

# RETURN TO LEARN

## EUFAULA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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### Introduction

Planning for and starting the 2021-2022 school year.

This document provides the framework with the considerations made by the district, stakeholders and school leaders for the 2021-2022 school year. This is subject to change as new information becomes available.

### Eufaula Public Schools Position Summary

Eufaula Public Schools (EPS) recognizes that public school is fundamental to child and adolescent development and well-being and provides our students with academic instruction, social and emotional skills, safety, reliable nutrition, therapy services, school health services, opportunities for physical activity, and many other benefits. COVID-19 and its ever-changing pandemic have led to many school closures including EPS. The American Academy of Pediatrics “strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school.” (AAP, 2020) The purpose of this document and its supporting documents is to safely and responsibly re-open EPS through effective mitigative measures.

### COVID-19 Screening

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus thought to spread mainly from person-to-person: between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks (CDC, 2020). **Masks will not be mandatory, but recommend (per CDC guidelines).**

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In order to protect students and staff health and prevent the spread of COVID-19, **Staff will check for the following symptoms/risk factors:**

1. Cough
2. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
3. Chills or repeated shaking with chills
4. Loss of taste or smell
5. Students complaining of fever or displaying fever-like symptoms will receive a temperature check. Symptoms include but are not limited to; sweating, chills and shivering, headache, irritability, general weakness, etc. If a measured temperature is greater than 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit parents will be contacted and the student sent home.
6. Known physical contact with a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19 if exposure to the active confirmed case occurred within the last 14 days.
7. Is part of the vulnerable population

Any student or staff who is experiencing these symptoms/risk factors should not ride the bus or attend school until they have received the appropriate testing/health care. If a student or staff tests positive for COVID-19, they must adhere to the following guidelines as well as the "Too Sick for School Rules," before returning to school and/or accessing school bus transportation:

1. The child/staff has had no fever in the last 3 days with no fever-reducing medications.
2. The child's/staff's respiratory symptoms have improved (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) and
3. It has been 10 days since the child's/staff's COVID-19 symptoms first appeared.

Parents and staff are encouraged to contact the school nurse and their local health department for further health guidance concerning a safe return to school. For more information on COVID-19 please visit

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and

<https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov/>. "Too Sick for School Rules" can be found in the at <https://www.ok.gov/health2/documents/Too%20Sick%20for%20School.2015.pdf>

## **Isolation Procedure**

- A student who exhibits a fever of 100 degrees or greater will be immediately isolated in a predetermined room, the parent will be contacted, and the student will be sent home. The student will be identified in a Google Form and/or staff email for the necessary staff to communicate with health officials. The school nurse has been identified as the liaison between Eufaula Public Schools and the McIntosh County Health Department. Staff experiencing a fever of 100 degrees or greater will also be sent home.

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- Students or staff who have been sent home due to temperature must remain out of school until fever-free with no fever-reducing medication for at least 3 days after receiving a negative COVID-19 test or 10 days if no COVID testing is done. During this time, the student will become a distance learner according to district procedures. Daily off-site attendance will be taken through the digital platform as stated in the district's digital learning guidelines.

## **Practice for Positive Case in Eufaula Public Schools**

- A student or staff who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be part of contact tracing by the McIntosh County Health Department. Such tracing will require the whereabouts of the student or staff in the school to be communicated to the McIntosh County Health Department.
- Based on the guidance from the McIntosh County Health Department, parents of other students who have been in close contact with the student or staff who tested positive for COVID-19 will be contacted.
- The classroom of the student or staff who tested positive will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized. EPS Administration will determine the need for classroom closure and sibling quarantine based on the guidance of the McIntosh County Health Department.
- Grab and go meals will be provided for students who have been placed in quarantine. Delivery will be dictated by the district's Child Nutrition capabilities.
- Any decision to quarantine or close a school site/district with a positive case will be based on the guidance of the McIntosh County Health Department and EPS Administration.
- Letters, texts, or other school communications that a positive COVID-19 case has been identified will be sent to staff and parents of the site with the case. Communication for proving daily attendance will also be given at that time.

## **Eufaula Public Schools Mitigative Measures**

Eliminating the risk for contracting COVID-19 is impossible, but mitigating the risk in the school setting can be accomplished by implementing certain strategies.

Mitigative strategies at EPS will be evidence-based, appropriate for the school-aged child, and easily adjusted for each individual student, family, and staff member. Physical distancing also referred to as social distancing is the act of keeping people separated in an effort to limit the spread of illness. Physical distancing is an effective mitigative measure for limiting the spread of COVID-19 but may be difficult to implement in the school setting. There is also a conflict between strict adherence to physical distancing and optimal academic and social-emotional learning in schools. EPS will implement physical distancing of 3 - 6 feet when feasible. When physical distancing is not feasible or interferes with optimal learning, EPS will focus on effective risk mitigation strategies such as hand hygiene and infection prevention education for staff, students, and families.

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EPS will implement other mitigative measures in addition to physical distancing. Those measures include modeling hand hygiene and healthy behaviors, cleaning and disinfecting per CDC guidance, and providing COVID-19 information and testing resources to students, families, and staff. Wearing a mask is an effective mitigative measure, but will not be required for EPS students, staff and visitors.

### **Efforts to provide vaccinations to school and communities:**

Eufaula Public School is working with McIntosh County Health Department and Muscogee (Creek) Nation Health Services to help provide vaccinations to our school and communities. McIntosh County Health Department will send a mobile van to the school. This van will provide COVID-19 vaccinations to all students and adults ages 12 and up, on the following dates: June 15, 2021 (during summer BEACON), August 16, 2021 (during meet the teacher night). Muscogee (Creek) Nation health services has offered to vaccinate all faculty and staff at EPS.

### **Bus Strategies for Safety**

- Recommend alternate transportation if possible for all bus riders.
- Make hand sanitizer readily available for bus riders upon entering and exiting the bus.
- Masks will not be required for bus riders.
- Maximize airflow by opening bus windows when appropriate.
- A seating chart will be used on all bus routes.

### **Cafeteria Strategies**

- Wash hands or use sanitizer before and after eating.
- Cohort students by class/grade when feasible.
- Create separate lunch periods to minimize the number of students in the cafeteria when possible.
- Utilize outdoor spaces when possible. For example, a picnic lunch when weather permits.

### **Classroom Strategies for Teachers**

- Maximize classroom space
- One directional seating (for all classrooms that don't have round tables)
- Placing desks 3 - 6 feet apart when feasible.
- Cohort classes and/or grade levels to minimize crossover among children and staff within the school.
- Seating charts (required by all teachers for all classes)

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- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting the classrooms.
  - Students who appear or display symptoms of illness based on the EPS Handbook Student Illness Section and/or COVID-19 Section should be sent to the office and/or nurse's office for assessment.
  - Secondary activity leaders and coaches will continue EPS COVID-19 screening procedures as identified in the Summer Interim Guidance.
  - Students with disabilities will have a plan developed and implemented focused on health and safety, academics, and appropriate related services.
  - Teachers, school, counselors, administrators, and staff will provide mental health support and resources to students and families throughout the pandemic.
  - Teachers will be expected to revert to distance learning as designed by their district when quarantine is required.

### **Hallways**

- Utilize one-way hallways to reduce close contact when feasible.
- Post signage to promote healthy mitigative measures
- Dismiss students in groups to decrease the number of students in the hallways.
- Use every other locker to promote physical distancing when possible.
- Assign lockers by cohort or possibly eliminate lockers, allowing students to carry their backpacks with them from class to class.

### **Playgrounds/Outdoor Areas**

- Students will clean their hands before using the playground equipment.
- Cohort students to limit the size of groups on the playground.

### **Visitors**

- Visitors are encouraged to call the office before arriving on campus.
- Visitors will be limited to the foyer of each campus unless pre-screened and approved by the site administrator.

## **Back to School**

We have a new registration system. **All students** (including students who were enrolled for the 2020-2021 school year) must re-enroll using this system.

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The health, safety, and well-being of each student, teacher, and support staff member is paramount.

Eufaula Public Schools will follow the guidelines provided by the Oklahoma Department of Health (the Oklahoma Health Department) and the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE). The use of personal protective equipment, physical distancing where possible, and in-depth cleaning and sanitizing procedures will be implemented.

In accordance with OSDE guidelines, on-site (face-to-face) instruction for students will resume on August 19, 2021. Eufaula Schools will also provide a PK-12 virtual learning option for interested students.

The Eufaula School District is committed to helping each student reach his or her full potential. Personalized learning has been and will continue to be our focus. We look forward to partnering with each of you in the creation of a culture focused on caring and safety as we navigate this new educational landscape together.

### **What is the first day for students?**

The first day of school for students is August 19, 2021. This date will only change if the Oklahoma Health Department sends updated guidance with this requirement, but this is not anticipated.

### **What are some key definitions?**

On-Site: Learning that occurs at school, sometimes referred to as face-to-face.

Remote: Learning that occurs at home or another site away from school. Remote learning will occur online and may include both recorded and simultaneous learning methods.

Blended: Students attend school based on-site learning and remote learning through a combination of recorded and simultaneous online teaching and learning methods.

Simultaneous Online Learning - Learning in which participants interact at the same time and in the same place.

Recorded Online Learning - Methods of recorded online learning include self-guided lesson modules, streaming video content, virtual libraries, posted lecture notes, and exchanges across discussion boards or social media platforms.

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## **What is the difference between Alternate Method of Instruction (AMI) and remote learning?**

Students will be issued devices to use at home for remote learning. Eufaula Public Schools is working to expand wifi opportunities for students to engage in remote lessons simultaneously and recorded.

## **Has the district chosen a Learning Management System (LMS)?**

An LMS is an online location platform that helps individuals manage administration, tracking, reporting and delivering of courses, lessons and tests. Upon OSDE approval, Eufaula Public Schools will use the following LMS's.

PK-2 : Seesaw

3-12: Google Classroom

Virtual: Edmentum

## **How will you help fill any gaps my student has from the previous year?**

Curriculum teams have worked on identifying missed essential standards and these will be addressed throughout the year in the curriculum and in concentrated support systems. Additionally, students will be assessed to determine individual strengths and deficits. These assessments will determine if students need additional support.

## **How will the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) needs of our students be addressed?**

Parents will be provided SEL tools and sites that will help them understand the needs of their child.

SEL sites will be available to teachers and parents.

Counselors will be available to support students, families, and teachers.

## **Will face coverings be required?**

No. The use of masks will not be mandatory for students, staff, or visitors at this time. This could change depending on an increase in cases in McIntosh County and OSDH, CDC, and OSDE guidelines. Eufaula Board of Education Members, EPS staff, parents, students and stakeholders will revisit this periodically to determine if

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any changes are needed. Students, staff, and visitors have the option of wearing masks. Masks will be provided for EPS staff. Students will need to provide their own mask. Disposable masks will be available in cases where they have been forgotten.

**Will bus transportation be provided?**

Yes, the district’s transportation department will follow its traditional route model. Students will be required to wear masks when riding the bus. We are planning no changes to bus schedules or bus stops.

We are asking that any parent/guardian that has the ability to transport their student(s), to please do so, to help reduce the number of students on the buses.

**Will students at the elementary still have classes like PE, art, music, guidance and library?**

Yes, students will continue to participate in activity classes, check out library books, and receive guidance and gifted instruction. In some cases, the teachers may present their lesson in the students’ classroom to reduce the amount of cleaning required. In other situations, such as PE, students may have an assigned area in the gym with specific materials assigned to their classroom.

**Will my elementary student have recess?**

Yes, elementary students will have recess time with restrictions that limit the number of students they come in contact with.

**Will social distancing guidelines be observed?**

Social distancing will be observed as much as possible, but at times students will be closer than the recommended 6 ft. apart.

**Will classrooms be arranged differently to protect students?**

Yes, classrooms will be arranged to provide more space between students along with additional measures. We will make every effort to provide distance but not limit students’ ability to interact and communicate with others in their classroom.

**If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, what will happen?**

In the event an individual tests positive, we will follow the latest guidance from the Oklahoma Health Department . We will be in direct contact with the local health

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department. This could result in a brief closure of a single school within the district to provide time for additional cleaning and sanitation.

### **Public Health Protocols**

Eufaula Public Schools will continue to follow suggestions and regulations set forth by the local health department.

Each student, faculty member and visitor will be screened before entering a school facility or vehicle. This will include taking temperatures and asking health-related questions, such as cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills or repeated shaking with chills, loss of smell or taste, fever with temperature greater than 100 degrees, known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have Covid-19 if exposure to the active confirmed case within the last 14 days.

By entering the bus or the school facility parents are agreeing to students having their temperature screening and declaring that the student(s) are not demonstrating any of the symptoms listed above.

Each site will also have a location to isolate any student who displays Covid-19 symptoms. Student(s) demonstrating symptoms must be picked up or sent home and will be encouraged to be tested. These individuals should not return until they have met the following criteria:

- 3 days with no fever and
- Respiratory symptoms have improved (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) and
- 10 days since symptoms first appeared
- 10 days have passed since test

Depending on your healthcare provider's advice and availability of testing, you might get tested to see if you still have COVID-19. If you will be tested, you can be around others after you receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for "I think or know I had COVID, and I had symptoms."

**When possible, students will be separated by at least three feet.**

### **Does Eufaula Public Schools have a virtual option for my students?**

Yes, Eufaula Public School offers a K-12 completely online educational program for students who do not feel comfortable returning to onsite instruction. The virtual

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program is called Eufaula Virtual Academy. Parents can sign up for this option at each site.

Students enrolled in Eufaula Virtual Academy will be given an opportunity at the end of each semester to return to onsite instruction.

**If students choose to enroll in Eufaula Virtual Academy will they be able to participate in extracurricular activities?**

Eufaula Virtual Academy offers extracurricular activities for students in grades 6-12. Virtual students are allowed to participate in those activities. K-5 students enrolled in Eufaula Virtual Academy will not have the option to participate in extracurricular activities.

**Based on the Oklahoma Health Department guidelines, will we have open house, assemblies, concerts etc?**

In-person gatherings must comply with the most current Oklahoma Health Department guidance.

**Will students be able to participate in extracurricular activities and sports in the fall?**

Yes, senior high and junior high athletes have already returned to campus to begin practice based on the Oklahoma Health Department and Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association (OSSAA) guidance. We anticipate sports activities in the fall with possible modifications as required by the Oklahoma Health Department and OSSAA.

**Will there be restrictions for band and/or choir?**

We will continue to serve students enrolled in band and/or choir classes while observing the most current guidelines. Band and music will also follow OSSAA guidance.

**Will my student eat lunch in their classroom?**

Based on current guidance, the Oklahoma Department of Health is recommending schools limit the number of students in the cafeteria. Proper sanitation of all areas will be completed after each meal. Students will not self-serve or share food. Parents are encouraged to send a water bottle with their student. Each water bottle should be clearly labeled with the student's name.

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**What precautions will be implemented in regard to cleaning and sanitizing?**

Sanitation and cleanliness is a high priority in the Eufaula School District. Frequently touched surfaces (door knobs...) and restrooms will be cleaned continuously throughout the school day. We have continued to purchase disinfectant sprays to quickly sanitize rooms between usage. We will also provide time for hand washing and hand sanitizer throughout our campuses. Students will be asked to sanitize their hands each time they leave and enter a new space.

**If a student comes to school sick, what will happen?**

If a student is ill, then they should not come to school. If a student becomes ill at school, the school nurse will screen students. If a student has a temperature over 100.4, the student will be sent home and will need to be fever free for 48 hours without medication before returning to school. When the child returns to school, he/she will check in with the school nurse.

**What happens if schools are prevented from having onsite instruction again?**

Distance learning will take place if schools are prevented from having onsite instruction. This plan includes Pre-K -2nd grade using Seesaw, Grades 3-12 using Google Classroom. Teachers will utilize Zoom to deliver live lessons. Students will learn how to use these Learning Management Systems by participating in lessons throughout the week while at school.

**Will our students have the same arrival and dismissal times?**

At this time, arrival and dismissal times will be the following:

No students will be allowed on campus prior to 7:45 am.

Elementary School starting at 8:15 a.m. and ending at 3:30 p.m.

Middle School starting at 8:15 a.m. and ending at 3:25 p.m.

High School starting at 8:15 a.m. and ending at 3:20 p.m.

In order to increase social distancing and to decrease the number of students in the cafeteria and gym before school starts, additional locations may be identified for student arrival.

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**How will the district serve students with special health needs or weakened immune systems?**

Students with special health needs or weakened immune systems will be accommodated through both onsite and remote instruction. If parents have concerns about their student who may be at high-risk because of COVID-19, they may explore the virtual learning option which allows the student to continue their education from the safety of their own home.

**In the event of remote learning, how will the district serve students who have special needs?**

In the event of a school closure, students that receive special education and/or related services (ex. speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy) will participate per the agreed upon contingency plan embedded in their IEP and will be notified via a Written Notice if/when remote learning is required.

Guidance listed in this document will be reassessed by the Eufaula School Board , at least, each 6 months. The Oklahoma State Department of Health's risk level color system will be used as guidelines for revisions.

We will continue to provide more information as changes develop..