

**LEE COUNTY SCHOOLS**  
**COVID-19 SCHOOL OPERATIONS PLAN**

**Updated 03/08/22**

The Lee County Schools is committed to providing a quality education to our students while we work through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the 2020-2021 school year, we put many things in place to keep our students and staff safe and we will be continuing many of these things as we move into the 2021-2022 school year. We will be monitoring COVID-19 numbers in our school and community and make decisions regarding changes we need to make at any time throughout the school year. We will also follow any required mandates that are in place and realize mandates can be put in place or removed throughout the pandemic.

This updated plan was originally titled our Covid Reopening Plan and is being updated to meet the requirements of Senate Bill 1 enacted on 9/10/21.

**COVID TESTING**

The Lee County Board of Education has contracted with Wild Health to perform weekly COVID-19 screenings in the schools. According to new guidance provided on March 4, 2022, screenings are recommended for unvaccinated students, teachers, and/or staff to help identify and isolate cases and to guide the use of layered preventions strategies in the school. Wild Health employees come each Tuesday and perform screenings to all students and employees who provide permission to be tested. Wild Health has also trained district staff to perform COVID-19 testing on an as needed basis. COVID testing will be available free of charge to employees and students in the 2021-2022 school year. Weekly screenings will provide the district a way to monitor the spread of COVID-19 and determine what mitigation strategies to put in place moving forward.

COVID-19 testing will be available to students and staff who are symptomatic or need to be tested to be released from quarantine at both schools and our central office location. Students or staff who are not in the schools when symptoms are determined should test at the central office in the event the test shows a positive result. All testing is free of charge to staff and students.

**MASKS**

Current CDC recommendations regarding masking on school transportation have changed the federal mandate requiring masks. Therefore, masks will be optional on school bus transportation unless there is a health issue for a student or driver on a particular bus.

All School and Central Office Locations:

Effective Wednesday, February 09, the elementary school will be included in optional masking when the COVID incidence rate decreases in the county. Mask wearing is recommended for those who are unvaccinated or who have conditions that make them likely to contract COVID-19 or who are at risk of severe illness if they contract COVID-19. Mask wearing will be optional for students and staff at both Lee County Elementary and Lee County Middle High School and District Central Office locations as long as the numbers of COVID-19 cases in the community, school, and district building remain low. The

superintendent will continue to monitor the county incidence rate, review weekly county averages, assess rolling county averages weekly/monthly to determine trends, individual school data including school quarantines and positive cases (staff and student), and other data such as hospital capacity. If at any time the superintendent deems it necessary to require mask wearing in the schools and/or Central Office locations the staff and students will be notified through our school messaging system, website, and Facebook pages. Notification will be given at least one day in advance of the requirement. Unvaccinated visitors will be requested to wear masks in our facilities.

**IMPORTANT EXCEPTION:** Everyone who is known to have had close contact to a person with COVID-19 should wear a well-fitting mask when around others for 10 days and is recommended to be tested 5 days or more after the exposure. This exception stems from updated guidance on March 4, 2022 from Kentucky Public Health. Students who are required to isolate for a period of 5 days will be required to wear a mask upon return to school for 5 additional days.

#### **Student or Staff Health Concerns:**

If there is a student or staff member in a class that has health concerns which may cause the COVID-19 virus to negatively impact the health of the student or staff, the principal may ask students in the classrooms where the student or staff is to wear masks while around a particular student or staff.

#### Lee County Area Technology Center:

As of March 2, 2022, the Kentucky Department of Education released guidance that Area Technology Centers can follow the masking recommendations of the school district in which they are located. Therefore, current and future masking policies for the ATC will follow those of the Lee County Middle High School.

#### After School Events:

Participation in events after school is voluntary for those participating in the event and for spectators. Effective immediately, mask wearing to after school events will be recommended for those who are unvaccinated or who have conditions that make them likely to contract COVID-19 or who are at risk of severe illness if they contract COVID-19. Mask wearing will be optional for those attending after school events throughout the district. If it is determined that after school events are contributing to an increase in COVID-19 cases in the staff and student populations that affects our ability to safely operate school, we reserve the right to require masks for after school events at any time.

#### **TEST TO STAY PROGRAM**

Current recommendations for the Test to Stay program from the Department for Public Health as of March 4, 2022, indicate a "Test to Stay" model is recommended for out of school exposures for students or staff who have not considered fully vaccinated or who have not tested positive to COVID in the 3 months prior to their exposure. Individuals may continue to attend in-person school activities if they are received at least one negative COVID-19 test during the 5 day quarantine period and can wear a well-fitting mask in indoor school settings when around others. Test to Stay modified quarantine may be discontinued after day 5 if the individual is symptom free. Parents would have to agree to having their children receive routine screenings from Wild Health and would be tested for the first 5 days after exposure per Department for Public Health guidance documents.

To be eligible for the Test to Stay modified quarantine, the student must:

- Be given parent permission to participate in the program and be tested daily.
- Be entirely asymptomatic, (without any signs or symptoms of COVID-19)
- Wear a mask indoors while at school for the entirety of the program, even if all test results are negative.

Testing Protocol:

- Testing will occur at the school. Students in the Test to Stay program will get their breakfast and then go to the gymnasium where the school nurse will test them daily with rapid antigen tests provided by Wild Health. Students will remain in the gym where they will be allowed to eat breakfast while test results are determined.
- Tests will be performed for 5 calendar days after exposure. Weekends will be counted in the 5 days but tests will not be performed if we are not in school.
- If a test result is positive, the individual will be sent home immediately.
- Where possible, students should be transported to school by family. However, students will be allowed to ride the bus if that is their only means of transportation to school.
- Symptom screenings, such as taking temperatures, of students in the test to stay program will also take place daily.
- Students who refuse to receive their scheduled testing will be sent home from school to quarantine and follow standard quarantine procedures.

## **VACCINATIONS**

While there is a lot of science behind the COVID-19 vaccinations, being vaccinated is a personal choice for adults and for parents and guardians of our students. Everyone should consult with their family physician and make a choice that is right for their circumstances. COVID-19 vaccinations have been made available at our school to students age 5 and up as well as to staff and community members. Vaccines can be received at the Lee County Health Department and other locations throughout the county. We will be working with Wild Health and/or our local health department to make additional vaccine clinics available to all students and staff.

## **SOCIAL DISTANCING**

The concept of remaining 6 feet apart will be emphasized where practical throughout the school setting. However, in order to bring back as many students to our school as possible, we know that a 6 feet distance will not be achieved in most locations. We will put as much space as possible between students when the incidence rate in the county is high or when cases come into our schools. We will also utilize the concept of putting students into “pods” or small groups that remain consistent regardless of classroom setting.

## **CONTACT TRACING and QUARANTINES**

The guidance from the Kentucky Public Health department and KDE regarding contact tracing and quarantine changed on March 4, 2022. According to updated guidance, contact tracing following school exposures to COVID-19 is not expected. Additionally, quarantine is not routinely recommended

following exposures to COVID-19 that occur in the school settings. Targeted use of quarantine may be recommended during outbreaks of COVID-19 in the classroom or school.

When COVID-19 exposures occur outside of the school setting, quarantine is not recommended for students who have completed their 2-dose COVID-19 vaccine series, persons 18 years of age and older who are up to date with the recommended COVID-19 vaccinations, and persons who have documented COVID-19 illness in the 3 months prior to their exposure. The “Test to Stay” modified quarantine is recommended for individuals who do not meet these exemptions. Quarantine or modified Test to Stay quarantine may be discontinued after day 5 if the individual is symptom free.

## **CLASSROOMS**

The student desks in classrooms prior to the COVID-19 pandemic were not easily cleaned and were not conducive to both group learning environments and individually spaced environments, so all new student desks and chairs have been purchased that will allow our students to be socially distanced when needed or collaborate in groups when conditions allow. The desks and chairs will be separate from each other and will be easily cleaned.

During the 2020-2021 school year students remained in the same classroom as much as possible to eliminate the potential spread of the illness in transition periods. During the 2021-2022 school year students will be allowed to move from one classroom to another but when the same group of students moves together they will have the same seating arrangement in each location they travel.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Masks are no longer required on school bus transportation. Buses will remain being cleaned regularly.

## **INSTRUCTION**

Teachers will utilize the Google Classroom learning management system. They will post lessons in the Google Classroom to utilize throughout the year. Students who may go on quarantine or get ill will be able to complete their work from home. Teachers will also utilize the iPad and SWIVL devices provided last year to record lessons or provide real-time connections for lessons throughout the day for those students who may be on a quarantine.

In addition to the SWIVL devices and Google Classroom, teachers will have available the programs of Screencastify to record lessons from their computer and EdPuzzle for assessing learning. We will also continue to make APEX Learning available for Lee County Middle High School students in the event we have a long shut down due to COVID-19.

## **LEE COUNTY BOBCAT VIRTUAL ACADEMY**

The Lee County Schools will have a virtual option for students who were successful with virtual work during the 2020-2021 school year or who are new to the district and wishing to enroll and commit to being successful with virtual learning. There is an application process and applicants will be reviewed by our Virtual Academy Dean as well as the DPP and Instructional Supervisor. Students who qualify for the virtual academy will utilize instruction through the SchoolsPLP learning platform. All applications for the Bobcat Virtual Academy must be received no later than September 15, 2021 for this current school year. The Virtual Academy is an option for yearlong virtual learning.

### **INTERMITTENT VIRTUAL LEARNING**

We are currently utilizing intermittent virtual learning for students with medical issues only. This should be discussed with the principal of the school.

### **CLEANING and DISINFECTING**

Schools and buses will be cleaned regularly and disinfected with a solution of ArmourGuard RTU Disinfectant every 90 days. This product coats surfaces so that a live virus will die on it.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips will be evaluated on an individual basis. Data such as incident rate in our county, incident rate at the destination, number of students participating, reason for the trip, etc. will assist in determining if a trip can take place.

### **ATHLETICS**

During the 2020-2021 school year several protocols were put into place to keep athletes and fans safe throughout the COVID pandemic. All teams will use caution as students practice and participate in competition. We will determine the level of restrictions on athletic activity based upon the cases of COVID in our student and community population.