

# Return to School Plan for Benton #47



*Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow, Rangers Forever*

## Reopening Plans

On June 23, Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) released Joint Guidance regarding the reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 School Year. Benton CCSD #47 is committed to the health and safety of our students, staff, and their families. Each staff member should ensure their own health and safety by adhering to these guidelines and reporting any issues or safety concerns to their building principal. Each of us will play a role in our collective safety.

As a result, Benton #47 administration, the Board of Education, along with teacher transition teams, developed a plan for the safe return to learning applying two distinct learning platforms. Embedded in each plan is the non-negotiable desire to have Benton #47 students at school Monday-Friday, safely engaged in learning at the highest level possible.

However, it is important to note, Benton #47's reopening plan is fluid and is subject to change based on many factors mostly out of our control. As a district, we have been encouraged by ISBE to communicate to you the possibility at some point this school year, due to increased infection rates at school, in the community, or throughout the state of Illinois, we could possibly be required to return to full-time remote learning. Obviously, this is not something we want to do. Nevertheless, it would be careless not to communicate the possibility. Currently, as this plan is developed, COVID-19 infection rates in Illinois and across the country are increasing at an exponential rate. Please understand reopening school is not a risk-free endeavor. This plan does not eliminate risk for students, faculty, staff, or administration. It merely attempts to mitigate risk to the greatest extent possible given the conditions and limited resources in which we operate.

The goal of this communication is to provide you with a summary framework along with supporting details describing the learning options available for your student for the 2020-21 school year.

ISBE's guidance required focus on the following points:

- Allowing a safe transition back to in-person learning this fall to the greatest extent possible.
- Developing common and clear requirements, while preserving the flexibility of each school district, to implement a reopening plan that meets the needs of the community and the students they serve.
- Utilizing a hybrid of in-person and remote learning, if needed, to protect the health and safety of students, teachers, and families. (***Your response to our survey provided a clear directive for the need to provide a remote learning option.***)
- Addressing public health requirements for personal protective equipment (PPE) and physical distancing requirements including:
  - Mandatory Face Coverings
  - Capacity limits in one space
  - Symptom screening for faculty, staff, and students
  - School wide cleaning and disinfection protocols

**Important Note:** *Face coverings (masks) will be available for students who need them. However, we would highly encourage you to provide your child multiple washable masks he/she is comfortable wearing so they can be rotated on a weekly basis.*

## **Academic Instructional Plan – Two Platforms for Learning**

### **In-Person Learning:**

In-person learning is highly encouraged for all Benton #47 students. Student attendance begins **Monday, August 10**. ISBE's guidance has permitted in-person learning with the following guidelines being established:

- Enhanced Cleaning
- Social Distancing Where Possible
- Mandatory Face Coverings
- Symptom Screening for students, faculty, and staff

**School dates and times for students attending in-person instruction will be Monday-Friday, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**Important Note:** *Other school related guidelines are attached and provided in the COVID-19 Prevention Strategies for the 2020-2021 School Year (At A Glance).*

## **Remote Learning:**

Remote learning will be provided as an option for students and parents who have pre-existing health conditions and/or are concerned with the possible risk of contraction and the spread of COVID-19 due to school attendance. We understand this is a real concern for many, and your response to our survey provided clear direction on the need for a remote learning option.

However, **please note if this option is chosen**, the following guidelines must be followed:

- RL is a school provided curriculum free of charge to any student enrolled at Benton #47.
- Students will have a 5 hour per day instructional requirement. Work can be completed anytime during the day at each child's individual pace.
- Tutoring during evening hours for Remote Learners will be available using an online platform.
- All learning will be 100% remote.
- Attendance will be taken daily (truancy rules/guidelines apply).
- Students choosing the remote learning option will be allowed to participate in all available extracurricular activities.
- Once remote learning is chosen, students will remain remote learners for the entire semester.
- At the conclusion of the fall semester, each remote learner will be provided the opportunity to return to in-person learning if he/she chooses to do so.
- Due dates on all work will apply per teacher instructions and grades will be assigned.

**Important Note:** *This option will be provided only if the number of enrolled students dictate the need to provide Remote Learning. If remote learning enrollment numbers are low, keeping the number of people in attendance on a daily basis too high to meet social distancing guidelines, alternate plans could be implemented.*

## **Student Arrival and Dismissal**

***\*Note – Staggered dismissal times will apply***

***Bus Riders: 1:45 p.m. Dismissal***

***Car Riders: 2:00 p.m. Dismissal***

### **Bus Riders:**

- Route pick-up times and locations will be communicated following registration by Durham Bus Company.
- Bus arrivals will not enter the building prior to **7:30 a.m.**
- Each bus will be limited to 50 occupants.
- Driver and students are required to wear a mask.
- Student bus riders will have an assigned seat for a.m. and p.m. routes

- Morning bus drop off locations will be relocated to the rear of the building (East side) removing busses from morning traffic congestion.
- K-4 students will be dropped off at the 3-4 back (East) entrance and walked directly to their assigned teacher's classroom for breakfast prior to the start of instruction.
- 5-8 students will be dropped off at the back entrance to 5-8 Gym and Event Center Gym and proceed immediately to their assigned locations (**5-8 morning/breakfast locations will be assigned at registration**).
- Afternoon pick-up for bus riders will be at **1:45 p.m.** using the same rear (East) entrance locations used in the a.m. K-4 students will be walked to bus in groups by assigned staff member. 5-8 students will use same location to exit they used to enter in the a.m.
- Changes in pick-up plans (bus to car rider or other arrangements) must be communicated to the office prior to **12:30 p.m.** each day.

### **Car Riders:**

Arrival times and student access to enter the building will be substantially different than previous years. Currently, the following applies:

- Car riders will not be permitted inside the building prior to **7:30 a.m.** when supervision begins.
- K-4 students will be dropped off and enter the building at the following locations:
  - Kindergarten – Kindergarten entrance
  - 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Wing Entrance
  - 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade – 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade Office Entrance
- K-4 students will enter their assigned hallway and be walked to their assigned classroom for breakfast prior to the start of instruction.
- At dismissal, car riders on the K-4 end will be walked by either their teacher or teacher assistant to meet parents waiting in the parking lot. Parents will be permitted to gather at the outside entrance to their student's grade level hallway to meet their child.
- 5-8 students will enter the building at assigned doors based on their grade. Once they enter, they are to proceed to their assigned breakfast location. (**5-8 morning/breakfast locations will be assigned prior to the start of school**).
- 5-8 students will enter at one of the following locations:
  - 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade – 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade hallway entrance
  - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – Event Center
  - 7<sup>th</sup> Grade – Main 5-8 entrance
- 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade car riders are to exit the building on the West side (front) to meet their ride. 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will use the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade hallway doors to exit. 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will exit through 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom doors. Parents will not be allowed to enter the building during the dismissal process.
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade car riders will be dismissed through the 5-8 main entrance doors. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will exit through the Event Center lobby doors.

- If any student needs to be signed out before the end of the day, parents entering to do so must be self-certified and symptom free before signing out his/her student prior to 1:15 p.m. Sign-outs after 1:15 p.m. will not be allowed unless it is an emergency. All parents entering the building must wear a mask.
- Changes in pick-up plans (car rider to bus) must be communicated to the office prior to **12:30 p.m.** each day.

## **Health and Self Certification Screening**

Benton #47 has determined self-certification of health will be the responsibility of each parent prior to sending their child to school. Only students and staff who are healthy should report for in-person learning. This format will require each parent to screen their students for symptoms of COVID-19 and other criteria. All staff must also screen themselves for this criteria prior to reporting to work. The health screen checklist will be mailed home with registration information and posted on the district website. Parents, by sending your child to school, you are certifying you have conducted the daily health screen and your child meets the following criteria to safely attend school:

1. They do not have a temperature over 100.4F.
2. They are not taking fever-reducing medicines, such as those that contain aspirin, ibuprofen or acetaminophen, in order to reduce his/her fever.
3. They have not had close contact or cared for someone with COVID-19 within the past 14 days.
4. They have not returned from travel outside the United States or on a cruise ship or river boat within the past 14 days.
5. They have not been directed to self-quarantine by a health care provider.
6. They have not been directed to self-quarantine by the County or State Department of Public Health.
7. They do not have any of the following symptoms:
  - Chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

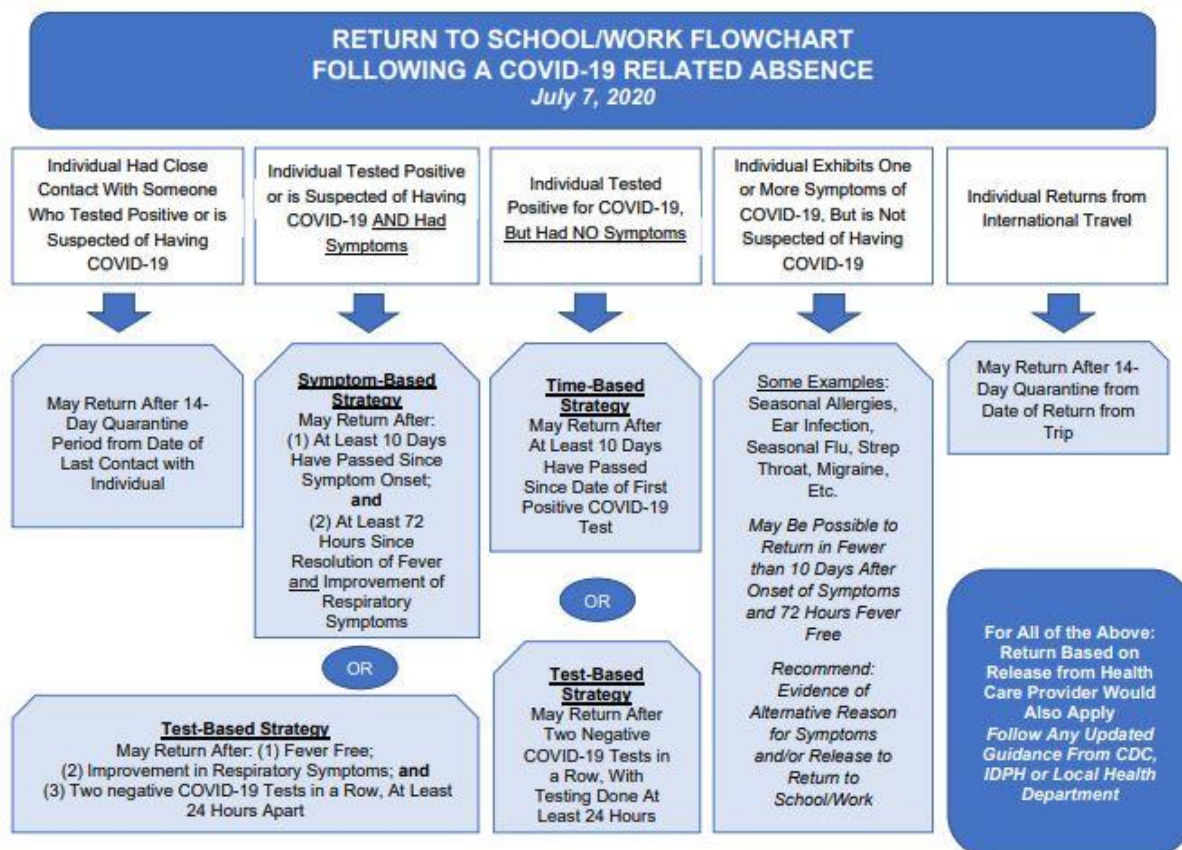
**Students and staff who exhibit symptoms or do not otherwise meet the above criteria will not be allowed into the school building. If a student does not meet these criteria, parents should notify the school of the child's absence. Employees who do not meet this criteria will not be permitted to return to work until the employee provides the District a statement from a physician that he/she is cleared to return to work.**

Any student or staff member who begins to exhibit a high fever associated with COVID-19 like symptoms while at school should report to the designated area, following the building procedure. Students will continue to wear a face covering and will remain in the quarantine area until a parent or guardian picks the student up or alternative transportation home is arranged. Staff who exhibit symptoms while at school will remain in the quarantine area until they are able to leave.

Staff who have had contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19 should notify their building principal or supervisor immediately.

Students who are suspected to have COVID-19, whether they are tested or not, should follow the IDPH guidelines for self-monitoring and self-quarantine, including quarantining until at least 72 hours have elapsed from the resolution of a fever, without fever reducing medication, and 10 days have elapsed since symptoms first appeared.

Furthermore, if a student or staff member at some point during the school year tests positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed to someone who has tested positive, the enclosed flowchart (*see flowchart below*) should be used to determine protocol for each situation.



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Although the information contained herein is considered accurate, it is not, nor should it be construed to be legal advice. If you have an individual problem or incident that involves a topic covered in this document, please seek a legal opinion that is based upon the facts of your particular case.  
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**Important Note:** The health screen checklist will be mailed with registration paperwork and posted to [www.benton47.org](http://www.benton47.org).

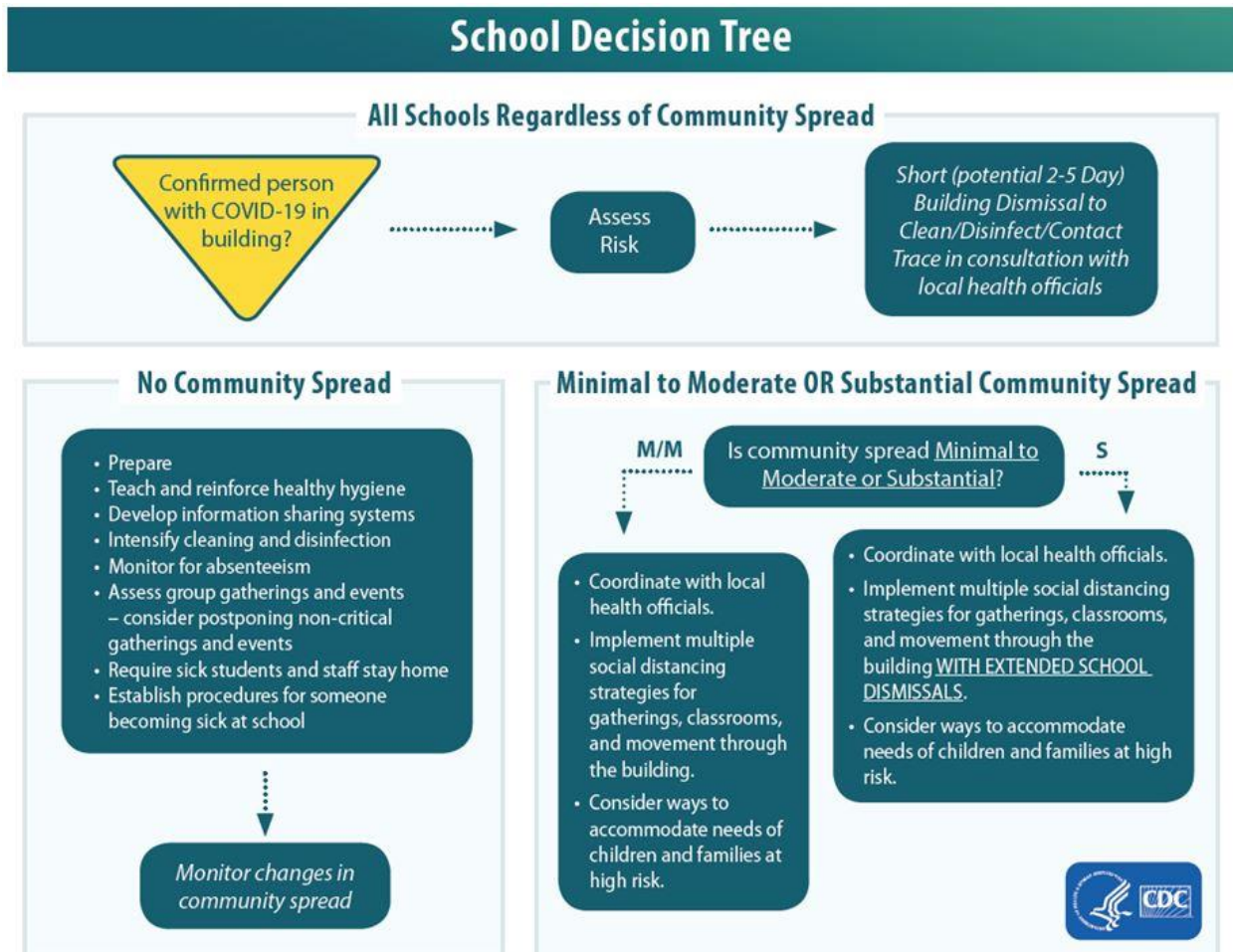
### **Additional Safety Measures:**

- Teachers will schedule frequent hand washing for all students.
- Seating should be arranged 6 feet apart (if possible) and should all be facing the same direction.
- Commons areas and tables should be clearly marked to show where to sit, stand or line-up for 6 ft. spacing.
- Classroom windows should remain open for increased ventilation to the extent possible.
- Teachers will have supplies of hand sanitizer and face masks for students, if needed.
- All teachers have thermal scan thermometers to take student temperatures if symptoms are displayed.
- If a child has a temperature or displays other symptoms, teachers will immediately contact the school nurse. The school nurse will then determine the student's illness and take appropriate action. If a student/teacher is determined to have symptoms and/or fever, isolation rooms will be available if needed to prevent unnecessary spread prior to the student/teacher leaving campus.
- Hallway movement will be scheduled in a manner minimizing the number of students in proximity to one another at any given time.
- 5-8 locker access will be scheduled in a manner minimizing the number of students in proximity to one another at any given time.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be placed throughout the school.
- K-4 classes will be assigned outside zones for recess. Zones will be rotated on a weekly basis.
- Student supplies will be restricted to individual use to the greatest extent possible.
- Outside hand washing stations have been purchased for all students to use following outside recess. All students will wash hands prior to entering the building.
- K-4 students will be kept inside their classroom bubble to the greatest extent possible minimizing contact with other grade level students.
- Water fountains will not be accessible for students or staff during the school day. Parents are encouraged to provide student water bottles for personal use.



## School Closure Plan

Benton CCSD #47 must be prepared for a short-term closure, regardless of community spread, **if an infected person has been in a school building**. If this happens, the CDC recommends the following procedures:



### Coordinate With Local Health Officials

Once learning of a COVID-19 case for someone who has been in a school, Benton CCSD #47 will immediately notify local health officials. These officials will help administrators determine a course of action for the school and programs.

- The Building Principal will notify the Illinois Department of Public Health of the positive case of COVID-19.
- The two entities will collaborate to confirm the positive COVID-19 case and to what degree the Benton CCSD #47 plan will be implemented.



## **School Dismissal**

The school, grade level or classroom may be dismissed for 2-5 days. This initial short-term dismissal allows time for Benton CCSD #47 and the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school. Local health officials will help the school determine appropriate next steps, including whether an extended dismissal duration is needed to stop or slow further spread of COVID-19.

- Benton CCSD #47, along with the Illinois Department of Public Health, will determine recommendations for the scope and duration of school dismissals made on a case-by-case basis using the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the community.
- During any school dismissal, all extracurricular group activities, school-based afterschool programs, and large events (e.g., assemblies, spirit nights, field trips, and sporting events) may be cancelled.
- During any school dismissal staff, students, and their families are discouraged from gathering or socializing anywhere. This includes group child care arrangements, as well as gathering at places like a friend's house, a favorite restaurant, or the local shopping mall.
- During any school dismissal, full remote learning will continue for all students M-F as scheduled.
- Meals will be offered as "grab-and-go" bagged lunches from a location to be determined for families affected by the school closure.

## **Communication Plan**

Benton CCSD #47 will coordinate with local health officials to communicate dismissal decisions and the possible COVID-19 exposure.

- This communication to the school community will take place via School Messenger call, the district web site, Twitter, and Benton #47 mobile app.
- In such a circumstance, Benton CCSD #47 will maintain confidentiality of the student or staff member as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.
- Families will be notified of the planned duration of the closure and the anticipated return to in-person learning

## **Cleaning and Disinfection**

Benton CCSD #47 custodial staff will follow the established cleaning procedures for building cleaning and disinfection.

- Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential for exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection.

- Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces. Cleaning staff should use disinfectants that are EPA-approved for COVID-19.
- If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

### **Extending the School Dismissal**

Temporarily dismissing PK-12 schools is a strategy to stop or slow the further spread of COVID-19 in communities. The need to extend school closures will be made in collaboration with the Illinois Department of Public Health.

- School dismissals and event cancellations may be extended if advised by local health officials. The nature of these actions (e.g., geographic scope, duration) may change as the local outbreak situation evolves.
- During school dismissals (after cleaning and disinfection), Benton CCSD #47 may stay open for staff members (unless ill) while students stay home. Keeping facilities open: a) allows teachers to develop and deliver lessons and materials remotely, thus maintaining continuity of teaching and learning; and b) allows other staff members to continue to provide services and help with additional response efforts. Decisions on which, if any, staff should be allowed in the school will be made in collaboration with the Illinois Department of Public Health.
- Administrators should seek guidance from local health officials to determine when students and staff should return to schools and what additional steps are needed for the school community. In addition, students and staff who are well but are taking care of or share a home with someone with a case of COVID-19 should follow instructions from local health officials to determine when to return to school.

### **Student Meals**

Student meals will continue to be provided as normal. Due to social distancing guidelines limiting capacity to 50 people per location, breakfast and lunches will be served in various locations to meet state guidelines.

### **Registration**

**Important Note:** All registration information will be mailed home and posted on school web site with applicable dates, times, and directions for drop-off in drive by bins.

