

Benton Community Consolidated School District No. 47

K-8 Principal
Mrs. Ellen Gibbs

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K-4 Assistant Principal
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Mr. John Pulliam

5-8 Assistant Principal
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Mr. Doug Jones

Benton #47 Return to Learning Plan: 2021-2022 School Year

Benton #47 Parents/Guardians,

On Saturday, July 10, we received updated guidance from ISBE and the CDC regarding COVID-19 mitigation strategies and guidance on safely reopening schools. I am happy to report the following information as you begin planning for the first day of school on August 10, 2021. If you have not already done so, I would highly encourage you to download the Benton 47 app from the Apple App Store or Google Play store for push notifications and other important school updates throughout the school year. We look forward to seeing our students and anticipate another great year at Benton #47!

School Day:

- In accordance with the Illinois State Superintendent of Schools July 9, 2021 declaration, the District will be open fully for in-person learning for all student attendance days for the 2021-22 school year.
 - Under the declaration, remote learning is only required to be provided to students while under quarantine by IDPH or a local health department if they have contracted COVID-19 or been identified as a close contact to another individual who has tested positive.
 - If a student does not meet the above criteria, but requests remote learning due to a medical condition, the request for remote learning will be evaluated under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If the student has a qualifying medical condition, the student may be provided home/hospital instruction.
- Mask use is recommended, **but not required**, for unvaccinated students, staff, and visitors.
- Masks will be available for students who request them.
- The school day will run on our normal schedule Monday - Friday:

7:30 a.m. - Doors Open

8:00 a.m. - Start Time

2:50 p.m. - Dismissal

- Social distancing and other common sense mitigation strategies will be utilized to the greatest extent possible within school and classroom structures. This will take place in a manner that does not exclude students from full day in-person learning.
- Proper cleaning/disinfection practices will continue to be utilized by the custodial staff; focusing on restrooms, classrooms, cafeterias, and other “high touch” areas/surfaces.
- Similar to last year, we encourage parents to self-certify their student(s) are healthy and symptom-free prior to coming to school.

- Students diagnosed with COVID-19, with COVID-19 symptoms, or those who have had close contact with a person infected with COVID-19, will be excluded from school in accordance with CDC and IDPH guidelines. Vaccinated students do not need to quarantine after close contact with an infected person if they are asymptomatic. **Please see the COVID-19 Return to School Flowchart attached as Exhibit A.**
- For morning door entrance information, please see the school website at the following location: **Menu/Documents/Parents & Students**

Students:

- Bussing will continue to be provided by Durham Bus Company. Masking is still a universal requirement for all students while riding the bus. Please make sure if your student rides the bus, they are masked when they board the bus for both the morning and afternoon routes.
- Good hand hygiene will be strongly encouraged. Hand sanitizer will continue to be available in various locations throughout the building. All soap dispensers will be regularly checked in all restrooms to ensure it is readily available.
- Hands-free bottle filling stations have been installed throughout the building and will be utilized to reduce contact with “high touch” surfaces.
- The school breakfast and lunch program will continue to operate as it has in previous years. Breakfast and lunch are free for all students.
- *Chronic absenteeism will be referred to the ROE Attendance Specialist and/or the Franklin County States Attorney as appropriate. This will be an item of emphasis this year and every year moving forward. Parents, please make sure your students are at school on time and ready to learn every single day.*
- All medical records, physicals, dental exams, and vision exams should be completed for students as indicated by law.

School Staff:

- PLC/Professional Development time will be scheduled on the following Wednesdays throughout the school year: **Students will be dismissed at 1:50 p.m.**
 - October 6, 2021
 - November 3, 2021
 - February 2, 2022
 - March 2, 2022
 - April 6, 2022
- The 2021-2022 Benton #47 School Calendar will be posted as usual on the school website at www.benton47.org
- Staff absences related to a COVID-19 isolation or quarantine will be recorded in accordance with the district’s sick leave policy and related professional negotiations agreements.

Miscellaneous:

- Masks are recommended for unvaccinated visitors entering the building.
- Visitors must self-certify they are free of infectious illness symptoms before entering the building.
- Athletic and extracurricular programs, including band and chorus, will run as normal, with admission charged at sporting events as usual. Currently, there are no limitations on the maximum number of spectators. Masks will be encouraged for unvaccinated spectators.
- ***The district will closely monitor COVID 19 cases in the school, county, and surrounding area. If community spread becomes an issue, the district will adjust educational and athletic programming as necessary.***

Please Note: *This plan may be revised and modified as necessary based on school, community, and county positivity numbers and after consultation with local public health officials. Modifications to this plan could include increased mitigation measures to decrease the spread of COVID-19, including but not limited to requiring all individuals to wear a mask in the school building, increasing social distancing, and other appropriate mitigation measures.*

Very Important Note: Parents, please download the Benton 47 app from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store for push notifications and other relevant school updates.