



# Paris School District Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services 2021-2022



Updated August 11, 2022

## August 11, 2022

PSD has updated our COVID-19 testing and quarantine plan to follow the latest CDC guidance. In accordance, students, faculty, and staff will:

1. Be encouraged to stay up to date with vaccinations in order to protect our community against serious illness or hospitalization due to COVID-19
2. If students, faculty, or staff are exposed to COVID-19 at school or in the community they will be encouraged to wear a mask for 10 days.
  - a. If after exposure students, faculty, or staff develop symptoms, they must isolate pending a COVID-19 test
    - i. If test is positive student will follow CDC isolation recommendations
    - ii. If negative, and fever free for 24 hours, student, faculty, or staff can return to school.
    - iii. Failure to test will be a presumptive positive and CDC isolation recommendations will be followed.
3. If students, faculty, or staff are positive for COVID-19 they will be instructed to isolate for 5 days.
4. Upon returning, the student, faculty, or staff member will be encouraged to wear a mask for another 5 days.

PSD continues to encourage frequent hand washing and maintains cleanliness of facilities to reduce the in building spread of the COVID-19 virus.

## January 18, 2022

### COVID Reporting Form

In the event your student tests positive for COVID, please complete the Google Form at the attached link. [COVID Reporting Form](#)  
Thank you for your help!

**January 11, 2022**

## **Mask Mandate - Update**

During a special called board meeting on January 11, 2022, the the Paris School Board reinstated the mask mandate effective tomorrow, January 12.

**January 6, 2002**

## **Letter to Parents**

Parents

Covid cases, especially the Omicron variant, are on the rise statewide prompting once again the possibility of students being sent home to quarantine. Please remember that if a student is fully vaccinated and has no symptoms after exposure they are exempt from quarantine and will not be sent home. If your child is vaccinated please remember to share that information with our Wellness Center Director, Shawna Clayton, RN.

Also, our district has chosen to “opt-in” to the Test-to-Stay program in Arkansas. If your child is exposed **while at school** you will be given the choice to have your child tested at school. If your child tests negative during the testing period, they will be allowed to stay at school. This is voluntary but, another avenue that allows students to remain in the school setting. As always, if you have questions please feel free to contact Shawna Clayton, Wellness Director at [sclayton@parisschools.org](mailto:sclayton@parisschools.org) or call toll free 844-963-3243. We will continue to clean and disinfect, practice distancing and employ whatever mitigation strategies necessary to contain the potential spread of the virus.

R. Wayne Fawcett, EdD  
Superintendent  
Paris School District

**October 20, 2021**

## **COVID - 19 "Test to Stay" Modified Quarantine Guidance Plan**

The Paris School District wants to help our students stay in school. One way to do this is to provide probable close contacts with another option to remain on-site for educational purposes. To do this, the District will follow the “Test to Stay” Modified Quarantine Plan. In utilizing this plan, we can minimize disruptions for both students AND staff and keep students attending in-person instruction.

For more information, please read the Supplemental Guidance for a "Test to Stay" Modified Quarantine Plan below. If you have any questions, please contact Shawna Clayton, RN,

### **Supplemental Guidance for a "Test to Stay" Modified Quarantine Plan**

Daily, on-site instruction in a safe environment is a priority of ADE and ADH. With multiple mitigation strategies in place, students and staff can reduce the risk of contracting COVID while attending school in-person everyday. One way to help students remain in their learning environment is to provide probable close contacts with another option to remain on-site for educational purposes. It is an expectation of ADE and ADH that if this modified quarantine option is chosen, it will be utilized for both students AND staff in order to minimize disruptions and keep students attending in-person instruction.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on an optional modified quarantine strategy for managing COVID-19 exposures in the school setting. CDC and ADH guidelines emphasize the implementation of layered prevention strategies to protect students, teachers, and staff, which includes isolation of persons who test positive for COVID-19 and quarantine of unvaccinated contacts. This document outlines considerations for a "test to stay" modified quarantine to allow unvaccinated individuals who are exposed to COVID-19 at school to continue with in-person instruction with repeated negative COVID-19 testing.

#### **School requirements of a Test to Stay modified quarantine strategy**

1. **Collaboration with the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH).** Districts that opt to participate in the Test to Stay option must notify the ADH of their decision and may ask to be a pilot district. Any district that participates will be required to share data each week with the ADH. Districts that are selected for the pilot may have additional data collection requirements. If an increase in positive cases occurs in the school setting, the school district should consult with the ADH to determine if the Test to Stay modified quarantine should be discontinued and exposed, unvaccinated individuals quarantined away from school.
2. **Participate in the early release (7-day) quarantine option.** Repeated testing through the test to stay protocol is planned to only be done through Day 7 after exposure. Those who have chosen to only allow 10 or 14 day quarantines in your district need not participate unless the district is willing to reconsider this requirement.
3. **Implementation of a testing program which provides tests for students, faculty, and staff at no cost to the individual.**
4. **Ensure testing is conducted with voluntary informed consent** from the appropriate person, parent, or guardian. If consent is withheld or cannot be obtained, exposed individuals are not candidates for this voluntary program and must quarantine per standard protocol. Consent should be obtained at initiation of the program to avoid a delay in the ability to test when an exposure occurs.

#### **Eligibility requirements of a Test to Stay modified quarantine**

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

**October 19, 2021**

**Protocol changes for K-12 Schools:**

The definition of a close contact in a school setting has changed from within 6 feet for 15 minutes to within 3 feet for 15 minutes.

Test-to-stay protocols now apply to extracurricular activities instead of only apply to the school day.

**Remember:**

Vaccination eliminates the need for quarantine.

If both the case and the contact are masked, there is no need to quarantine.

October 12, 2021 Board Meeting

The Board voted in favor of keeping the mask policy

**CONTACT TRACING**

The Paris School District Point of Contact (POC): Shawna Clayton, RN, Wellness Center Director 844.963.3243 EXT. 3099 or 479.518.7720

The Paris School District will continue to wear masks to help mitigate the spread of COVID – 19 in our schools. CDC guidance states, “When teachers, staff, and students consistently and correctly wear a mask, they protect others as well as themselves. Consistent and correct mask use is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained.” The 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.

- **PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

CSD will continue to promote physical distancing and follow CDC recommendations which include schools maintain:

- 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.

- **HANDWASHING**

Sanitation and cleanliness will be a high priority for our district as we return in the fall. We will be cleaning high-touch surfaces (doorknobs, light switches, etc.) and restrooms continuously throughout the day. In addition, we will provide time for handwashing, and hand sanitizer is available throughout all campuses. Students are asked to sanitize their hands each time they leave and enter a space.

- **RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE**

Teachers and staff will continue to train and promote sneezing/coughing into one's elbow, using tissues and throwing them away, and washing/sanitizing hands after touching your nose or mouth. Social distancing will be encouraged as well.

- **MAINTAINING HEALTHY FACILITIES**

Staff is provided additional cleaning supplies to continue with current sanitation procedures even though CDC now states:

"The virus that causes COVID-19 can land on surfaces. It's possible for people to become infected if they touch those surfaces and then touch their nose, mouth, or eyes. In most situations, the [risk of infection from touching a surface is low](#). The most reliable way to prevent infection from surfaces is to [regularly wash hands or use hand sanitizer](#)." [Link to CDC website on Cleaning Your Facility](#)

[LINK to the COVID – 19 Information on the Arkansas Department of Education \(DESE\) webpage](#)

[LINK to the AR Ready for Learning page that contains current guidance to schools](#)

Paris School District reviewed its plan (see below) for safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services on August 9, 2021, during a Ready for Learning Committee email meeting. During the meeting, participants reviewed the mask policy and it was a consensus to keep the mask and this will be discussed at the board meeting on August 12, 2021.

***August 9, 2021***

**Wayne Fawcett <wfawcett@parisschools.org>**

**Members of the Paris School District Reopen/Relearn Committee**

You only thought your time on this committee was over! Honestly, so did I but Covid doesn't seem ready to relent.

One month ago, I was optimistic that we would have a much more "normal" school year. Yes, we would have to continue to take some precautions but we expected things to be back to pre-March 2020 routines. But as we all know the Delta variant is affecting younger people and is much more transmissible. Consequently, we will implement many of the strategies that we had last year: distancing, shields, split lunches, sanitizing, cleaning, etc. The one option that is undecided and currently a political football is masks.

As you are aware Act 1002 of 2021 prohibits the implementation of a mask mandate in public schools (private schools can mandate them). It went into effect July 28, 2021. However, last Thursday, August 5, 2021 Judge Tim Fox in Pulaski County issued a temporary injunction prohibiting the implementation of the law in response to a lawsuit filed on behalf of some parents. The effect is Act 1002 **CURRENTLY** cannot be enforced which means a mask mandate **CAN** be implemented, at this time. There is no doubt that the Arkansas Attorney General will appeal the ruling whether to circuit court or to the Arkansas Supreme Court. This leaves school districts in limbo as to whether to ask their local boards to approve masks or not since at any moment a court may rule that the law can be implemented OR the AG loses and appeals again to another court that then may rule either way.

Which brings me to my email. **Please let me know your thoughts about a mask mandate in the Paris School District.** Last year it was a statewide mandate issued by the Governor. That will not happen this time, it will be a local decision by each local school board. There are many opinions and some options. No mandate at all, mandate only those that cannot be vaccinated (ages Pre-K-11 years old), total mandate for all students and staff, etc.

I am writing this on Monday, August 9, 2021, one week before school starts. There is a board meeting Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 5:30 pm. While I am not advocating for any decision at this time and, given the fluid situation with the courts, it is not certain when any decision can or will be made. My purpose is to simply gather information and opinions for our board. Either way it is a difficult decision when and if one can be made.

Thank you in advance for your time and thoughts on a difficult topic. As always feel free to call, write or come by if I can help in any way.

**August 2, 2021**

Paris School District Employees

As we get closer to the beginning of the school year I have purposely waited as late as possible to give you the most recent and updated information. A month ago I was excited that we appeared ready to have a relatively "normal" school year. But, at this

point it is obvious that we are once again faced with serious issues to start the school year. In some ways we are better off than we were last year. We have a vaccination that has proven to be effective in combating the virus, IF someone is vaccinated and becomes a close contact with someone infected they DO NOT have to quarantine. Even if not vaccinated and two people both have masks on and one is positive the other does not have to quarantine and, students at age 12 and above are eligible for vaccination. However, we also know that the current variant is much more transmissible than a year ago and it is affecting younger people. Last year we had an emergency declaration from Governor Hutchinson that allowed us to require masks for everyone in our school buildings but, now that is not legally possible and only rises to recommended status. Last school year we had 88 positive cases among staff and students and through contact tracing we were able to determine that not a single case was transmitted at school. This was no doubt because of everyone's effort to wear masks, sanitize, distance, etc.

I was adamant that we would not have a virtual option available for the coming school year given the success we had last year and the relatively low number of cases statewide, countywide and within the boundary of our district. But, things have changed quickly in the last 30 days. After informal consultation with the board I feel that we must offer a virtual option to a very limited number of students. Parents are apprehensive about sending their children to school even though we know we can and will be successful in offering a clean and safe environment. Multiple conditions must be met for a student to avail themselves of a virtual option. Included are the following conditions:

1. There will not be blanket approval to any and all requests. Students will have to apply to their respective buildings using an application process unique to each building. Principals will establish a committee that will review the application and determine whether the student qualifies. Appeals will be to the superintendent only.
2. Lack of success in the virtual option last year will almost certainly eliminate the possibility for 2021-22.
3. There must be extenuating circumstances in order to qualify. Each situation is different and will be judged on its merits. Simply being concerned is not sufficient.
4. If permission is granted the district will reserve the right to revise or rescind the permission at any time.
5. If permission is granted and a student fails to contact the school as set forth they may be subject to being referred to the juvenile prosecuting attorney.

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be conditions specific to each building. Students in the virtual option will be the exception rather than the rule. We submitted our tentative DLP (District Learning Plan) to DESE Friday and will continue to refine it ahead of when it will be presented to the State Board of Education. Specifics will be discussed later.

The Paris School District will be offering a vaccination clinic for staff only on Monday, August 9. If you are interested in getting either your first or second dose contact Shawna Clayton. As always receiving a vaccination is a personal choice and is not required by the Paris School District.

We will continue to screen staff to begin each day. Nurses or their designees will be screening for symptoms related to Covid until further notice. I will be contacting the

2020-21 PPC later this week to discuss revisions to the Covid leave policy from last year for presentation to the board at the August 12 meeting.

Given the rate of positivity and hospitalizations, and at the risk of being a pessimist, it is likely that we will begin the school year with immediate positive cases and quarantine. The Marion School District operates on a hybrid schedule starting last week. Within a week they sent 168 students and 3 staff members to quarantine. Unfortunately we must be prepared again this year for disruptions caused by the virus. All of the building administrators have been working on plans to begin the school year to be as prepared as possible and have and will continue to share those plans with everyone.

Tomorrow I will release information to the public about issues such as those discussed here. Information will be posted on the district web site, Facebook page and I will provide a short video. Each building will also provide building level specificity on their respective web sites.

As always I appreciate the job that each of you do daily for the students in the Paris School District. The coming year comes again with uncertainty but, the strength and commitment of the Paris School District staff insures the best will be available for our students.

Thank you

RWF