

Westview School District
Pandemic Plan
Preface

The contents of this plan will be reviewed every 6 months and revised according to the most recent public health information. This will ensure the plan continues to remain current with the recommendations of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), Newton County Health Department (NCHD), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The current response plan was based on the pandemic impacts of COVID-19 and updated for the 2021-22 school year to meet the requirements of the *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan (SRCSP)* (Last Two Pages).

Tasks assigned and delegated during each phase of the response plan, in the case of an influenza pandemic or novel virus pandemic (such as COVID-19), should be considered as possible actions and should be implemented based on the current situation and guidance from the DHSS, NCHD, DESE, and the CDC. The Westview School District will work with local response partners to ensure a coordinated, and measured response is taken to protect our students and community members.

Pandemic severity information provided by the CDC and NCHD, should be used to help gauge the necessary level of response. Based on this information the administration of the Westview School District will determine which actions in the Pandemic Plan to implement and which may be delayed. The actions listed under each Pandemic Phase should be implemented only as needed.

Westview Schools will continue to follow health guidelines for fever, nausea, vomiting, etc. as has been implemented in the past.

PANDEMIC RESPONSE PLAN

Purpose of Plan:

This plan is intended to provide guidelines to implement an effective response to a pandemic. The plan's responses will reduce impact on students' and the community's health (i.e. reduce illness and possibly save lives) and minimize disruption to students' education. The following response plan will be implemented after an influenza virus, novel virus (COVID-19), or resurgence of a formerly eradicated illness begins to spread readily from person to person, and it is geared toward action and specific responsibilities to be taken by the district under the direction of the authorities responsible for declaring a public health emergency.

Definitions:

Infectious disease outbreaks: Disease outbreaks are usually caused by an infection, transmitted through person-to-person contact, animal-to-person contact, or from the environment or other media. An outbreak carries the same definition as epidemic, but is often used for a more limited geographic area (i.e. community, company, facility, school, etc.)

Epidemic: Refers to an increase, often sudden, in the number of cases of a disease above what is normally expected in that population in that area (i.e. localized area, state).

Pandemic: Refers to an epidemic that has spread over several countries or continents, usually affecting a large number of people (i.e. global).

Phases of a Pandemic

The following guidance was adopted from the CDCs "K-12 Schools and Childcare Programs FAQs for Administrators, Teachers, and Parents", March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and updated accordingly.

1. Planning Phase:

- a. Review, update, and implement emergency protocols.
- b. Develop information-sharing systems with community partners.
- c. Teach and reinforce health hygiene practices.
- d. Intensify cleaning and disinfectant efforts.
- e. Monitor and plan for absenteeism (trend of increased absences due to illness will be reported to the local health department).
- f. Assess group gatherings and events.
- g. Require sick students and staff to stay home and establish procedures for students and staff who are sick at school.
- h. Create and test communications plans for use with the school community.

2. Minimal to moderate community transmission in local area

- a. Cancel or reduce field trips, assemblies, and other large gatherings.
- b. Cancel or modify classes where students are likely to be in very close contact.
- c. Increase the space between desks to at least 3 feet.
- d. Stagger arrival and/or dismissal times.
- e. Reduce congestion in the health office.
- f. Limit nonessential visitors.
- g. Teach staff, students, and their families to maintain a safe distance (3-6 feet) from each other in the school.

3. Substantial community transmission

- a. Local health officials will provide guidance to administrators on the best course of action.
- b. May need to consider extended school dismissals (longer than 2 weeks). This decision will be directed in coordination with the school board, local health department and DESE.
- c. Includes cancelations of extracurricular group activities, school-based afterschool programs, and large events.
- d. May be necessary to implement strategies to ensure the continuity of education (distance learning), meal programs, and other essential services for students (special ed).

4. Reopening of Schools

- a. Consult local health officials and DESE for guidance.
- b. Implement mitigation strategies;
 - i. Universal and correct use of masks
 - ii. Social distancing
 - iii. Hand washing and respiratory etiquette
 - iv. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation
 - v. Contact tracing in collaboration with local health officials in combination quarantine and isolation
 - vi. Diagnostic and screening testing, along with education and guidance for vaccinations
 - vii. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies
- c. Review/revision of plan every 6 months in consultation with all stakeholders

1. Planning and Coordination

If an unexpected outbreak should occur in our district, parts of the pandemic plan would be implemented to minimize exposure. The parts implemented would depend upon the specifics of the outbreak and would be determined in consultation with Local Public Health Authority (Newton County Health Dept.) experts, DESE, CDC recommendations, and local and state elected officials.

Characteristics of a pandemic that must be considered in preparedness and response planning include:

- 1) Continued spread of infection.
- 2) Loss of instructional time with students.
- 3) Missed meals for students on free and reduced lunch, or backpack program.
- 4) Increased hardship on families due to need for childcare.
- 5) Concern of lost wages and benefits for employees.

The following assumptions regarding a possible pandemic should be kept in mind at all times during the planning and response stages.

- Mitigation strategies; social distancing of 3-6 ft and correct use of masking.
- Basic hygiene and infection control strategies/enhanced cleaning may have to be reiterated and encouraged.
- School exclusions may have to be instituted to minimize disease spread.
- School closure and stay in place orders.
- Various responses may be needed or required based on the pandemic.

Guiding Principles in Pandemic Response

Since the district nurse is likely to recognize outbreak trends early, the nurse will report and collaborate with Local Public Health Authority (Newton County Health Dept.) experts regarding recommendations, and advise district administration. Once it is determined the pandemic plan needs to be activated, the response team members will meet to decide which phases of the plan should be initiated and how information should be disseminated throughout the school district.

Prevention and Control Measures:

There are three key strategies for preventing transmission of disease, these include:

- Decreasing the probability that contact will result in infection, such as providing education on hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, the importance of staying home if sick, receiving annual vaccinations, social distancing and correct use of masking.
- Decreasing contact between infected and uninfected individuals, school exclusions, cancelation of events/activities, closure of school.
- Referral to healthcare providers.

2. Continuity of Student Learning and Core Operations

In the case of interruption of seated instruction, short or long term, the district will implement an Alternative Method of Instruction (AMI). The district will ensure all students have access to the internet (parking lot wi-fi). Teachers will provide instruction, both introductory and review of concepts and skills, through the use of Google Classroom/SeeSaw as our Missouri Learning Standards (MLS) and will facilitate teaching and learning for all students by using various types of assignments, materials, and resources (such as SeeSaw, YouTube, Reading Eggs, Math Seeds, Accelerated Reader, learning games, electronic/web based apps, packets and textbooks).

The district will communicate the need for an AMI day to students and parents through social media, email, phone calls, Google Classroom, district website, and the school calendar. All teachers will engage in the virtual learning process, and paraprofessionals will continue to support instruction in the virtual environment. Students receiving services through an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) will follow the accommodations/modifications outlined in form G of their IEP. The following guidelines will be utilized by district instructional staff:

- Assignments will be meaningful and linked to instructional standards.
- Google Classroom/See Saw will be utilized to provide instruction.
- Teachers will be available by email/ Google Phone Number/ Google Classroom during school hours and may choose to set up a Zoom meeting to provide opportunities to communicate virtually with students.

The following will be expected of students:

- All activities assigned during AMI days will be due upon the student's return to classes.
- Students are expected to complete assignments in the virtual environment.
- If students have notified the office/teacher PRIOR to AMI days alternate forms of communication/assignments will be utilized. Students without the internet are still required to make contact with teachers each day.
- Students are encouraged to contact teachers with specific learning issues utilizing approved district communication methods.

The district will communicate the continuity of district operations to district employees through phone calls and email.

3. Communications Planning

- Administration will follow developing information regarding the pandemic as it unfolds via emails, phone calls, and meetings and consult staff as needed (i.e Nurse) to make decisions about necessary actions to take.
- Inform staff, students, and families where to find accurate up-to-date pandemic information from federal, state, local and health sources.
- Collaboration of the district's pandemic plan with the local health department to ensure continuity of instruction and community containment measures.
- Share information from local public health resources about infection control (hand hygiene, cough/sneeze etiquette), fundamentals of a pandemic (signs and symptoms, modes of transmission), and personal and family protection, and response strategies (at-home care, when to seek medical care).
- Anticipate the potential fear and anxiety of staff, students, and families as a result of rumors. Provide and maintain factual information and a sense of calm to minimize panic. District communication by means of specific FAQ's and infographics will be provided as needed.
- All communication will be made available in various languages upon request.

The primary disease prevention strategies for a pandemic are based on guidance from local public health authorities/CDC/ and/or DESE:

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- Social distancing (3-6 feet, use of student dividers/sneeze guards).
- Universal and correct wearing of masks/face shields/gloves
- Provide information and education regarding infection control (handwashing and respiratory etiquette).
- Maintain clean and healthy facilities, including improved ventilation.
- Track PPEs, medical, hygiene, and cleaning supplies.
- Diagnostic and screening testing conducted at Local Public Health Authority or clinic.
- Monitoring and education of immunizations/vaccinations if available.
- Providing resources to acquire testing and immunizations/vaccinations.
- Monitoring of absences and contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine in collaboration with local public health authorities.
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies.
- Closure of school as directed by guiding health authorities.

Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities will be provided as necessary or as stipulated by a student's Individual Education Plan.

Westview School District Safe Return to IN-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan (SRCSP)

- Post Covid-19 Pandemic of 2020-2021

Mitigation and Preventions Strategies for 2021-2022 School Year

All responses will be based from guidelines from the Newton County Health Department/community transmittal rate/CDC guidelines

Mitigation Strategies	Prevention Response
Universal and correct wearing of masks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent with Newton County Health Department/CDC ● Staff will wear a mask/face shield if they do not receive the vaccination until further information is obtained. ● Mask/face shields are required on school transportation by staff and students ● Masks will be required entering the building, hallways, or when they cannot socially distance. ● Masks are encouraged in the classrooms.
Physical Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent with Newton County Health Department/CDC ● 3 ft. distance will be encouraged ● When distancing not possible use of sneeze guards/masks ● All lunchroom tables will have dividers
Handwashing & Respiratory Etiquette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teach and reinforce healthy hygiene practices ● Consistent with Newton County Health Department/CDC ● Sanitizer provided
Cleaning & Maintaining Health Facilities, including Improving Ventilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent with Newton County Health Department/CDC ● Increased cleaning/disinfecting of high-touch surfaces in buses and the building. ● Review and upgrades to ventilation in the building.
Contact Tracing in combination with isolation & quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal Health Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact tracing by the local public health authority (Newton County Health Dept.) in conjunction with the school nurse if needed.
Diagnostic and screening testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Westview will not conduct any diagnostic or testing for COVID-19. Testing will be conducted by the local public health authority (Newton County Health Dept.) physician, or clinic outside the school setting.

Efforts to provide vaccination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The School Nurse will share information about vaccination events around the community ● Incentives provided to staff for vaccination/booster
School Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mask/face shields are required on school transportation by staff and students. ● Students will have assigned seats ● Families will be seated together ● Social distancing will be preserved between students ● Transportation is provided to students living more than 1 mile from the school. ● Students will not be allowed to switch buses or to ride if they are not a daily rider.
Backpacks/Water Bottles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only Non-porous see through backpacks will be allowed. (District will provide) ● Personal water bottles are required (School is equipped with water bottle filling stations)
School Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Admittance in the building will be by appointment only ● All outside visitors will be required to wear a mask/face shield ● Consistent with Newton County Health Department/CDC
Extracurricular Activities/School Sponsored Special Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Waiver of participation for student signed by parent/guardian on file ● Follow MSHSAA/Newton County Health Department/State/CDC guidelines ● Family groups will sit together/social distance from others ● Wear masks while attending school events ● In some cases, the school may require limited admittance to events at that time tickets will be issued for the number allowed per student.

Students With Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students receiving services through an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will follow the accommodations/modifications outlined in their IEP.