

# **Knox County R-I School District School Re-Entry Plan Document**

## **Introduction:**

Our school and community were impacted in an unprecedented way by the emergency of the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), the causative agent of COVID-19. The closure of school from March 2020, to the end of that school year has caused us to have to rethink how our schools can continue to provide a quality education to all of our students. As we have moved through this pandemic, we have learned that children are less vulnerable to infection and are unlikely to become seriously ill with COVID-19. The profound negative impact of loss of in-person schooling on the well-being of children has been well-documented and thus we are prepared to return to school for the 2020-2021 school year with some added layers of protection.

However, we must be attentive to the fact that this public health crisis has not ended. Adults, particularly those who are older and those with underlying health conditions and students with underlying health conditions, are at increased risk of serious illness from COVID-19. We need to prepare our schools to reduce the chances that any child or adult will acquire the infection during the school day and be armed with a protocol to respond to a case of infection in a school. We should be poised to adapt to new information as it emerges, so that we can create the safest and most robust educational experience possible. Although planning for this “new normal” may create some inconveniences, if we work together as a community, we can increase the chances that our students, staff and faculty will stay healthy and we will reduce the chance of significant educational disruptions.

The Knox County R-I School district understands that face to face instruction is more effective for our students, and we want the students to be here at school to receive their education. Our plan is to have school here every day with every student in as normal a capacity as possible, however there may come a time when students have to stay at home. In those situations, the school will be delivering instructions remotely. **Parents and students, we need your help. To lessen the likelihood of extended remote learning our social distancing and mask wearing recommendations and requirements have to be followed.**

**Suggestions in this document to add layers to protect students, staff members, and community members will center around the following:**

- Screening for illness
- Social distancing to the extent possible
- Avoiding large gatherings
- Recommendations to wear masks
- Sanitizing and cleaning
- Procedures in the case of positive COVID-19 test

## **Entering the school building/Screening for illness**

**Students: More than ever, it is important sick children not be sent to school. Parents please use the most extreme caution when deciding to send or keep your child home.** Parents will need to screen their students before they send them to school using established protocol.

**Staff:** Staff members will take a survey daily to be screened before they come to work.

**Parents:** Parents will be allowed in the building if they need to conduct school business. If you are simply dropping something off for your student, you will be asked to leave it in the front entrance. We are discouraging meal deliveries. If your students want to pack a lunch, they can do so. In the event that meals are delivered, they will need to be left in the front entrance for students to grab when they go to lunch. There will be labels and pens for your use. We will have a locked box for money and checks. Please label everything. If any item is time sensitive, please call the office with those details. Parents are asked to call ahead to have a student dismissed, and the student will be escorted out to you. If parents must enter the building, they will take a brief survey and have their temperature checked in the front entrance.

**Visitors:** Visitors will not be allowed in the building unless they have school business to conduct and have permission to enter the building. If the visitor must enter the building, they will take a brief survey and have their temperature checked before they are allowed to enter.

## **Social Distancing and Avoiding Large Gatherings to the Extent Possible**

**On school buses:** Social distancing on our buses would make it hard to transport every student to school. We suggest that parents, drop off and pick up their students if possible, to reduce the number of students riding the buses. For that reason, we will allow parents to drop off their students at 7:15 a.m. Please drop them off at the elementary doors. Student will go to the elementary gym. The State is asking us to put measures in place to be able to contact trace all our students as much as possible. Therefore, students that ride our school buses will all be given a seating arrangement with family members sitting together. Parents will also be asked to establish their students' morning and afternoon riding schedules for the year and those will not be allowed to change through the school year. If a student needs to go to a different location after school, other than what was originally arranged, then the parent will have to make arrangements to pick their student up. **Students will not be able to switch buses, nor will bus passes be issued for students to ride other buses.**

**In the classroom:** In classrooms, where possible, student desks will be in lines facing the same direction, spaced out as far as permitted, and students will be assigned seating arrangements.

**Breakfast/Lunch:** Shifts will be staggered and only every other seat at each table will be utilized. Students will social distance to the extent possible while in the lunch line. Only 2 students will be allowed in the serving area at a time.

## **Recommendations for Wearing Face Masks**

### **Students**

**On School Buses:** Because of the difficulties of social distancing on our buses, and the amount of time students and bus drivers are on the bus, we are requiring that the students in grades 4 through 12 wear face masks, and highly recommend that students in pre-k through 3 wear masks while on the bus.

**In the school building:** Students in grades 4 through 12 will be required to wear face masks, and we will highly recommend that students in pre-k through 3 wear masks.

## **Staff**

**Bus Drivers** will be required to wear face masks while students are on the bus.

**Food Service Personnel** will be required to wear face shields or masks when preparing food, serving food, and cleaning in the kitchen.

**Maintenance and IT Staff** will be required to wear protective gloves when disinfecting the building and to wear face masks when social distancing is not possible around adults and students.

**Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Secretaries, and Administrators** will be required to wear face masks when social distancing is not possible around students and adults.

**School Nurse** will be required to wear protective gloves and face mask when in close contact with adults and students.

## **Sanitizing and Cleaning**

**Students:** Students will be educated on appropriate hand washing as well as encouraged to clean hands and sanitize frequently.

**Staff Members:** Staff members will help educate students on appropriate hand washing and sanitizing. Staff members will also encourage students to clean hands and sanitize frequently and do so themselves.

**Parents/Visitors:** Parents and visitors walking in the building will be asked to sanitize hands, fill out survey in entryway, and wear a mask before they will be allowed to walk in the building.

## **Other Changes**

**Water Fountains:** All the water fountains have been turned off but bottle fillers will be operational. Students will be asked to bring water bottles to school with them with their names on them.

### **Upon arrival to school:**

Elementary students will report to their classrooms.

High School and Middle school students will report to designated areas.

**Extra and co-curricular activities** While we are all anxious to return to something approaching "normal" when it comes to extracurricular activities, it is important to understand a single case of COVID in our extracurricular organizations will likely cause a complete shutdown of that activity of no less than 3 weeks. While there are some

philosophical differences in our approach to this disease, it is our position that the following strict guidelines give us the best possible chance of having a complete and somewhat normal school year.

Based on coordination with the Knox County Health Department, the following standards are established with regard to extra-curricular activities:

- There will be separate gates for home and visiting spectators to enter facilities, and we will not collect entry fees from spectators. Spectator seating will be separated by community (home and visitor).
- We are eliminating concessions services for our home activities for the foreseeable future.
- Coaches will mask at all times when social distancing isn't possible.
- We will encourage social distancing and masks for spectators using signs and public announcements. In the event these steps prove inadequate, Knox County R-1 Schools is within its rights to limit spectator attendance based on MSHSAA guidance.
- The softball bleachers are closed to public seating.
- Teams will not congregate in dugouts and locker rooms unless all players and coaches are masked.

In addition, based on MSHSAA guidance, the following guidelines are also in place:

- Sideline personnel will socially distance at all times when not masked.
- Schools may not compete if they are not open for in-person education. Under that philosophy, Knox County R-1 is not waiving attendance requirements to maintain eligibility. Students who do not feel comfortable learning at school will not be eligible to compete in extracurricular activities.
- If a student-athlete presents a positive screen (temperature, symptoms, etc.), that individual will begin a 14 day quarantine pending receipt of a doctor note or negative test. At the completion of the 14-day quarantine, the student-athlete will return to play using the 7-day MSHSAA protocol.
- If a student-athlete presents a positive test, that individual will quarantine in accordance with local health care guidance. The student-athlete will return to play using the 7-day MSHSAA protocol. Any individual who had close contact, direct contact, or direct contact with secretions will immediately enter a 14-day quarantine and return to play using the 7-day protocol.
- Managers will not fill water bottles. Players will manage and use only their own water bottles.
- All bus riders will wear masks, to include all coaches, players, and drivers.

### **Changes from Nurse Kathy:**

I will be limiting my school health office to 2 students at a time to maintain social distancing. I have reorganized my office and medication/treatment room. The treatment room will now function as an isolation room. I will care for your child when needed, as always, but I will also be checking temperature and assessing for signs of COVID -19 on all students who come to the nursing office for assistance. I will wear a mask while interacting with students and will also sanitize my office after each student encounter. Middle school students and high school students that feel ill and request to see the nurse will wear their face mask before proceeding to the nursing office, as they will walk through more than one building. Masks will be available in the classrooms and offices.

If a student has a fever or any signs of COVID-19 they will be required to wear a mask and wait in the isolation room until picked up from school. The student will be walked out to their pick-up person. The

pick-up person should wait outside the elementary building and will not be allowed to enter the building to decrease the number of people in and out of the school.

Teachers and staff will also be assessed for illness as needed.

### **Procedures in the case of positive COVID-19 test**

In the event that someone in our school community tests positive. The school district will work closely with the health department to determine the course of action. Contact tracing will be used to determine whether or not the incident is isolated. From that determination the school will make a decision to only dismiss those individuals that could have been impacted or close school for a period of time and go to remote learning.

**Please do not send your child to school if your child is sick.**