A face covering is not meant to substitute for social distancing, but is especially important in situations when maintaining a 6-foot distance is not possible.

It is the goal of our school to safely operate, promoting a culture of health and safety amongst students and employees using all the health and safety protocols in place. Remember to maintain physical distance of at least six feet as much as possible. That is our best protection.

### **How To Wear a Face Covering**

Wash hands prior to putting on and after removing the face covering, following the Centers for Disease Control's How to Wear and Remove Your Face Covering guidelines. Be careful to not touch your eyes, nose or mouth while removing the face covering.

### **Can I pull down my face covering to talk to someone?**

No. It is important to keep your face covering appropriately in place over the nose and mouth to provide the intended protection. Try to avoid manipulating the face covering as much as possible once it is on.

### **How Do I Care for my Face Covering?**

Store face coverings in a manner that prevents it from being mistakenly used by another person and in a dry location away from external contamination. For cloth face coverings, carefully fold it so the contaminated outside is folded inward and against itself. Place the face covering in an appropriate place and wash your hands. You should remove and store your face covering to eat and drink. Ensure social distancing while eating and drinking. To prevent self-contamination, do not pull down the face covering or leave it on in any way while eating or drinking. Students/employees are to wash hands prior to putting on and after removing the face covering, following the [How to Wear and Remove Your Face Covering guidelines](#).

It is recommended that each student bring 2 masks each day to school. Students will be reminded to bring them home each day. **Face coverings should be washed and dried at the end of each day.**

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) face shields are not a replacement for a mask and are most effective when used in conjunction with a mask.

Posters and reminders will help students remember the importance of wearing the mask. Teachers will use positive reinforcement and guidance when reminders are needed.

Students are required to put on and remove their own mask.

## Monitoring and Excluding for Illness

Families should monitor symptoms of students and adults in their home. Staff and students will be encouraged to self-monitor symptoms throughout the day. Staff or students who develop symptoms during the school day must notify school health services or another identified point of contact in the school building immediately.

Innovation Academy will follow the appropriate path on the [decision tree](#) published by MDH if a child, student, or staff person is experiencing the following symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

Staff and students are required to stay home if

- They have tested positive, are waiting for a test result, or are showing COVID-19 symptoms, until they meet criteria for return.  
[What to do while you wait for your test results](#)
- They have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19, until they meet criteria for return. [What to do if you have had close contact](#) If your child has been identified as a close contact for someone who tested positive for COVID-19, a 14 day quarantine at home is required.

Parents are encouraged to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick. Innovation Academy will conduct temperature checks as needed on staff, students, family members, and any other visitors physically entering the school building. Persons who have a fever of 100° F (38.00C) or above or other signs of illness will not be admitted to the classroom. Parents will be called.

If a student or staff member takes a COVID-19 test because of exposure or symptoms, they are required to quarantine for 14 days. The quarantine period helps mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

The [decision tree](#) created by MDH uses symptoms categorized as more common or less common in COVID-19.

**More common symptoms:** fever greater than or equal to 100.4o F, new onset and/or worsening cough, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell. •

**Less common symptoms:** sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills, muscle pain, excessive fatigue, new onset of severe headache, new onset of nasal congestion or runny nose.

## Supporting people with COVID-19 symptoms

After identifying the COVID-19 symptoms, select one of two possible paths. Below is the narrative that accompanies the [decision tree](#) created by MDH.

### **First path**

The first path is for when the person is experiencing only one symptom from the list of less common symptoms.

1. Evaluate that symptom and determine if the person is well enough to stay in the school or program.
2. If yes, attend or remain in school or program.
3. If no, they should stay home or be sent home and consider an evaluation from a health care provider or COVID-19 testing.
4. **If evaluated and/or tested, follow second path numbers 2– 6.**
5. If the person is sent home, they can return to the school or program 24 hours after the symptom has improved.
6. The person's siblings or household contacts do not need to stay home or quarantine.

### **Second path**

The second path is for when the person is experiencing one more common symptom or at least two less common symptoms.

1. If one of the common symptoms exist or two of the less common symptoms exist,, the person stays home or is sent home, and their siblings or household contacts stay home or are sent home.
2. The person with symptoms is either seen by a health care provider for an evaluation and COVID-19 test or they do not seek a medical evaluation.
3. If the person does not seek a medical evaluation, they must stay at home in isolation for at least 10 days from the time their symptoms started until symptoms are improved and no fever for 24 hours without fever reducing medications. Siblings and household contacts must stay home and quarantine from all activities for at least 14 days starting with the day they were last in contact with the person who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
4. If the person receives an alternate diagnosis to explain the symptoms, they can then return to school or the program 24 hours after symptoms have improved or as directed by a healthcare provider. Siblings and household members do not need to stay home or quarantine any longer once the alternate diagnosis is known.
5. If the person tests negative for COVID-19, they can return to school or the program 24 hours after symptoms have improved. Siblings and household members do not need to stay home once the negative result is known.
6. If the person tests positive for COVID-19, they must stay at home in isolation for at least 10 days from the time the symptoms started until symptoms have improved and no fever for 24 hours without fever reducing medications. Siblings and household contacts must stay home and quarantine from all activities for at least 14 days starting with the day they were last in contact with the person who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

## Close Contact Notification and Process

A close contact is a person who was within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes of someone who is infected. This includes anyone who lives in the same household.

If a person is a close contact, the person must quarantine and stay home from all activities for at least 14 days since the last day of contact with the positive case. Even if the close contact receives a negative test result, they need to complete 14 days of quarantine before returning to school or program.

Close contacts should seek COVID-19 testing 5-7 days after last contact with the positive case. The siblings and household members of the close contact do not need to stay home or quarantine.

If a person who is a close contact develops symptoms and/or tests positive for COVID-19, the person must stay home in isolation for at least 10 days from the time their symptoms started until symptoms are improved and no fever for 24 hours without fever reducing medications. Siblings and household contacts also must stay home and quarantine from all activities for at least 14 days

## School Settings

When there are high levels of community transmission or multiple unlinked cases in the school, exclusion with evaluation and testing is strongly encouraged even if a person is experiencing only one less common symptom. For these purposes, high levels of community may be defined as greater than 10 cases per 10,000.

Innovation Academy will use the Data for K-12 Schools: [14-day COVID-19 Case Rate by County \(PDF\)](#) and will consult with their Regional Team or local public health office to help guide this recommendation.

### Responding to Confirmed Cases of Covid-19

When a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified in the school community, Innovation Academy will work closely with local public health and MDH officials through the Regional Support Teams to identify whether the person who is ill was present on school grounds while infectious, and whether that resulted in any close contact exposures among students or staff.

Because of the potential for asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic transmission of COVID-19, it is important that close contacts of students or staff with COVID-19 are quickly identified, informed of the need to quarantine at home, and encouraged to seek testing, even if they are not showing any symptoms.

Positive test results will be reported by testing sites to MDH. In addition, Innovation Academy encourages that students or staff self report positive results to Dr. O. or Dr. Peterson. Innovation Academy will follow the procedures for contacting families as

directed by the Regional Coordinator and Regional Support Team. MDH will determine close contact status and who needs notification.

Families or staff may contact the school at 763-339-0642, 763-339-0487 or email [oolatoye@innovationsta.org](mailto:oolatoye@innovationsta.org) or [lpeterson@innovationsta.org](mailto:lpeterson@innovationsta.org). Innovation Academy staff will follow up immediately with family or staff in order to begin the response plan.

Testing of close contacts should not occur until either a person becomes symptomatic or at least 5 to 7 days have passed since their last exposure to the confirmed case to guard against a false negative test result, which can occur when a person is tested too early in the incubation period. Even if a close contact tests negative, they must remain in quarantine for a full 14 days, as some people develop infection at the end of their incubation period. The CDC does not recommend universal testing of all students and staff. The regional response team will work with Innovation Academy to determine who is a close contact and needs notification.

### **Testing Scenarios and Thresholds**

If a known exposure occurs in a classroom (from staff or students), close contacts will be quarantined at home for 14 days. Close contacts are defined as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the patient is isolated.

### **The Regional Support team (MDH, MDE, county) recommends testing for close contacts.**

- Symptomatic students, children and staff
- Asymptomatic close contacts—children and staff who are asymptomatic no sooner than 5 to 7 days after known exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19.

In addition to the identification and notification of close contacts, Innovation Academy will consult with health officials to determine whether additional mitigation strategies are needed to protect the school community.

Innovation Academy believes in a strong home and school partnership. By encouraging our students to wear masks, follow social distance guidelines, and follow good hand hygiene we will work together to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our school community.

We request families to

- send two masks each day to school with their child.
- please keep contact information (phone numbers, email, addresses) up to date to facilitate necessary communication.
- conduct the self screening steps on a daily basis.
- call the school if your child is staying home. The school may call you back if more information is needed.

We look forward to a year of positive learning and strong relationships with all of our families.

Questions can be directed to Dr. Olatoye, Executive Director, at 763-339-0642, or Dr. Peterson, STEM Coordinator/COVID Coordinator at 763-339-0487.