



JUNCTION CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Dragon Parents and Students:

Information on COVID-19 mitigation in schools is changing rapidly. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released guidance Wednesday for the reopening of school on August 16. Today, Thursday July 29, Governor Hutchinson Issued an Emergency Health Declaration and has recalled the state legislature to consider modifying Act 1002. Arkansas has experienced almost 3,000 new cases since Wednesday.

As far as we know, we will basically start school the same way we ended school. Arkansas Act 1002 prohibits mandatory masking requirements, including schools. But additional guidance is expected from the state level as circumstances dictate. The following bullets are how we understand things as of today. We promise to keep everyone as informed as possible.

- Vaccinations are highly encouraged but not mandated. In our area only about 35% of the population has received both shots. The CDC, DESE, ADH and the Governor's office highly encourage all eligible people ages 12 and up to become fully vaccinated. There is a \$200 incentive for JCSD contract staff to become vaccinated.
- We will have another vaccination clinic August 11. It's for the whole community, and we'll schedule enough clinics to vaccinate more at a later date. Visit our website for more information.
- JCSD encourages masking in appropriate situations for staff and students. These are times when adequate distance cannot be achieved. We cannot mandate wearing a mask though.
- For those who feel more comfortable wearing a mask, you are encouraged to do so. As a courtesy to those who are uncomfortable, always have a mask with you or allow extra physical distance.
- The school district will not provide masks in general, but we have a substantial stockpile and will make them available to staff. Students may purchase a mask for 50 cents.
- We have added staff and additional sections in some grades to spread students out. We need to do the best we can to keep students at a minimum of 3' spacing.
- Faculty and staff is expected to continue with frequent disinfections of shared surfaces.
- We need to avoid air stagnation in classrooms. HVAC should run enough to keep air circulating in the enclosed places. The units should cycle frequently.
- In the cafeteria, children will not be seated directly facing each other, and we will enforce at least three feet of spacing in the serving line.
- We will continue screenings upon arrival. Students who have fevers, coughs, and upper respiratory symptoms will be directed straight to the school nurse.
- Staff is expected to self-monitor for symptoms and use good logic before exposing others. We all will have colds, allergies, and other respiratory infections, but at times COVID symptoms are similar. When in doubt, get tested.
- Frequent handwashing or hand sanitizing is expected.