



Pocola Public Schools
Home of the Indians
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Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

In order to comply with Section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act and U.S. Department of Education's Interim Final Rule, each school division that receives ARP ESSER III funds is required to submit a plan that describes how it will safely return to in-person instruction and ensure continuity of services, including school divisions that have already returned to in-person instruction. This plan is published to Pocola Public School's website.
www.pocolaschools.org

Section 1: Introduction

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. This plan describes how Pocola Public Schools will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and district staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. Questions about this plan should be directed to Jason Brittain, Superintendent of Pocola Public Schools, at jbrittain@pocolaschools.org or 918-436-2424. The primary goal of Pocola Public Schools continues to be to safely offer in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible under the guidelines provided by the Governor's Office, Oklahoma Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Oklahoma State Department of Education. Pocola Public Schools is planning for a return to in-person learning five days a week for all PreK-12 students beginning August 11th, 2022. Health and safety mitigation procedures will continue to be in place in our schools and transportation in August, when necessary, including physical distancing and face coverings. As guidance from health officials continues to evolve, mitigation practices may become less restrictive. Our instructional staff will focus on the design and delivery of engaging, in-person instructional experiences that will mirror our instructional approach prior to the pandemic. Pocola Public Schools strongly believes the best educational opportunity is provided to our students through an in-person environment.

Section 2: Maintaining Health and Safety

Pocola Public Schools has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and division staff during in-person instruction, five days per week. PPS has established a COVID-19 team within the school division and a point person at each school facility. PPS has been in contact with local health department officials in our planning for reopening our buildings and will maintain continued contact with LeFlore County Health District officials. The PPS health mitigation plan will continue to focus on the following guiding principles: • promoting behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19 • maintaining healthy environments and operations • preparing for and acting when someone gets sick and/or presents with symptoms.

PPS will continue to monitor student absenteeism using already established attendance procedures. Should the rate of absenteeism significantly increase in any school or across the district, then the Superintendent will be made aware of this by attendance staff and/ or Principals of schools. The Superintendent will consult with stakeholders regarding possible causes and determine the next steps for the division. PPS will be partnering with our families and community with the expectation that all students and staff continue to complete a health screening protocol before reporting to school. PPS has developed a communication strategy that includes orientation and training for staff and students specific to COVID-19 mitigation strategies. PPS will provide information and training to staff and students on safety protocols, signs, and symptoms of COVID-19, first aid situations, provide classroom supply support, conduct virtual training sessions, and ensure social distancing is maintained during training. Staff will receive guidance on CDC recommendation for triaging students in the classroom, accommodating a sick student, isolation protocol, Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidance, medication administration guidelines, and protocols. PPS will communicate, in accordance with applicable laws and privacy policies, having staff and families self-report to the school if they or their student have symptoms of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days in accordance with health information sharing regulations for

COVID-19. PPS will notify staff, families, and the public of school closures and any restrictions in place to limit COVID-19 exposure. Upon confirmation of positive lab findings, the school will contact the Director of Student Services, School Administration, and the Health Department. The Health Department would do contact tracing in an effort to determine the communication needs of parents, students, and address closer to infected areas. All staff, students, and stakeholders will be provided information on the importance of staying home when sick and maintaining social distancing practices. Lesson plans, modeling, verbal wellness screenings, and skill practicing will be used to ensure that staff and students understand the importance of personal hygiene and practice these preventative behaviors. PPS may provide age-appropriate signage and material to all facilities to promote healthy hygiene. Materials may be posted in the entrances, hallways, classrooms, food service areas, restrooms, and other areas as deemed appropriate by the building principal, site supervisor, and Central Office staff. Facemasks may be required among all students, staff, and visitors. If required students and staff will be expected to wear masks on buses, in common areas, during transitions, and in classrooms, with the exception of during socially distanced, planned mask breaks. PPS will work with both parents and primary care providers to determine the best safety practices to make appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities and for students with medical conditions. Pocola Public Schools will clean and disinfect each building regularly, with special attention to frequently touched surfaces; transport vehicles, and it will ensure adequate cleaning supplies are available for custodial use. PPS will provide additional training opportunities related to COVID-19 and enhanced sanitation measures for the custodial staff. PPS will provide staff working with students, staff, and areas of exposure with personal protective equipment and provide guidance according to Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidelines. Pocola Public Schools will provide access to additional hand sanitizer at key locations throughout the building including high traffic areas like the main offices and classrooms. Students will continue to be encouraged to wash hands regularly and frequently especially before eating and after using the restroom. Pocola Public Schools will work to provide adequate access to learning materials and technology to minimize sharing to the greatest extent possible (e.g. dedicated student supplies, lab equipment, computers, etc). The sanitization of shared items between uses will be a high priority. Pocola Public Schools will strive to make certain our ventilation systems operate properly and to increase the circulation of outdoor air as much as possible. Systems will be checked regularly and filters will be replaced regularly

Students will continue to be encouraged to bring water bottles from home daily for hydration. PPS classrooms will be arranged to ensure appropriate social distancing, to the greatest extent possible, between students while maximizing available space and ensuring proper entry and egress routes. While students and staff are in the building, communal areas will be monitored for cleanliness.

Meals may be served and consumed in the cafeteria along with the classroom or outdoor setting to optimize physical distancing. Students may continue to bring their own meals as appropriate. Distribution of food items and utensils will continue to follow guidance of best health mitigation practices. All non-disposable food service items, including cooking and preparation equipment and student trays, are handled with gloves and will be cleaned and sanitized after each use with a high-temperature dish machine or washed with dish soap and hot water. Food Service staff will wash their hands in accordance with CDC guidelines. Food Service staff will clean and disinfect frequently touched student surfaces; including keypads, and tray guides and employee surfaces; including door handles, sink handles, and keyboards.

PPS continues to work closely with Le Flore County Health Department officials to coordinate and communicate vaccine efforts, as well as allow for the use of school buildings to provide vaccination sites for school staff, students and community members.. PPS may assist with clinics to support the vaccinations of 12-18 year olds and their household members, as well as any remaining staff and community needs.

Section 3: Continuity of Services

Pocola Public Schools has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs.

Academic Needs: All students Pre K-12 will be eligible to return to school for in-person learning five day per week for the 2022-2023 school year. PPS has made plans for continuity of new learning to exist alongside planning and responding to loss of learning through modifications of curriculum, pacing, and targeted assessment and remediation opportunities. The focus will remain on remediating reading and math skills in grades K-8, and Credit Recovery remediation for grades 9-12 for English, Math, Science and Social Studies. Assessments will be administered at the start of the school year to identify individual student needs. Formative assessments and delivery will be adjusted accordingly, and progress monitoring will be utilized to assess effectiveness, and drive future instruction.

Collaboration with all instructional staff will be imperative to provide the instructional delivery necessary for all students to succeed. Students who fall into the Response to Intervention (RTI) Tier 2 and Tier 3 level of instructional needs, will continue to receive specialized instruction through the implementation of best practices, which will be progress monitored for effectiveness. Students in need of services including English Language Learners (ELL) and Students with Disabilities (SWD) will be provided the opportunity to receive instruction based on the direct service time indicated in the student's Individualized Instructional Plan (IEP) and/or Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP). Students with 504 plans and identified gifted students will continue to receive differentiated and accommodated instruction. Dedicated daily and weekly time scheduled for teacher planning, collaboration, and continued professional development and support based on both student and staff needs will continue. Reflection of student data and progress will be used as a means to improve student services and instruction. The administration will continue to monitor instruction and classroom/school operations. We recognize and respect that some families may still be interested in a virtual learning option for the next school year. Parents of PK-4 students are asked to contact their building principal to discuss virtual learning requests. Families of students in grades 5-12 will complete a request to continue with virtual learning for next school year.

Social/Emotional/Mental Health: Teaching staff will embed social and emotional learning opportunities and will explicitly instruct students on safety and health habits as we progress through the phases of reopening. School counselors will target their instructional delivery and support based on communication with staff and families, as well as observations of student behaviors and needs. Pocola Public Schools will have trained staff available by phone or in-person to assist any student who self-refers or who is otherwise identified as experiencing mental health issues. Pocola Public Schools will continue to provide crisis support to students via each school's Counselor. For students receiving special education services, their IEPs will be amended, if appropriate, to ensure the provision of

essential supports and/or services to address their social-emotional functioning. The Pocola Public School Board is committed to nondiscrimination with regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, ancestry, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, status as a veteran, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law.

Section 4: Opportunity for Public Comment

In developing the ARP ESSER Plan, Pocola Public Schools sought public input and took such input into account. Staff and parent input was collected through surveys, Superintendent Staff Advisory meetings, Superintendent Parent Advisory committee meetings, public comment opportunities at advertised school board meetings, and individual communications received at the school and division planning levels.

Section 5: Periodic Review and Revision of Plan

During the period of the ARP ESSER award (until September 2024), Pocola Public Schools will periodically review and, as needed, revise its plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. The plan will be reviewed at least every six months, and Pocola Public Schools will seek and take into account public input during the review process. Plan revisions will address updated CDC guidance on safely reopening schools, if any are issued.

Section 6: Making the Plan Available to the Public

Pocola Public Schools has taken the following steps to make this plan available to the public: • The plan is posted at www.pocolaschools.org • The plan will be included in the July School Board meeting packet and opportunity for public comment on the plan will be provided.