

# **Knox County R-1**



## **Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan**

**2021-2022**

**Revised and Board Approved:**

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# **Knox County R-I School District District Wide Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan**

## **Introduction:**

Our school and community were impacted in an unprecedented way by the emergency of the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), the causative agent of COVID-19. The closure of school from March 2020, to the end of that school year, May 2020, caused us to have to rethink how our schools could continue to provide a quality education to all of our students. As we moved through this pandemic, we learned that children are less vulnerable to infection and are unlikely to become seriously ill with COVID-19. The profound negative impact of loss of in-person schooling and on the well-being of children has been well-documented and thus the Knox County R-I School District made the decision to return to in-person learning for the 2020-2021 school year with some added layers of protection. With our experience of in-person learning last year we discovered that positive cases were extremely low and transmission in school was in all cases absent. Therefore, we will continue with in-person learning for the 2021-2022 school year.

However, we must be attentive to the fact that this public health crisis has not ended. We will continue to monitor situations as we progress through the school year. A large majority of our employees have been fully vaccinated, which improves our situation over last year. We will continue to prepare our schools to reduce the chances that any child or adult acquire the infection during the school day and be armed with a protocol to respond to a case of infection in a school. We should be poised to adapt to new information as it emerges, so that we can create the safest and most robust educational experience possible.

The Knox County R-I School district understands that face to face instruction is more effective for our students, and we want the students to be here at school to receive their education. Our plan is to have school here every day with every student in as normal a capacity as possible, however there may come a time when masks may be mandated, or students have to stay at home. In the event that students have to stay home, the school will be delivering instructions remotely.

**Suggestions in this document to add layers to protect students, staff members, and community members will center around the following:**

- Parents screening their students for illness
- Social distancing to the extent possible
- Reducing large gatherings to the extent possible
- Optional mask wearing
- Sanitizing and cleaning
- Procedures in the case of positive COVID-19 test

## **Entering the school building/Screening for illness**

**Students:** More than ever, it is important sick children not be sent to school. Parents please use the most extreme caution when deciding to send or keep your child home. Parents will need to screen their students before they send them to school using established protocol.

**Parents:** Parents will be allowed in the building if they need to conduct school business. If you are simply dropping something off for your student, you will be asked to leave it in the front entrance. We are discouraging meal deliveries. If your students want to pack a lunch, they can do so. In the event that meals are delivered, they will need to be left in the front entrance for students to grab when they go to lunch. There will be labels and pens for your use. We will have a locked box for money and checks. Please label everything. If any item is time sensitive, please call the office with those details. Parents are asked to call ahead to have a student dismissed, and the student will be escorted out to you.

**Visitors:** Visitors will not be allowed in the building unless they have school business to conduct and have permission to enter the building.

## **Social Distancing and Avoiding Large Gatherings to the Extent Possible**

**On school buses:** Social distancing on our buses would make it hard to transport every student to school. We will continue to allow parents to drop off their students at 7:15 a.m. Please drop them off at the elementary doors. Student will go to the elementary gym. The State is asking that we continue contact trace all our students as much as possible. Therefore, parents will also be asked to establish their students' morning and afternoon riding schedules for the year and those will not be allowed to change through the school year unless arrangements have been made with the superintendent's office. If a student needs to go to a different location after school, other than what was originally arranged, then the parent will have to make arrangements to pick their student up. **Students will not be able to switch buses, nor will bus passes be issued for students to ride other buses.**

**Breakfast/Lunch:** Shifts will be staggered and only every other seat at each table will be utilized.

## **Recommendations for Wearing Face Masks**

Masks will be optional at school facilities, grounds and events unless guidance from CDC and local health depart advise us otherwise.

## **Sanitizing and Cleaning**

**Students:** Students will be educated on appropriate hand washing as well as encouraged to clean hands and sanitize frequently.

**Staff Members:** Staff members will help educate students on appropriate hand washing and sanitizing. Staff members will also encourage students to clean hands and sanitize frequently and do so themselves.

**Parents/Visitors:** Parents and visitors walking in the building will be asked to sanitize hands before they will be allowed to walk in the building.

### **Other Changes**

**Water Fountains:** All the water fountains have been turned back on and have bottle fillers. Students are encouraged to bring water bottles to school with them with their names on them.

#### **Upon arrival to school:**

Elementary students will report to their classrooms.

High School and Middle school students will report to designated areas.

**Extra and co-curricular activities.** While we are all anxious to return to something approaching "normal" when it comes to extracurricular activities, it is important to maintain some level of risk awareness when it comes to COVID-19.

Based on coordination with the Knox County Health Department, the following standards are established with regard to extra-curricular activities:

- Masks are optional at all times for spectators, players, coaches, and all other support personnel.
- Gates will return to collecting admission in person, and there will be a single gate for all spectators. Visiting and home spectators will still be encouraged, but not required, to sit in separate designated areas.
- Concessions services will return to normal operations.
- Attendance limits are no longer in effect.
- Teams, to include visiting teams and support personnel, may utilize all facilities such as locker rooms, dugouts, bleachers, etc.
- Knox County R-1 is not waiving attendance requirements to maintain eligibility. Students who do not feel comfortable learning at school due to the threat of illness will not be eligible to compete in extracurricular activities.
- If a student-athlete presents with COVID signs or symptoms (temperature, cough, etc.), that individual will begin a 10 day quarantine pending receipt of a doctor note or completion of the quarantine. At the completion of the quarantine, the student-athlete will return to play using the applicable MSHSAA protocol.
- If a student-athlete presents a positive **test**, that individual will isolate in accordance with local health care guidance. The student-athlete will return to play using the applicable

MSHSAA protocol. Any individual who had close contact, direct contact, or direct contact with secretions will immediately enter a 10 day quarantine and may return to play after 7 days if he or she can provide a negative test.

- Parents may no longer transport their children to away games, barring a special issue addressed in our Activities Handbook. All student-athletes are expected to travel to events on school-provided transportation.

### **Changes from Nurse Kathy:**

I will be limiting my school health office to 2 students at a time to maintain social distancing. I have reorganized my office and medication/treatment room. The treatment room will now function as an isolation room. I will care for your child when needed, as always, but I will also be checking temperature and assessing for signs of COVID -19 on all students who come to the nursing office for assistance. I will sanitize my office after each student encounter.

Face masks will be optional in the Nursing Office, unless symptoms of COVID are present. If a student has a fever or any signs of COVID-19 they will be required to wear a mask and wait in the isolation room until picked up from school. The student will be walked out to their pick-up person. The pick-up person should wait outside the elementary building and will not be allowed to enter the building to decrease the number of people in and out of the school.

Teachers and staff will also be assessed for illness as needed.

## **Procedures in the case of positive COVID-19 test**

In the event that someone in our school community tests positive, the school district will work closely with the health department to determine the course of action. Contact tracing will be used to determine whether or not the incident is isolated. From that determination the school will make a decision, in close coordination with the Health Department, to quarantine to those individuals that could have been impacted.

### **Contact Tracing**

Definition of a Contact - a person that has had close contact with an individual who is symptomatic or confirmed positive for COVID-19.

Upon notification of a positive COVID-19 case, contacts in the school will be evaluated for symptoms and informed that they may have been exposed to COVID-19. The Knox County Health Department will be notified in order to make a determination of whether specific individuals will quarantine, isolate, or continue with their work/education. Vaccinated individuals are not required to quarantine or isolate.

## **Re-Entry Information for the Elementary**

### **Transportation:**

Students in grades PreK-5 are not required to wear masks on the bus and will have assigned seats on the bus.

### **Arrival:**

Students dropped off by parents no earlier than 7:15 in the morning, will wait in the gym. Students will not be allowed to go to classrooms before 7:50.

### **Breakfast: (7:50-8:15)**

Breakfast will be offered in the High School Cafeteria. Morning helpers will be in to help students with breakfast and to help sanitize afterwards.

### **Supplies:**

Each student will need to have and use their own school supplies. The school will provide all non-personalized supplies to classroom teachers. Students should keep these items in their desks and not share them with other students.

### **Recess Expectations:**

Same grade levels will be allowed to be on the playground at the same time. If two different grade levels are on the playground at the same time, they will have to split up with the younger grade-level having priority over the upper playground.

Recess and playground equipment may be used. Hand washing after playing on the playground should become normal practice.

### **Cafeteria Expectations:**

Tables will be assigned for each class. Classroom teachers will also have a seating arrangement for their students. Tables will be wiped down between groups.

## **High School/Middle School Student Re-opening Plan**

### **Arrival**

- Students need to eat breakfast upon arrival and report to their designated locations. Unless actively eating.
  - MS students: West bleachers in gym

- HS students: East bleachers in gym, library, or cafeteria

### **Class Time**

- Students will sanitize their hands in and out of each class.
- Students will wipe down their desk area at the end of each class.

### **Passing Time**

- Students are allowed to wear backpacks to eliminate locker traffic.

### **Lunch**

- Shifts will be staggered. Only every other seat will be used.
- Some teachers may choose for their classes to return to their classrooms to eat.



## Mitigation and Prevention Strategies

This is not a complete list of mitigation and prevention strategies the District may access during the 2021-2022 school year. The District will implement mitigation and prevention strategies as necessary to address the district's needs, or as determined by the Knox County Health Department.

| <b>Mitigation and Prevention Strategies</b>  | <b>District Response<br/>(In collaboration with the Knox County Health Department)</b>  |
|--|---|
| Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not a county mask mandate</li> <li>• Masks are allowed and encouraged</li> </ul>  |
| Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students in pre-k through 5th grade are in cohorts and pods</li> <li>• Students will social distance when possible</li> <li>• Lunches will be staggered and seating spaced out.</li> <li>• School doors will open earlier to encourage parents to drop off and pick up students to allow more social distancing on buses.</li> </ul> |
| Handwashing and respiratory etiquette  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taught and reinforced</li> <li>• Sanitizer and tissue provided</li> <li>• Water bottle fillers at all water fountains</li> <li>• Hand washing posters posted in all bathrooms</li> </ul>   |
| Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modified layouts</li> <li>• Installation of new HVAC units</li> <li>• Clean and disinfect all work areas, counters, restrooms, doorknobs, desks, keyboards, cafeteria tables, etc. several times daily.</li> <li>• Disinfect buses after each route/trip</li> </ul>  |
| Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the state, and local health departments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The District collaborates with the Knox County Health Department to perform contact tracing and quarantine activities.</li> <li>• The District will maintain a room in the nursing services office for quarantine.</li> </ul>  |

| <b>Mitigation and Prevention Strategies</b>  | <b>District Response<br/>(In collaboration with the Knox County Health Department)</b>  |
|--|---|
| Diagnostic, Screening, and Testing   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The District provides all families with information provided by the Knox County Health Department regarding screening.</li> <li>• The District Maintains a room for quarantine of any student demonstrating symptoms and waiting to be pick-up from school.</li> </ul> |
| Efforts to Provide Vaccinations  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The District collaborates with the Knox County Health Department to assist in distribution of information regarding vaccination.</li> </ul>  |
| Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities with Respect to the Health and Safety Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodations as necessary or as mandated by the Individualized Education Plan.</li> <li>• Form G Continuity of Services is included in the IEP for each student.</li> </ul>  |

## **Plan Development and Revisions**

The Knox County R-I School District will make every effort to minimize contact to COVID-19 and other communicable diseases; however, attending school will inherently introduce a great risk of exposure.

The Knox County R-I School District plans on moving forward with school starting on August 24, 2021 unless the federal, state, county or local health departments require us to close. Procedures may or can be modified at at time. It is impossible to plan for every scenario and situation. We will continue to collaborate with the Knox County Health Department, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Governor’s Office, and Center for Disease Control.

The Re-Entry Planning Team will continue to collaborate and meet periodically as needed to review and recommend any needed changes.

## **Continuity of Servies**

Teachers have had to train and prepare for alternate methods of instruction over the last year and a half, and have continued to improve this process. Should the need for remote learning arise, teachers will work with the students to address the Missouri Learning standards with the use of district technology and connectivity equipment.

The district will also continue to provide social emotional support to students and staff as needed. School counselors as well as the Behavioral Health Clinician will be available throughout the school year.

## **Re-Entry Planning Team**

Andy Turgeon - Superintendent  
Melissa Vannoy - Elementary Principal  
Alex Van Delft -HS Principal  
Nancy Goodwin - Federal Programs Coordinator  
Gary Mayer - Maintenance Director  
Wendy Kerby -Teacher  
Lisa Clark - Teacher  
Bethany Hoffman - Teacher  
Lisa Spilker - Teacher  
Mary Lynn Greenley-Teacher  
Karen Hodge \_Teacher  
Lori-Moots Clair -KCHD and Parent  
Caitlyn Clary -Teacher  
Mariah England - Teacher  
Lacy Hayes -Parent

## **General List of Stakeholders**

Superintendent of schools, Building Administrators, Director of Special Education, Curriculum Coordinator, Innovative Learning Specialist, I.T. Director, Maintenance Director, Transportation Director, School Nurse, Health Department, Parents, Teachers, Community Members, Board members

