

# School Activities

GUIDANCE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

November 2020



The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) to reconsider standard practices and activities in schools. This guidance document is intended to provide general suggestions and safety considerations related to school activities such as pictures, assemblies, fundraisers, and more. Though we hope to be able to maintain as many traditional activities as possible, we must always ensure that the safety of our staff, students, and families remains in the forefront of our mind.

## Preventing and Limiting the Spread of COVID-19

- Wash your hands often.
- Avoid close contact with individuals outside of your home and individuals who are ill. Maintain social distance of 6 feet or greater.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering or mask when around others.
- Cover coughs and sneezes and wash hands thoroughly after.
- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily and as needed.
- Teach staff, parents, and students to monitor their health and stay home when they are not feeling well.



## School Gatherings

To limit the spread of the virus, schools must avoid congregation of large groups until it is safer to do so based on public health data and community spread. Follow the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) guidance for virtual activities](#) in lieu of field trips, student assemblies, special performances, school-wide parent meetings, and spirit nights. Meetings and gatherings conducted via a virtual platform are safer and can still allow for social connection by providing an opportunity for staff, students, and families to engage.

## School Pictures

School photographers who are contracted to take student pictures may do so under the following conditions:

- The photographer and any supporting staff must wear a mask that covers their mouth and nose and adhere to 6-foot social distancing;
- Students should be given the option to not take pictures;
- Photographer must schedule picture taking in such a way as to avoid congregation of large groups of students. There must not be long lines of students waiting, and there must be at least 6 feet of social distancing among students in the line. It may be helpful to use visual cues to ensure adequate social distancing among students as well as between the photographer and the students being photographed;
- If possible, it is highly encouraged to have the photographer take pictures outside. Air quality and weather conditions should be assessed prior to planning outdoor events.

## School Fundraisers

School fundraising is often an essential practice to support extra-curricular activities for students. Fortunately, there are multiple virtual fundraising options available with today's technology. Some examples include online auctions, online raffles, or even virtual talent shows where a monetary donation equals a vote. Certain traditional fundraisers can also be converted to an online design. For example, many elementary schools opt to conduct walkathons, which encourage physical activity. Schools should strive to conduct fundraisers that promote student and staff wellness by offering opportunities for physical activity, or in the case of food fundraisers, healthy choices that meet the [Smart Snacks Standards](#). Please see the following resources for additional creative ideas to support your school programs.

If the school decides to continue with more traditional fundraising options, such as selling of goods (magazines, holiday merchandise, etc.), it is important to communicate clear and safe procedures for processes such as payment collection and distribution of purchased products. These procedures should include essential COVID-19 mitigation practices such as wearing of face coverings, avoiding congregation, and maintaining social distancing. For example, the school may wish to organize scheduled pickup times to avoid congregation or schedule no-contact front door delivery of purchased goods. If at all possible, online payment options should be utilized. For in-person fundraising activities, organized in accordance with the current public health order and NMPED school reentry requirements, limiting of parent or outside volunteers is encouraged. Student and staff cohorts should also be maintained to the greatest extent possible.

**Thank you for your tireless work and dedication to the safety of the staff, students, and families in your school community.**

### RESOURCES

- [Action for Healthy Kids](#)
- [Alliance for a Healthier Generation](#)
- [Alliance for a Healthier Generation, Fundraising](#)
- [CDC Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Hand Hygiene in Schools](#)
- [CDC Operating Schools During COVID-19](#)
- [Kaiser Permanente Thriving Schools](#)
- [SHAPE America Virtual Fundraiser Resource](#)
- [Springboard to Healthy Schools](#)
- [Unique Fundraising Ideas for Schools](#)
- [USDA Best Practices for Healthy School Fundraisers](#)
- [USDA Smart Snacks in Schools Flyer](#)

