

# Oologah-Talala Public Schools

## COVID-19 Response Plan

### Return to Learn

### 2021-2022

Updated 1/10/22



**Parents:**

The Board of Education and Administration of Oologah-Talala Public Schools are of the mind that students need to be in school to receive a quality education. Furthermore, the American Association of Pediatrics recommends students be in school to ensure student mental and emotional needs are met. We will do all we can to make sure we are able to keep our students in school as much as possible while simultaneously keeping the health and safety of all in the forefront of our decision making.

We have developed this plan after a lot of discussion, thinking, and collaborating. As you may know, there are several laws, regulations, and ideas that are contradictory in how to open school this fall. Some of these contradictions involve the use of masks, quarantining students, and vaccinations. We will be asking our parents and students for your assistance and patience in these areas as we move forward into this next school year. There is no easy solution to reopening schools with the spectrum of views, laws, and opinions. We will keep the physical, mental, and emotional health of all our students in mind as we make decisions and move forward with the 2021-2022 school year. Thank you for your thoughts and support as we navigate the unknowns of the coming year.

David Wilkins  
Superintendent

# **Oologah-Talala Public Schools**

## **COVID-19 Response Plan**

### **2021-2022**

**The items in this plan are subject to change based on guidance from local and state health officials.**

#### ***Teaching and Learning***

The goal for each classroom is to maintain a semblance of normalcy so that learning may continue. Teachers will examine classroom areas to maximize spacing of student desks/tables as needed. Seating charts for each class may be utilized as a precautionary tool. The sharing of supplies will be limited and closely monitored by the teachers.

Full-time virtual learning will only be an option for students at the high school. Middle school and elementary students will not have the option of full-time virtual school.

Distance learning will be offered to students at the discretion of the district and only in cases where it is necessary for the health and safety of students and staff.

#### ***Student Attendance / Screening***

Any student exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19 or any other contagious illness should stay home from school to limit the possibility of exposing others. Any student who develops a fever or any other symptoms will be evaluated by the school nurse and possibly sent home. Any absence related to COVID-19 will be listed as an excused absence and will be tracked for reporting purposes. Those absences will not interfere with the student's ability to access learning and teachers will work with students in this situation to maintain academic progress.

The building principal will have the final authority to excuse or not excuse any absence.

#### ***Students Health***

The school district has one full time registered nurse. The nurse will work with students, staff, and administration to ensure that our school sites are as safe and healthy as possible. The nurse will stay involved in communicating with parents any illnesses and potential illnesses throughout the school year.

Any student sent to the nurse's office with symptoms that could be COVID-19 related will be examined by the school nurse to make a determination on whether the student remains at school. The district knows that not every person running a fever will have

COVID-19. However, any student who should begin running a fever after the start of the school day will not be allowed to remain at school. Regardless of the reason for a fever, a student must be fever free, without fever-reducing medication, for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.

- Any child or staff member who tests positive or has COVID-19 symptoms may return to school:
  - after 24 hours with no fever (no fever-reducing medication) AND
  - improved respiratory symptoms AND
  - Five (5) days since symptoms first appeared.
- A child who tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms can return to school after five (5) days have passed since the test. If a parent is unsure about their child's health, we recommend the parent consult their child's physician.

The nurse will contact state, local, or tribal health departments to seek their input before making decisions about isolations and quarantines.

Handwashing is one of the best means of protection against infection. Students will be reminded to wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing their noses, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating. They will also have access to an alcohol-based hand sanitizer throughout the school building and school transportation when hand-washing opportunities are not readily available.

Frequent hand washing and sanitizing will be accommodated and encouraged. Students will be asked to wash and/or sanitize their hands before and after meals and outdoor play. Classrooms will be equipped with hand hygiene products and additional hand sanitizer stations will be placed throughout the buildings.

### **Daily Self-Check List**

Parents should review the following checklist for each child in their household. This action is necessary every day before a student can attend school. By sending your child to school, you are telling Oologah-Talala Public Schools that the answer to each of these questions is "No."

1. Has your child had a fever of 100.4 degrees or more at any point in the last 24 hours?
2. Has your child had COVID-19 in the past 10 days or do you think your child has COVID19 now?
3. Has your child tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days?
4. Has your child been directed to be under quarantine by the health department in the last 10 days?
5. Have you taken a COVID-19 test and are awaiting the results?

### **Exposures & Contact Tracing**

Should a school be made aware of a possible COVID-19 exposure in a building, the school administrators will contact trace as was practiced during the 2020-21 school

year. The end result of that contact tracing will be a notification to the appropriate parents stating that their student had close contact with an individual who has since tested positive for COVID-19. We ask that parents who receive such a notification monitor their child's health and contact their family physician should the child develop symptoms. The option to quarantine will be at the discretion of the parents of the child who has been exposed to COVID-19.

Close contact is defined as being less than 6 feet for at least 15 cumulative minutes within a 24- hour period, kissing, hugging, or sharing food or drink with a person with COVID-19 within 48 hours prior to his/her onset of COVID-19 symptoms and/or for 10 days following onset of symptoms.

In regard to communication regarding contact tracing:

- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 with a staff member, parents of students at that school building will be notified ONLY in the event their child has had possible close contact with the affected staff member.
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 with a student, parents will be notified ONLY in the event their child has had possible close contact with the affected student.
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 with a student or staff member within an extracurricular activity, parents will be notified ONLY in the event their child has had possible close contact with the affected individual.

### ***Quarantine and At-Home Exposure***

Any student who has a positive case of COVID-19 in their home will be required to quarantine based on the most recent household positive case. Parents will need to contact the school nurse or building administration to coordinate dates of isolation and quarantine.

### ***Masks***

Masks are optional on school premises as of this time. The district does acknowledge that Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt has signed into law a bill prohibiting schools from adopting mask or vaccination requirements. However, the federal government is requiring the mask policy for the school to receive federal aid related to COVID-19. By maintaining Level 1 on the Board approved mask policy, OTPS is able to satisfy the federal requirement of having a mask policy while also ensuring that state law is not violated. Oologah-Talala Public Schools will continue to operate with the safety of all students and faculty in mind and will continue to adjust policies and procedures based on available information from local, state, and federal entities.

The School District has adopted a Board Approved mask policy (4.06.1) that includes 5 levels. The level shall be determined by the Superintendent. The policy includes universal and correct wearing of masks. The five levels are outlined at the end of this document.

### ***Food Services***

All school breakfast and lunch meals will be served in a normal fashion. Custodial staff will clean and disinfect each eating location after each use. Kitchens will be cleaned throughout the day and disinfected at the end of each day. Mealtimes may be staggered or students may follow a rotating schedule that allows them to eat in the cafeteria, a classroom, a gymnasium, or outdoors when weather permits, as was practiced during the 2020-21 school year. Students will be encouraged to social distance during mealtimes.

The USDA is allowing all student meals to again be served free of charge during the 2021-22 school year. Parents who qualify are still encouraged to compete and submit a free & reduced lunch application as families may qualify to receive additional benefits.

### ***Special Education***

Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be reviewed for any specific needs that will need to be addressed as we move into the new learning formats and learning environments. There will be a myriad of small changes that have the propensity to affect a student's emotional, mental, and physical well-being. OTPS staff will ensure these needs are addressed and that the students' IEP is adjusted accordingly. We are offering virtual IEP meetings to allow for safer communication.

### ***Extra-Curricular Activities***

OTPS will continue to offer extra-curricular activities to students as long as it is feasible. Administration will continue to work with the state athletic association and with the county health department to determine the best course of action within the context of this ever-changing situation. All decisions will be made with the health and wellness of our student body in mind.

### ***Transportation***

The district intends to continue traditional busing services for existing routes.

For the health and safety of all bus riders, OTPS will ask the following of bus riders:

- Parents should not send their child to a bus if their child fails to meet the COVID-19 guidelines provided to each family for morning self-checks at home.
- Bus riders may not eat food on the bus while in operation.
- Bus riders may carry closed container drinks on buses.
- Bus riders should face forward and comply with any request of the bus driver.

If a student riding your child's bus tests positive for COVID-19:

- In accordance with the district procedures, the district will ONLY notify those bus riders who potentially came in contact with the person who tested positive. If there is any question about whether notification is necessary, the district will err on the side of overcommunicating with parents.
- Information about the health of a student will ONLY be shared with those who have a need to know. It is further expected that others will respect the privacy

rights of individuals and no information will be given to any other person, employee, or student unless there is a need for that information to be shared. School policies will be used to determine when a student may return to bus riding and may return to school. Should it become necessary, the district may need to alter and/or temporarily suspend bus routes. Every effort will be made to avoid that occurring. Masks may be required or optional on busses depending on the current mask level according to our Board Approved Policy. Weather permitting, windows will remain down to ensure proper air flow throughout the bus. All buses will be sanitized on a regular basis.

### ***Cleaning Protocols***

All desktops, lockers, hallway walls, countertops, restroom walls and stalls, kitchens and serving areas, locker rooms, nurse's offices and reception areas will be cleaned and sanitized regularly.

Drinking fountains will not be open; however, students will be encouraged to use water bottle fillers to fill personal water bottles. These drinking fountains and water bottle filling areas will be cleaned and sanitized daily. All bottle fillers and classroom sinks will also be disinfected in the evening after the building is unoccupied and all students have gone home for the day.

Teachers will wipe down door knobs and classroom sinks daily.

Custodians will use any extra time to work on door knobs, hand wash stations, restroom stalls, paper towel/toilet paper cabinets, soap dispensers, entry door hardware or any other areas that are frequently touched by students/staff.

### ***Social-Emotional Learning/ Student Mental Wellness***

OTPS counselors have been working to create a plan to provide emotional support for our learners that will need additional counseling and assistance. OTPS has a close partnership with Grand Lake Mental Health Center to provide additional staff and services for our learners. OTPS and GLMHC counselors will work closely with our school nurses to provide any services or additional assistance to students and families of students who are dealing with extenuating circumstances. OTPS has also partnered with The Alliance to provide more counseling and support for mental health.

We are ensuring that students with respiratory or health concerns have a personalized learning environment such as allowing extra space or providing them with PPE that meets their needs, such as face shields, masks, individual hand sanitizer, protective barriers, individual water bottles, etc.

### ***Efforts to Provide Vaccinations***

OTPS collaborated with the Rogers County Health Department in the spring of 2021 to schedule vaccinations for all staff. OTPS also collaborated with the Indian Hospital of

Claremore and hosted vaccination days on the High School campus twice in the spring of 2021. OTPS is open to future partnerships to bring vaccinations to our students and staff.

### **Facilities**

All buildings will have reminder signs about proper procedures to help in the slowing of the spread of communicable diseases. Some hallways may be directional hallways. These areas will be marked with signs on the floor to indicate direction. All sites will work to increase airflow & improved ventilation in all areas. All facilities will be cleaned regularly to ensure a safe working and learning environment.

Facilities will be modified to create social distancing where possible and appropriate. Building Administration has the authority to make adjustments to furniture and other facility arrangements as the need occurs.

Temperature checks may be required for certain events or activities. This requirement will be determined by district and school administration.

### OTPS Board of Education Mask Policy

- **Level 5 (Mandatory Mask Protocol):** All individuals—including students, staff, and visitors—must wear masks while on school premises, on school buses, or while engaged in school-sponsored activities.
- **Level 4 (Selective Masking):** Students on school premises or engaged in school-sponsored activities must wear masks in situations where social distancing is unlikely or impossible but may otherwise remove their masks. For example, students must wear masks on school buses and when traveling outside classrooms but may not be required to wear masks in classrooms. Teachers may determine when students are required to wear masks in their classrooms, subject to administrative approval. Staff and visitors must wear masks on school premises.
- **Level 3 (Employee and Visitor Masking):** Staff and visitors must wear masks on school premises or while engaged in school-sponsored activities, but students are not required to wear them. Mask usage is highly encouraged.
- **Level 2 (Visitor Masking):** Visitors, including those associated with vendors, must wear masks on school premises or while engaged in school-sponsored activities, but staff and students are not required to wear them. Mask usage is highly encouraged.
- **Level 1 (Optional Masking):** All individuals—including students, staff, and visitors—may wear masks while on school premises or while engaged in school-sponsored activities. Though mask usage is optional, the District highly encourages individuals to wear masks.