

Playbook for K-12 School Spring Events 2021

Proposed Guidance for Prom,
Graduation, and other Spring
Events in the 2021 School Year

Updated: 4/27/21



Purpose of playbook and directions for use

What is the purpose of this playbook?

The purpose of this document is to provide school leaders health and safety guidance for planning and executing Spring Events and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This guidance was created by a working group consisting of more than a dozen school leaders, including superintendents and principals, in collaboration with the RIDOH, RIDE, and EdOC.

The goal of this guidance is to assist schools in maintaining a level of normalcy, while utilizing mitigation measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

How should I use this playbook?

Please keep this playbook in an area which is **easily accessible** for reference.

This playbook is intended to **share general best practices and health and safety guidance for hosting Spring Events** which can be used by **all schools**.

In the event of a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 during Spring Events, in addition to this resource, RIDOH, RIDE, and EdOC will support you throughout the process.

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Planning for Spring Events 2021



**General Guidance for all School
Sponsored Spring Events**

**RHODE
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Pre-Event Planning: Appointing Key Leaders

It is recommended that schools create planning teams, members of which should include an **Event Organizer** that liaises directly with RIDOH and a **Contact Tracing Specialist** (typically the school nurse).

The Planning Team's key responsibilities would include:

- Ensuring that event plans stay in compliance with published guidance
- Working directly with contractors, chaperones, and staff to ensure compliance
- Compile contact info and vaccination date (if applicable) of all attendees
- Ensuring mass communication system is in place in case there is a positive case and attendees need to be contacted in a timely manner
- Once venue location, day, time are definitive, complete the [COVID-19 Control Plan](#) and communicate the key aspects of the plan to school leaders and other necessary school staff

Pre-Event Planning: Completing A COVID-19 Control Plan

Schools will be required to complete a [COVID-19 Control Plan](#) prior to the start of the event. This will serve as the written planning document.

- Having a written record allows transparency with the community.
- If a venue has an existing COVID-19 plan, the planning teams should work to ensure it is compliant with guidance and is integrated within the school's plan.

Pre-Event Planning: Capacity of Venues and Spaces

It is recommended schools utilize venues with robust circulation and ventilation systems. Indoor capacity limits are not flexible at this time. Outdoor capacity may be expanded (please refer to general events guidance for DBR approval process). Schools looking to expand the capacity limits, must submit their plan for approval 30 days in advance to DBR at: dbr.ri.gov/covid/plans/plans.php.

	BEGINNING May 7th	BEGINNING May 28th
Prom event with food served	80% up to 200 indoors 500 outdoors	100% capacity with no cap
Prom or alternative event without food	80% up to 500 indoors 80% capacity with no cap outdoors DBR/municipal approval for 2,500+ indoor and outdoor events	100% capacity with no cap DBR/municipal approval for 2,500+ indoor events

*These numbers are based on the assumption that the percent of Rhode Islanders being vaccinated continues to increase.

*These numbers include the total number of individuals in attendance. Regardless of capacity, dancing must follow catered events guidance. Proms with food must follow catered events capacity and proms without food or alternative spring events may follow Venues of Assembly capacity.

Pre-Event Planning: Timing of Subsequent Events

Option 1: Consider holding other Spring events (i.e. Senior Prom and Graduation) on the same weekend to minimize cost (if renting a tent and/or other supplies) and minimize possible contact tracing efforts.

Option 2: Consider having ample time between Prom and Graduation to minimize the number of students who would have to miss one event if there was a positive case following the initial event.

**Schools may also wish to encourage students to get tested 11 days prior to large spring events so they have the time required to isolate themselves if they were to test positive.*

Event Day Management: At The Door Screening

- All attendees must be pre-screened for COVID-19 symptoms at the door prior to entry to the event. See sample screening tool on slide 26.
- Schools are encouraged to use “touchless” registration and pre-screening by leveraging use of digital ticket sales and pre-screening programs.

Event Day Management: Disinfection and Cleaning

- Plan to schedule additional janitorial or staff devoted to cleaning and disinfecting high-traffic or high-touch areas.
- Plan for conveniently placed sanitation stations (i.e., at entry/exit points, high touch areas, and/or each table).
- Limit the number of shared items, such as eating utensils or drinking glasses. Utilize disposable or single-use items where feasible.
- Microphones should be cleaned between users.
- Only use EPA approved disinfectants or 1/3 cup of bleach per gallon of room temperature water for cleaning and disinfecting high-traffic or high-touch areas.

Event Day Management: Disinfection and Cleaning (cont.)

- To verify that a product is effective against the SARS-COV2 virus, search the EPA's List N using the product's EPA number found on the product label.
- Follow the product manufacturer's cleaning instructions.
- EPA website: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-coronavirus-covid-19>
- For more information visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.htm>

Post-Event Guidance

- Attendees who become symptomatic after the event will contact the event planning team's contact tracing specialist and schedule a COVID-19 test.
- Encourage safe Post Event activities.
- Consider hosting in-school PCR or rapid testing events for students and staff who attended events.

Planning for High School Prom 2021

Pre-Prom Planning
Prom Day Management
Post-Prom Guidance

Pre-Prom Planning: Testing and Consent

- For Proms serving food, all attendees must present a negative COVID-19 test result from a sample collected no more than 48 hours prior to the event if they held prior to May 28. For Proms without food or those held after May 28, testing is strongly recommended. Schools may choose to accept a PCR or Rapid Antigen Test result, or both types equally. Proof of full vaccination may be acceptable in lieu of a test. Full vaccination is defined being at least 14 days past the final dose of a two-dose FDA-authorized vaccine series or 14 days from the initial dose of an FDA-authorized one-dose vaccine. **RIDOH and EdOC may be able to assist with mass testing prior to Prom.** Contact Raquel Woodmansee, raquel.woodmansee@ride.ri.gov, for more information.
- Letters of understanding should be shared with the school community to outline the 2021 Prom plans and requirements for attendance (ex. Testing/proof of vaccination, contact tracing procedures, dancing guidelines, mitigation measures, etc.). The recommendation is that the letter of understanding is signed by each student/guardian as a condition of purchasing a ticket for the event.
- Schools should develop a plan for screening attendees for COVID-19 symptoms. One option is to use the questions included on the template on page 26.

Prom Day Management: Dancing

Dancing activities at Prom must adhere to current Catered Events guidelines, regardless of capacity or event-type. Requirements from May 7-27:

- All attendees must wear a properly fitting mask during all dancing activities, and at all other times except while eating or drinking
- Dance with a stable group of individuals (i.e. those from their table/pod).
- Maintain no less than 3 feet of social distance from other dancers unless dancing with a partner or table/pod.
- Students stick to the same dancing partner throughout the event or have as few different partners as possible.

Requirements beginning May 28: Open dance floors, requirement for mask if indoors. Masks are also required outdoors unless you can continuously maintain 3 feet of space.

Prom Day Management: Dining

Requirements for Dining at Prom:

- A licensed caterer must be always on site where meals are served.
- Table capacity must be aligned with Catered Events guidance.
- Tables must be at least 3 feet apart, from the center point of the body of each adjacent seated person.
- Assigned seating and seating plan are required.

Prom Day Management: Social Interaction

- All attendees must wear a properly fitted mask during all Prom and alternative spring activities if they are indoors. They must also wear a mask if they are outdoors and cannot continuously maintain a distance of at least 3 feet from each other. Masks are not required while eating and drinking.
- Schools may choose to adopt methods of establishing stable pods or groups utilizing tables or grouped areas of tables. Guidance is flexible in this case to allow for differing sizes and spaces of venues. Examples include entry bracelets that use color coding for pods and assigning table seating.

Prom-Day Management: Space Layout

- For information on how to address DJs, live performances, or bands, please visit our most current [Safe Activities Regulations](#). Please note that regulations are subject to change.
- Pre-plan ingress and egress to allow for minimum of 3 feet social distancing.
- Plan to reduce number of students in restrooms at the same time.

Prom Day Management: Additional Mitigation Areas

- **CI/CT:** Table seating plans are required. Prom planning team must keep the seating plans and all attendees' contact information on record for at least 30 days. It is recommended that schools have a mass communication plan to notify/message all attendees rapidly if widespread transmission occurs.
- **Additional Mitigation Measures:**
 - Develop plans to limit congregating at entry/exit and common areas
 - Limit numbers allowed in restrooms
 - Conduct regular disinfecting of common areas
 - Make hand sanitizer readily available

Planning for High School Graduation 2021

**Pre-Grad Planning
Grad Day Management
Post-Grad Guidance**

Pre-Grad Planning: Testing and Consent

- Testing for all indoor graduation events is strongly recommended. Proof of vaccination may be acceptable in lieu of a test. Full vaccination is defined being at least 14 days past the final dose of an FDA-authorized two-dose vaccine series or 14 days since the initial dose of an FDA-authorized one-dose vaccine.
- **RIDOH and EdOC may be able to facilitate mass testing events for schools prior to event.** Contact Raquel Woodmansee, raquel.woodmansee@ride.ri.gov, for more information.
- Schools should develop a plan for screening attendees for COVID-19 symptoms. One option is to use the questions included on the template on page 26.
- Schools are encouraged to be transparent with families for conditions for graduation attendance.

Grad Day Management: Social Interaction

- All attendees required to wear properly fitting masks if they are indoors or cannot continuously maintain more than 3 feet spacing outdoors. Graduates may remove their masks to have their picture taken alone or with members of their households.
- Schools will choose to adopt methods of establishing stable groups utilizing seating charts. Guidance is flexible in this case to allow for differing sizes and spaces of venues.
- Visitors of one graduate can be seated together as a stable group. There must be at least 3 feet of spacing between each stable group.
- Graduates must be seated at least 3 feet from one another.

Grad Day Management: Diplomas

Diplomas may be distributed hand-to-hand as long as both parties are masked and proper hand hygiene (e.g. sanitizing) is followed before and after diploma acceptance.

Potential alternative plans include:

- Have students pick up their diploma cover (without the diploma) prior to graduation day. Have them carry it to the stage to hold for a photo opportunity.
- Have a table with the diplomas in their covers. Clearly label the covers on the outside. Have students pick up their diploma upon arrival to the venue. Have them carry it to the stage as their name is called.
- Prior to graduation day, distribute template diplomas with generic information that students can carry up to the stage to use for a photo opportunity.

Grad Day Management: Space Layout

- Assigned seats are required for both graduates and attendees.
- Pre-plan ingress and egress to allow for minimum of 3 foot social distancing. Plan to have separate entrance and exits and staggered arrivals and releases to avoid congestion at the entrances and exits.
- Consider having local fire/police to help usher families to their vehicles after the event has concluded.
- Consider live stream options for those unable to attend in person.
- For indoor events, schools should limit the duration of the event.

Grad Day Management: Additional Mitigation Areas

- **Diploma Stage Walk:** Social distancing marked off. Students must wear a properly fitting mask if indoors or less than 3 feet spacing outdoors. Exception when posing for a picture as their name is called on stage. Photos may be taken alone or with members of their household without masks.
- **CI/CT:** Graduation planning team keeps all attendees' contact information on record for at least 30 days. It is recommended to have a mass communication plan to notify/message all attendees rapidly if widespread transmission occurs.
- **Additional Mitigation Measures:**
 - Microphones should be cleaned between users.
 - Limit numbers allowed in restrooms and schedule frequent cleanings
 - Conduct regular disinfecting of common high touch areas
 - Make hand sanitizer readily available at entrances/exits

Further Reading and References

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). (n.d.). Retrieved March 18, 2021, from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

COVID-19 Screening Tool [PDF]. (n.d.). Rhode Island: State of Rhode Island.

Event Template: COVID-19 Control Plan [PDF]. (2020). Rhode Island: State of Rhode Island.

Events and Gathering: Readiness and Planning Tool [PDF]. (n.d.). The Center for Disease Control.

List n: Disinfectants for coronavirus (covid-19). (2020, December 15). Retrieved March 18, 2021, from <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-coronavirus-covid-19>

Phase III Guidelines for Restaurants [PDF]. (2020, November 6). Rhode Island: State of Rhode Island.

Protect Your Household Guidance [PDF]. (2021, March 12). Rhode Island: State of Rhode Island.

Van den Berg, P., Schechter-Perkins, E. M., Jack, R. S., Epshtein, I., Nelson, R., Oster, E., & Branch-Elliman, W. (2021). Effectiveness of three versus six feet of physical DISTANCING for CONTROLLING spread of COVID-19 among primary and secondary students and STAFF: A Retrospective, STATE-WIDE cohort study. *Clinical Infectious Diseases*. doi:10.1093/cid/ciab230

Event Day Management: Sample Pre-Screening Form

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS IN THE PAST 24 HOURS?	YES	NO
FEVER OR CHILLS		
SHORTNESS OF BREATH		
NEW LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL		
HEADACHE		
COUGH		
NAUSEA OR DIARRHEA		
MUSCLE OR BODY ACHES		
RUNNY OR STUFFY NOSE		
FATIGUE		
HAVE YOU BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A CLOSE CONTACT BY A SCHOOL OFFICIAL OR THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND DIRECTED TO QUARANTINE FOR THIS DATE?		
HAVE YOU TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 WITHIN THE PAST 10 DAYS?		
HAVE YOU TRAVELED OUTSIDE THE 50 STATES OR DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA IN THE PAST 10 DAYS?		
HAVE YOU TRAVELED TO RHODE ISLAND FROM A HOT SPOT WITHIN THE 50 STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WITH THE PAST 10 DAYS?		

(School Name) Prom 2021 COVID Attestation Form Template

Student Name:

Date:

Parent/Guardian Name:

Grade:

School Name (if different):

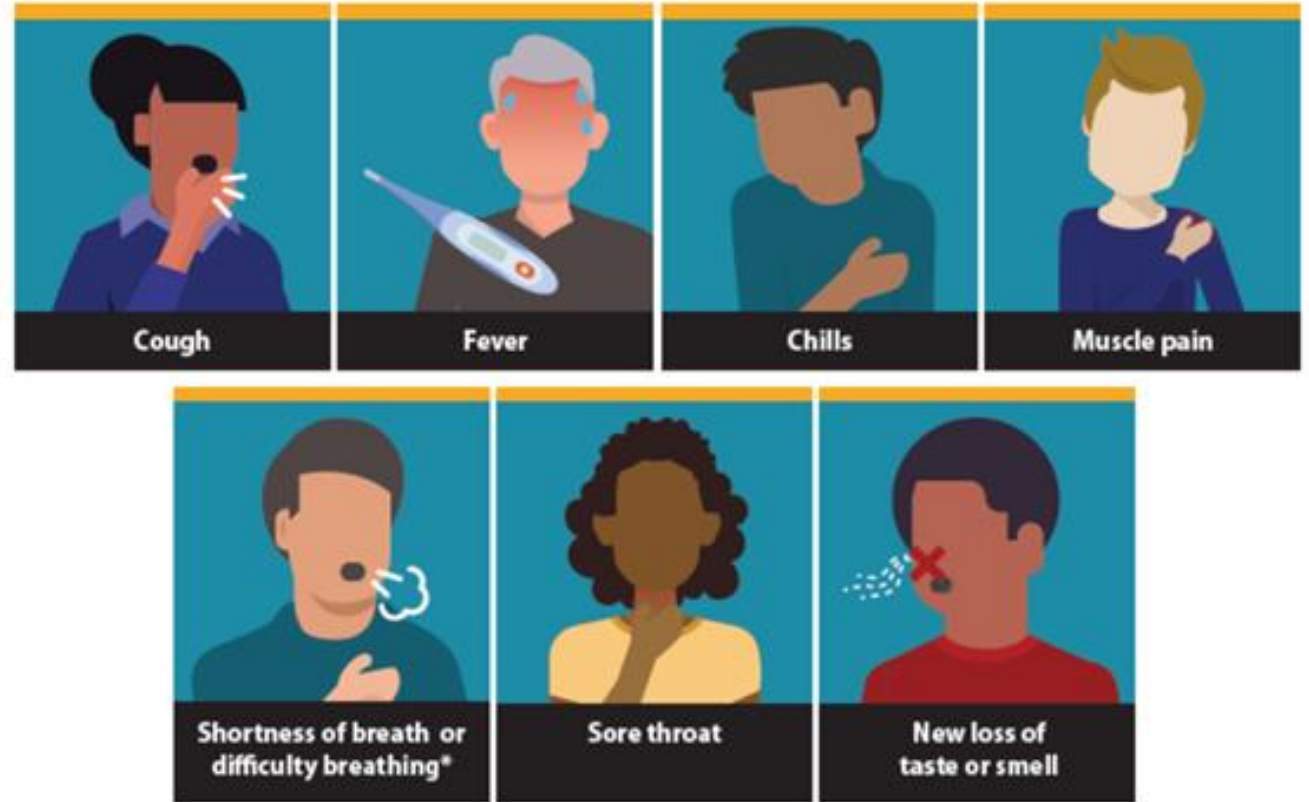
I hereby attest that the following information is accurate and legitimate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Student/Parent/Guardian:

Date:

Symptoms of COVID-19

- Fever or Chills
- Cough (new)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose (new)
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea



<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Glossary

Term	Definition
Attestation	In reference to COVID-19 screening, attestation is the act of providing written verification or proof that you do not meet the probable criteria of being currently ill with COVID-19
Close contact	Being within 6 feet of an infected person (with or without a face mask) for a cumulative 15 minutes over a 24-hour period or having unprotected direct contact with secretions or excretions of a person with confirmed COVID-19 during the infectious period
Community transmission	Occurs when individuals acquire COVID-19 through contact with someone in their local community, rather than through travel to an affected location
Confirmed case	A person who has tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 infection (the virus that causes COVID-19)
Contact tracing	Process of identifying individuals who have had close contact (see definition above) with someone infected with COVID-19
Consistent/Stable Group	A consistent group of students and staff who interact with each other but not with members of other groups on a regular basis. Groups should be as small as possible, with maximum numbers outlined in the different reopening scenarios. When in a stable group, each group member must physically distance themselves from each other and from other consistent groups.

Glossary

Term	Definition
COVID-19	Abbreviation for the disease caused by the novel coronavirus SARS CoV-2
EdOC	Education Operation Center. The Education Operations Center (EdOC) is an interagency center located at the R.I Department of Education that brings together expertise from a range of state agencies to collaborate, coordinate, and communicate efficiently with schools
Incubation period	The time between exposure to an infection and the appearance of first symptoms. The virus that causes COVID-19 has an incubation period of 2-14 days
Infectious period (asymptomatic cases)	2 days prior to testing (the date the swabbing was conducted) until CDC criteria to discontinue isolation are met
Infectious period (symptomatic cases)	2 days before symptom onset until CDC criteria to discontinue isolation are met

Glossary

Term	Definition
Isolation	Process of separating individuals who are infected with COVID-19 from others. Isolation lasts a minimum of: 10 days from symptom onset if symptomatic. 10 days from the date of specimen collection (test) if asymptomatic. 20 days for individuals with severely immunocompromising conditions.
Protocol	Recommended actions to follow if a probable or confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs
Probable case	Individual who has at least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of smell or new loss of taste, OR at least two of the following symptoms: fever (measured > 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or subjective) or chills (rigors), body aches (myalgia), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, or congestion or runny nose
Quarantine	Process of separating and restricting the movement of individuals who were in close contact with someone who tested positive or had symptoms of COVID-19. Persons in quarantine should self-monitor for 14 days for symptoms and seek medical advice as needed. RIDOH recommends all close contacts of people with COVID-19 get tested on day 5 of quarantine or later. Close contacts who are vaccinated are not required to quarantine.

Glossary

Term	Definition
RIDE	Rhode Island Department of Education
RIDOH	Rhode Island Department of Health
Screening	Assessing individuals for symptoms of COVID-19 verbally or via self/parent attestation. Temperature checks may be performed by the school if desired.
Symptomatic individual	A person who is experiencing one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 as defined in CDC guidelines
Testing	Two types of tests are available for COVID-19: viral tests and antibody tests. Viral tests indicate if you have a current infection while antibody tests indicate a previous infection. Throughout this document, 'testing' refers to the viral test to diagnose a person with COVID-19.
Vaccination	Used interchangeably with immunization or inoculation. A person who is vaccinated for COVID-19 is not required to quarantine as a close contact. Some other restrictions are also reduced for those who are vaccinated.