Frankfort Community Unit School District #168

Plan for the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

Since March 13, 2020, the Frankfort Community Unit School District #168 has continued to work on its plans to return to a full, regular, in-person learning day and school year. We have continually reviewed our experiences and actions that we have taken since that time. We have taken what we learned using our protocols that were successful during the 2020-2021 school year to make plans for the 2021-2022 school year to make it as normal as possible. Throughout this process, the District has been guided by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Franklin-Williamson Bi-County Health Department (FWBCH).

This latest plan release has been developed in accordance with the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act and the declaration on July 9, 2021, released by the Illinois State Superintendent of Education. The plan is aligned with guidance provided by the IDPH and the CDC. It also addresses adjustments that may be needed in response to evolving COVID-19 pandemic circumstances. It will be posted on the District’s website. Due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, it is possible the District will have to modify this plan during the school year. These modifications and changes will be communicated to the families, staff, and students of the District through its regular communication platforms.

In reaction to changing guidance by the CDC, on August 4, 2021, the Governor of the State of Illinois issued Executive Order 2021-18 (COVID-19 Executive Order No. 85), “requiring the indoor use of face coverings by students, staff, and visitors who are over age two and able to medically tolerate a face covering, regardless of vaccination status.” In addition, it requires the continued implementation of “other layers of prevention strategies.”

School Status to Begin the 2021-2022 School Year

In accordance with the State Superintendent’s July 9 declaration, the schools of Frankfort Community Unit School District #168 will open for full, in-person learning for all student attendance days for the 2021-2022 school year. Teachers will report on Thursday, August 12 while students will report on Friday, August 13.

Remote or distance instruction will ONLY be made available for students with a medical reason from a licensed physician and by completing the District’s regular approval process for Homebound instruction.

Please note that the protocols outlined in this guide are subject to changes as guidelines continue to evolve. As a minimum, this guide will be reviewed and updated no less than every six months as required by the ARP Act.
General Guidelines for the 2021-2022 School Year

Use of Facial Coverings
- Frankfort CUSD #168 will begin the 2021-2022 school year in accordance with the Governor of Illinois’ Executive Order that mandates masks to be worn indoors for students, teacher, and staff at all District Schools and Facilities regardless of vaccination status.
- Unless exempt by CDC Order, all school bus passengers and drivers shall wear face coverings.

Physical Distancing
- To the extent possible within school and classroom structures so that it does not exclude students from full day in-person learning, school staff are to help students commit to physical distancing as much as possible by:
  > Arranging furniture, play spaces, and naptime materials to model and reinforce physical distancing of at least 3 feet
  > Providing assigned seating for students and encouraging student to remain in these seats to the greatest extent possible; and
  > Developing marked paths of travel in classrooms and corridors.
- School staff will maximize physical distance as much as possible when moving through food service lines and while eating indoors. Aside from the cafeteria, additional spaces for mealtime seating will be utilized when available and feasible.
- Physical distancing measures are to be done in an equitable manner that does not perpetuate academic, racial, or other tracking.

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette
- School staff will monitor and reinforce frequent handwashing and respiratory etiquette by:
  > Continuing to teach handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
  > Assisting young children with handwashing;
  > Reminding everyone in the facility to wash hand frequently;
  > Utilizing hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for those who can safely use it when hand washing is not possible;
  > Providing adequate handwashing and hand sanitizer supplies that are safely stored.

Facility and Transportation Cleaning, Disinfection, and Ventilation
- District custodial staff, as well as transportation staff, will continue to clean surfaces daily to further reduce the risk of spreading infection.
- Maintenance staff will continue to regularly replace school ventilation system filters.
- When possible, staff will open doors and windows, use child-safe fans, and conduct activities outdoors when circumstances allow.
- When it does not pose a safety risk, transportation staff will keep vehicle windows open at least a few inches to improve air circulation.

Contract Tracing / Isolation / Quarantine / Collaboration with State and Local Health Officials
- Students and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, should stay home and contact their healthcare provider for testing and care. District school health professionals should be contacted. The District will follow the advice and directives of the Franklin-Williamson Bi-County Health Department and IDPH to
determine how long a quarantine should last and when a person is able to return to school. Students and staff may present medical documentation or explanation of other illnesses or conditions (such as allergies, fibromyalgia, etc.) that may be causing symptoms that would allow them to return to school or work.

- It is recommended that medically fragile and immunocompromised students consult their medical provider prior to attending school.
- Students or staff returning from illness related to COVID-19 should call to check in with the school nurse BEFORE returning from quarantine.
- Any individual within the school environment who shows symptoms will be immediately separated from the rest of the school population.

Diagnostic and Screening Testing
- Personnel at the District’s schools will screen students and staff upon entry if they have had symptoms of COVID-19 such as a measured temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, new onset of moderate to severe headache, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, new cough, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain from unknown cause, new congestion or runny nose, new loss of taste or smell, nausea, fatigue from unknown cause, or muscle and body Aches.
- The District’s Health Care Professionals will contact parents and provide information about the location of local testing sites for COVID-19.

Vaccination Provisions
- While being respectful of people’s varying levels of vaccine confidence, the District will provide signage and information on the available locations providing COVID-19 vaccinations including the Franklin-Williamson Bi-County Health Department, area clinics, and area pharmacies.

Appropriate Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
- Parents of students who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, or weakened immune systems should contact the Office of Student Services.
- Staff members who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, weakened immune systems, or a sincerely held religious belief of practices (covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) should contact their school’s principal to discuss the need(s). Staff members with weakened immune systems are advised to contact their healthcare professional about the need for continued personal protective measures after vaccination.

Visitors
- Nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organization are discouraged from visiting schools.

Collaboration with Public Health Officials
- District officials will continue to collaborate and consult with Franklin-Williamson Bi-County Health Department officials throughout the pandemic on various logistics and...
decision-making including, but not limited to, school health and safety protocols, screening testing, contact tracing, vaccine clinics, and emergency school closings.

Plan Review
- Through September 30, 2023, this plan will be reviewed no less frequently than every six months and revised as appropriate after seeking and considering public input. Revisions will address the most recently updated safety recommendations by the CDC and IDPH, provided in an alternative format accessible to parents who are individuals with a disability as defined by the ADA, and made publically available on the District’s website.

Daily School Operations

Restrooms
- Physical distancing should be maintained with areas for safe distancing clearly marked.
- Clearly visible signage will be displayed to remind everyone of physical distancing and face covering requirements.
- Restroom and hand washing breaks will be scheduled and coordinated when possible.
- High touch areas will be cleaned throughout the day.
- Restrooms will be assigned to student groups when possible.

Shared Materials
- Materials that must be shared or communally used such as electronics, Chromebooks, iPad devices, touchscreens, keyboards, remote controls, door entry systems, etc. shall be cleaned before and after use.
- Individuals must perform hand hygiene between uses.
- Hand sanitizer should be used before and after the use of books or library materials.

Required Physicals
- Physicals and immunization requirements for students remain the same as they did in the past. Families are encouraged to obtain these requirements as soon as possible. Those requirements do **not** include vaccines for COVID-19. All physical and immunization forms must be returned by October 15.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Social work and guidance staff will continue to check in with students.
- Faculty and staff will be attentive to the social and emotional learning concerns that they observe and hear from their students.

Music-Related Courses
- Music related education will follow the most current IDPH/ISBE guidance for student and staff safety measures. This will include using outdoor spaces when possible. School staff will work to follow the protocols to practice and distance indoors in a safe manner. Choral students must wear face coverings when singing indoors.
- It is permissible for band members to remove their mask during the time they are playing, but only when necessary.
Driver’s Education Behind-the-Wheel
- Behind-the-wheel driver’s education will be done in compliance with all Illinois Secretary of State and IDPH safety requirements. Those requirements include:
  > Face coverings must be worn.
  > Eating and drinking are prohibited in the vehicle.
  > Do not make any unnecessary stops during the training.
  > Complete hand hygiene with soap and water or hand sanitizer before and after driving.
  > Clean and disinfect steering wheel, door handles, seat belt fasteners, controls/dial, keys, etc. in between each behind-the-wheel session.

Physical Education, Gymnasiums, Playgrounds, and Locker Rooms
- Physical activity can support students’ overall health and help reduce stress and anxiety. Whenever feasible and when the weather permits, schools may select outdoor P.E. activities that allow physical distancing.
  - Hand shaking, high fives, or other physical contact is discouraged.
  - Any shared equipment must be cleaned between each use and disinfected at the end of each class.
  - Areas with equipment such as treadmills, elliptical, stationary bicycles, weights, etc. must be cleaned and sanitized before and after each class.
  - High touch surfaces on playgrounds will be sanitized routinely.
  - Students and staff must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at the start and end of each class period or when hands are visibly dirty.
  - Students must perform hand hygiene after the use of each piece of equipment.

Extra-Curricular Activities
- Extra-Curricular activities must follow the IDPH requirements set forth for the school setting including social distancing, appropriate use of PPE, and limiting the number of individuals in one space according to the State of Illinois’s current mandates, as well as cleaning and disinfecting to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
  - Athletics will follow the guidelines set forth by the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) and the Southern Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association (SIJHSAA).

Transportation
- Frankfort CUSD #168 is working closely with Illinois Central School Bus (ICSB) to ensure procedures are in compliance with all the expectations that apply under state and federal guidelines.
  - All individuals on a school bus must wear a facial covering.
  - Seating on each school bus will be within limits set for groups of students.
  - Social distancing will be maintained to the greatest extent possible.
  - Students will be assigned a seat and must remain in that assigned seat each day and trip.
  - Seating arrangements with respect to social distancing may be adjusted for students who live in the same household with other students.
  - By placing students on a school bus for transportation to school, parents and guardians are self-certifying that the student is free of symptoms of COVID-19 and do not have a fever of more than 100.4 degrees.
  - Drivers and monitors will be wearing approved and appropriate PPE and will perform regular hand hygiene.
- Before the start of each workday, ICSB staff will undergo symptom and temperature checks to verify they can work that day.
- School buses will be sanitized each day, with seats and high touch areas sanitized between routes.

Food Services
- Food service personnel will use appropriate PPE including gloves and face coverings while preparing and distributing food.
- Hand hygiene will be promoted before and after eating a meal or consuming any food items.

Facilities
- Custodial and maintenance staff will continue to receive training on the return to school guidelines to ensure extra sanitation efforts using properly approved products will be utilized in low and high contact areas including door handles, desktops, handrails, light switches, restroom fixtures, counter tops, and bottle fillers.
- Items such as cloth toys or other cloth material items that cannot be disinfected should not be used.
- Cleaning schedules will be created and be implemented for all facilities and equipment. Extra cleaning efforts will occur during in-person learning to address high traffic and common areas.

Communications
- Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, Frankfort CUSD #168 will use our regular communication methods to keep all faculty, staff, students, families, and other stakeholders up to date on changes regarding these protocols. These methods include:
  > The Frankfort CUSD #168 Website and social media avenues.
  > “All-Call” Messages.
  > Frankfort CUSD #168 Social Media avenues.
  > All parents or guardians should make sure that their email addresses and phone numbers are up to date in our systems.