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**COVID-19 NC Update - Sept. 18, 2020**  
 NCDHHS Communications [news@dhhs.nc.gov]

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**COVID-19  
(CORONAVIRUS)  
NC UPDATE**

*Sept. 18, 2020*  
**[Plan A Now Available for Public Elementary Schools](#)**

[Governor Roy Cooper yesterday announced that after several weeks of stable COVID-19 trends and continued low virus spread in school settings, North Carolina public school districts and charter schools can choose to implement Plan A for elementary schools \(grades K-5\) starting Oct. 5.](#)



[Plan A continues to include important safety measures like face coverings for all students, teachers and staff, and symptom screening. But schools will not be required to reduce the number of children in the classroom to meet social distancing of 6 feet.](#)

[As the Governor announced in July, every district will continue to have flexibility to select Plan A, B or C based on their unique needs. In addition, districts should still provide an option for families to select all remote learning for their students. Read the Strong Schools NC Public Health Toolkit to learn more about the requirements under each plan.](#)

[Dr. Mandy Cohen, Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services shared an update on North Carolina's data trends. Dr. Cohen explained that North Carolina has seen a sustained leveling or decrease of key metrics.](#)

["Our trends show that we are on the right track. It's up to all of us to protect our progress. Our individual actions like those 3 Ws will help keep our school doors open," said Secretary Cohen.](#)

[Secretary Cohen](#) also explained that as schools have opened, the current science shows that younger children are less likely to become infected, have symptoms, experience severe disease or spread the virus.

Find all public health guidance for K-12 schools [here](#).

### **Whatever Your Reason, Get Behind The Mask**

NCDHHS has put together [toolkits](#) for the "Prevent and Protect" and "Whatever You Reason" public outreach campaigns for businesses, community organizations, or health care associations. See more in the [Marketing and Campaigns Guide](#). See videos for the "Whatever You Reason, Get Behind The Mask" Campaign in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).



### **More COVID-19 News**

- NCDHHS officials are [urging North Carolinians to get vaccinated for the flu](#) and stress the added importance because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Governor Cooper and Secretary Cohen [met](#) with Dr. Deborah Birx, the White House Coronavirus Task Force coordinator, on Sept. 9. The three participated in a call with the Task Force to discuss the state's response to COVID-19. [Read more](#).
- Nearly \$40 million will [go to help connect students to high-speed internet](#), a need made more evident by remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- DHHS [announced its selection of an additional vendor, Optum Serve, to continue increasing COVID-19 testing capacity across the state](#).
- Guidance documents have been updated for [Fall Events, COVID-19's impact on children, and Youth and Amateur Sports](#). New guidance documents were recently created for [Administrators and Participants of Youth and Amateur Sports and Employers Requiring Negative tests](#). You can find all the NCDHHS guidance [here](#).

### **Get the Latest Information**

- Visit the [NCDHHS COVID-19 Response website](#) for information, a [data dashboard, updates, live briefings and more](#).
- [Go to North Carolina's COVID-19 Information Hub](#) for resources, information and assistance across state government, including the latest [news releases](#).
- Follow NCDHHS on [social media](#) for advance notice of press briefings and a recap.



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