



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY AMERICAS

MID-ATLANTIC DISTRICT, FIELD OFFICE, PUERTO RICO
566 COLUMBUS STREET
FORT BUCHANAN, PR 00934

8/6/2021

Sponsors and Staff:

Welcome back to another year of learning with DoDEA Schools in Puerto Rico. We are so excited to get the 2021-22 school year kicked off and have students back in our buildings. The purpose of this letter is to help answer some questions you might have as we prepare for our return to school.

Please be aware that last week we had COVID protocols and guidelines version VII released from DoDEA HQ. The entire document can be found online at: <https://www.dodea.edu/covid-operations.cfm>

As you are aware DoDEA schools are directly connected to the HPCON level of the local installation. Currently Ft. Buchanan is at HPCON Bravo and Ramey is at HPCON Bravo+. Therefore, both areas will attend school full-time in-person with regular instruction from teachers. We will keep you informed if the HPCON levels change and the impact it may have on our day-to-day routines and instruction.

DoDEA has worked hand in hand with the CDC since the onset of COVID. As early as March 2020 we began designing multiple prevention strategies for the health and care of our students and personnel. Some of these strategies include appropriate masking procedures, encouraging vaccination, physical distancing, handwashing, staying home when sick, contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, and the continuous ongoing cleaning and disinfection of our buildings and busses.

PLEASE NOTE: DoDEA guidelines indicate that masks are required to be worn by all students and staff while indoors and on busses regardless of your vaccination status.

Masks with exhalation valves or vents are not authorized. In an outdoor setting, masks are mandatory in crowded settings or when physical spacing cannot be maintained.

The Home-based Screening Acknowledgement form must be completed prior to returning to school. This form only needs to be completed once for each child and submitted to your school. It is available at the following link:

<https://www.dodea.edu/upload/Home-based-Screening-Acknowledgment-for-Students-and-Adults-7-15-21-2.pdf>

DoDEA guidelines also require employees and sponsors of enrolled students to perform the Daily Self Screening protocols before departing for school or a school sponsored activity.

According to the CDC, the risk of infection from touching a surface is low. That being said, DoDEA personnel will continue to clean and disinfect our buildings and busses to decrease any

potential spreading. As a mitigation factor we also encourage students to bring their own water bottle/container as drinking fountains will be available only to refill bottles.

Our most recent guidelines encourage staff and students to avoid large events and gatherings if possible. Additionally, nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations will be limited on our campuses in order to prevent the spread of the virus or any of its variants.

Individuals with a positive test result or a confirmed diagnosis of COVID can return to school once the following conditions are met; 1) a minimum of 10 days from the start of the symptoms 2) symptom free and 3) fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. Members of the student's household are requested to quarantine in accordance with public health or the local installation guidelines. **Please be respectful and protect one another by staying home if you are sick or experiencing symptoms.**

Student attendance at school continues to be mandatory unless the student is ill. Please contact the nurse or the attendance clerk if your student will be staying home due to illness. Students are expected to leave campus at the end of the school day unless they are involved in an after school activity. We will have additional information coming out soon concerning extracurricular clubs, activities, sports, etc.

Please be aware that we will be sharing lots of information in the coming weeks. Please monitor your emails and our school social media sites to ensure you don't miss essential information.

Again, we look forward to a fun and healthy school year and wish all of you the absolute best in the year to come!

Stay well,

Jacob S. Sherwood, Ed.D.
Community Superintendent of
DoDEA Schools, Puerto Rico