As champions for all students, Macon County R-IV Schools’ mission is to graduate responsible students and positive self-image who demonstrate high academic, ethical, and moral standards through an environment conducive to career development and life-long learning. The purpose of this plan is to guarantee continued and safe school operations that best serve all students and staff through full in-person instruction during the 2021-2022 school year. Information included in Macon County R-IV Schools’ Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan (SRCSP) aligns to guidance from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). This plan will be updated at minimum every six months or as practices and recommendations change throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

OVERVIEW

Macon County R-IV Schools learned many lessons while navigating the pandemic. Effective communication and collaboration with all stakeholders proved essential. This will remain a priority as we begin a new school year. Macon County R-IV Schools is fully prepared for any scenario that may arise. While the world around us changes and evolves, it is imperative for the school district to learn and grow, preparing students to be successful and resilient regardless of the opportunities and challenges brought to our community by COVID-19.

In preparation for the 2021-2022 school year, a task force of students, parents, educators, classified staff members and board members met to determine procedures that will best serve all students and staff. The end result entails a combination of mitigation strategies, continual monitoring of district data and ongoing partnership with local health partners to support in-person instruction. A collaborative review with stakeholders will occur at minimum every six months or as practices and recommendations change throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

Macon County R-IV Schools is thankful for the support of our community as we strive to be champions for all students. A unified effort is critically important. District leaders stand ready to work in partnership with all families as school begins for the 2021-22 academic year!

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Macon County R-IV Schools’ COVID-19 mitigation strategies follow guidance from the Macon County Health Department, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Clear and consistent implementation of recommended mitigation strategies will support in-person instruction. Macon County R-IV Schools will continue to collaborate with our local health departments and monitor data, particularly at individual school sites. If data demonstrates a spike in particular classrooms, grade levels or schools, additional safety measures will be put into place.

MASKS

Macon County R-IV Schools is recommending that all non-vaccinated or immunocompromised students and staff wear masks. Based on the advice of national and local health professionals, we are also recommending that students 12 years or older consider receiving the vaccination as soon as possible. The Macon County Health Department does not advise schools to implement a mask requirement. Updated MCHD guidance for schools no longer recommends requiring masks for students or fully vaccinated adults. As of June 2021, federal requirements requiring masks on public transportation have not changed. All students and staff will be requested to continue wearing masks while on Macon County R-IV school buses.

CLEANING

Macon County R-IV Schools Custodial Services Department has developed clear procedures for extensive cleaning throughout the day and each evening. High-touch surfaces have been identified and ventilation systems reviewed to support healthy environments.

DISTANCING

Physical distancing of students and staff is no longer required. Distancing of students and staff may continue to the extent possible, if a situation dictates it

PERSONAL HYGIENE PRACTICES

Personal hygiene remains a key prevention practice. Regular handwashing and the covering of coughs and sneezes will continue to be taught and reinforced to students. Hand sanitizer will be available throughout each site.

Contact Tracing & Protocols

The goal of Macon County R-IV Schools’contact tracing procedures is to minimize the risk of COVID-19 in our school sites through identification, tracking and guidance in the event of a potential positive case. The district’s internal contact tracing efforts are aligned with those of the Macon County Health Department and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.

Procedures are in place for all possible scenarios, including:

• COVID-19 symptoms with no known exposure

• Known or possible exposure to an individual with COVID-19, on or off-campus

• Positive COVID-19 test or diagnosis

• Consideration of vaccination status

• Return to work or school protocols, including testing criteria

As of June 2021, unvaccinated individuals who have been deemed exposed to COVID-19 are required to stay home from school sites for ten days, with potential to return after seven days if testing criteria are met. Macon County R-IV Schools will provide support to staff and families in accessing diagnostic testing through widely available community resources. Stay-at-home procedures will be updated as necessary to align with health department guidance.

Communication Procedures

The goal is always to share what we can, when we can, while complying with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and/or Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines. To provide the greatest level of transparency possible, we will notify impacted communities in the event of a probable or confirmed case. Staff: All building staff members, including traveling and classified staff members, will be made aware of a positive case in their building. Families: All families of students attending the same school will be notified of a positive case, regardless of exposure level.

Additional Considerations

VACCINATION OPPORTUNITIES

Macon County R-IV Schools’ goal is to ensure that vaccination against COVID-19 is convenient and accessible for those staff members and families who would like to take advantage of the opportunity.

When Missouri’s K-12 educators were approved to receive the vaccine in March 2021, Macon County R-IV Schools disseminated information for all employees. As eligibility was extended to all individuals ages 16 and older, the district continued to disseminate information on availability of vaccination sites. We will continue to provide opportunities for vaccination to students and staff, including resources for younger students as vaccine eligibility is expanded. Vaccination status is not a condition for employment nor access to activities and athletics.

CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

These updates to procedure will continue throughout the summer and fall. In the event we see an increased number of positive cases in our community, Macon County R-IV Schools will re-evaluate our district health and safety protocols in conjunction with the health department.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations will be provided to students as necessary or mandated by their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated and other underserved populations will monitor implementation of the plan to determine need for additional accommodations and/or revisions. This plan has been made available in the home languages of the students served by Macon County R-IV Schools. A virtual learning option exists for K-12 families who would prefer this learning mode for their child in the 2021-2022 school year. More information is available on the school website at www.mcr4.k12.mo.us.

For questions, comments or concerns regarding this collaboratively developed plan for the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services, please contact Macon County R-IV Schools at 660.226.5615.