



Dierks Public Schools

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Dear Parents,

In preparing for the 2021-2022 school year, the Dierks School District is planning to begin onsite instruction on Monday, August 16, 2021. The faculty and staff of our district are excited for the opportunity to offer your child a quality education and will continue to keep their safety a top priority. Please review the information below based on the guidance given to school districts from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in preparing for the upcoming school year. The guidance document may be viewed in its entirety by clicking [here](#).

Masks/Face Coverings

CDC currently **recommends** the following regarding the wearing of masks in school settings:

- **Indoors.** CDC **recommends** indoor masking for all individuals age 2 years and older, including students, teachers, staff, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status.
- **Outdoors.** In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. CDC **recommends** that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people. Fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings if they or someone in their household is immunocompromised.

Hand Washing/Cleaning

- Students, teachers, staff, and campus visitors should be encouraged to sanitize and/or wash hands frequently.
- Hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations are available.

Physical Distancing

- At least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, and
- At least 6 feet between students and adults, and between adults who are not fully vaccinated.

- It is suggested that both of these **recommendations** be combined with indoor mask wearing by all individuals in a school setting to reduce transmission risk.

Exposure/Quarantine

Fully-vaccinated students or staff do not need to quarantine if deemed close contacts, unless they have/develop symptoms.

Individuals exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 will not need to quarantine if the individual exposed has no symptoms and both the infected and exposed individual consistently and correctly were wearing a mask.

Food Service and School Meals

- Maximizing physical distance and additional spaces will be utilized while students' meals are being served.

Busing

- While on buses, air circulation will be improved by opening or cracking the windows when possible.
- Sibling/household members will be seated together when possible.
- Sanitation will be performed regularly.

Point of Contact

- Dierks School District Point of Contact, Nurse Lindsey Stokes, will be responsible for initiating the contact tracing process.
- School districts are required to continue to follow the Arkansas Department of Health reporting processes and requirements for isolation and quarantine.

Close Contact Determination and Responses

- The CDC defines a close contact as an individual confirmed to have been within six feet for 15 cumulative minutes or longer within a 24-hour period during the infectious period of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Individuals who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 and recovered and who are subsequently exposed to someone with COVID-19 within three months of their original diagnosis do not have to stay at home or get tested again, as long as they do not develop new symptoms.
- Individuals exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 will not need to be quarantined if they have no symptoms and both the infected and exposed individual consistently and correctly were wearing a mask.
- Fully-vaccinated students or staff do not need to quarantine if deemed close contacts, unless they have/develop symptoms.

Quarantine Periods

- After 10 full 24-hour periods since close contact exposure without testing, or

- After seven full 24-hour periods since close contact exposure and after receiving a negative test result (sample taken no earlier than five 24-hour periods after exposure).

Isolation Period

A person who tests positive for COVID-19 is still required to isolate at home for 10 days from the onset of symptoms or, if asymptomatic, 10 days from the positive test date.

Educational Protocol

- Students and staff should stay home when sick.
- Alternative Method of Instruction (AMI) plan will be utilized to modify on-site instruction when an entire school or district must be closed. Each building's AMI plan will be communicated through your child's principal and/or teacher.