



# **Tecumseh** **Public Schools**

## **Return to Learn Educational Plan**

**Approved July 21, 2020**

**Updated August 10, 2020**

### **Introduction**

This document is designed to provide a framework for reopening Tecumseh Public Schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The Plan to Reopen was developed through many discussions and meetings including our Communications Committee as a part of Tecumseh Association of Classroom Teachers, a group of teachers representing each building in the district, a parent group whose children represented each building in the district, a group of community members representing city government, businesses and support groups, a group of local emergency management directors in our city and county including the county and state health department, our district's nurses, two parent and teacher surveys and hours of research and discussion by our building administrators. Each perspective was important in the development of this plan.

The creation of this plan is based on two basic target goals:

1. Health and Safety – (Student, Faculty and Staff, Visitors)
2. To provide an outstanding, quality education in whatever format is required as a result of the current status of COVID-19.

These basic target goals will drive the decisions made for the district and will constantly be updated as we move through the school year. These goals will continually be based on the most up-to-date guidelines from health professionals including the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Oklahoma State Department of Education, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and other health experts. In addition, we will be using the COVID-19 Alert System from the Oklahoma State Department of Health and the COVID-19 Risk Levels map from the Harvard Global Health Institute as guidance for determining the safest schooling options for our students and teachers. To our students, parents, employees and members of our community, we want to communicate our efforts to create a plan that is based on health and safety, established policy and guidelines, communication and student academic success.

# Health and Safety

The first component of our plan for reopening is to ensure the safety of every student, employee or guest that enters our school or participates in a school activity.

## 1. Health Assessments

A part of ensuring the health and safety of all individuals starts with a daily health assessment. This assessment is required for each individual who enters our buildings and rides our buses, student and adult. The health assessment should take less than a minute for parents to complete for each of their children. The assessment begins with a temperature check to determine if the individual has a fever. The threshold of fever will be based on the current health agency standards and current policy which is 100.0°F. Any person exhibiting a temperature at or over 100.0°F, should stay at home, and those already at school will not be allowed to remain at school. The district will follow a determined procedure which includes review and consultation with our district nurses.

The following questions make up the daily health assessment:

- Do you have a fever?
- Is anyone in your household ill?
- Do you have a cough?
- Have you been exposed to anyone who is ill with symptoms similar to COVID-19?
- Have you experienced a recent loss of taste or smell?

*If the answer to any of these questions is YES, please keep your child at home.*

## 2. Masks

Current health guidelines have determined that the use of a mask is the number one deterrent to the spread of the COVID-19. Therefore, masks will be required for all individuals that enter district buildings or ride buses. We understand the use of a mask may, in the beginning, be difficult for some younger students and for some students with health conditions due to breathing complications. We will stress on our part the need for a continual review of the circumstances that may arise and make decisions that are based on the age or physical conditions of the student. We will follow these guidelines where it is appropriate and deemed necessary due to limited social distancing availability.

### Why Wear A Mask?

- To protect yourself.
- To protect your friends and fellow students.
- To protect your teachers and other adults you come into contact with on a daily basis.
- To protect those that have regular contact with their grandparents, provide care for an aging parent or family member and others that may have health concerns.

Chance of Transmission	Asymptomatic COVID-19 Carrier	Uninfected Person
<b>VERY HIGH</b>	 No Mask	 No Mask
<b>HIGH</b>	 No Mask	 Mask
<b>MEDIUM</b>	 Mask	 No Mask
<b>LOW</b>	 Mask	 Mask
<b>VERY LOW</b>	 Mask	 Mask

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<https://phelpshealth.org/news/latest-news/latest-news-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

### 3. Hygiene

As with most illnesses we come in contact with, handwashing is one of the best practices for the protection against infection. Students and adults will be asked to wash their hands frequently with soap and water following general handwashing procedures. This is especially important before we eat, following sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose. In addition, the district will provide hand sanitizing stations throughout all areas to encourage frequent hand sanitizing.

### 4. Campus Sanitation/Cleaning

Each evening, classrooms, restrooms, hallways, office space, cafeteria and other areas in our buildings will be cleaned and sanitized prior to our students, employees and guests entering the building each morning. During the school day, our custodial staff will be routinely cleaning all of the high touch areas such as door knobs, light switches, water fountains, bathroom faucets and countertops several times during the school day.

### 5. Social Distancing

A simple, yet effective, way to slow the spread of COVID-19 is to maintain adequate distance between yourself and those around you. The CDC guidelines suggest that people be spaced a minimum of six feet apart to achieve proper social distancing. In a school setting where dozens of students and staff members may typically be in a building such as the cafeteria or gymnasium, maintaining proper social distancing may be challenging. Staff members will help students maintain social distancing as much as possible by arranging classroom furniture to match proper guidelines, adjusting schedules of students to control how many students are in an area at any given time, and using visual cues such as signs to remind students and staff members about social distancing guidelines. Students will be expected to keep their hands to themselves and respect social distancing guidelines when interacting with fellow students and staff members while at school and participating in school activities.

### 6. Campus Visitors

Our practice is generally to welcome parents and other guests, where appropriate, into our buildings. Under the current circumstances, we are asking that requests to enter the buildings be limited due to the current health situation.

## Instructional Options

All of our stakeholders are ready to return to school in the manner that we consider our normal beginning of school. At this time we realize that our plans are based on the information we have today, and it is impossible for us to predict what our community, state and nation will be experiencing in August with COVID-19. We know from this uncertainty that we must not just have one plan but several plans that will prepare us to deal with COVID-19 issues as they occur during the year.

**The following “Instructional Options” represent our planning for the instruction of students during the 2020-2021 school year:**

#### 1. Traditional Schedule – (In Person Instruction)

Under this plan, school will open on the date originally approved by the Board of Education - Thursday, August 13, 2020. This option would be similar to our opening during a normal school year. We believe that the face-to-face instruction provides the optimal learning experiences for our students, and we are hopeful that circumstances will allow us to continue in this format. We also believe that the In Person Instruction will require that we have several safeguards in place in order to fulfill our commitment to ensuring student, employee and visitor safety. These expectations have been listed above.

## 2. Virtual Distance Learning

- a. The Virtual Distance Learning option is available for students and/or parents that feel uncomfortable returning to the Traditional (In Person) Schedule due to COVID-19 concerns. Parents may enroll their student in a full time virtual distance learning schedule. Tecumseh Public Schools has invested in a new Learning Management System (LMS) called Canvas. The Canvas LMS allows the student, teacher and parent to participate in their classes on a daily basis, just as if they were attending in person. The student can participate in the daily instruction generated by the regular classroom teacher. This daily participation is where Tecumseh Public Schools LMS differs from other statewide virtual learning programs offered where a student has limited contact with the teacher. This selection is scheduled to start on Thursday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, just as regular classes are scheduled to begin.
- b. In order to accommodate parents and students that may not feel comfortable attending under the traditional in person schedule but still would like to participate in the multiple activities that are available through our school, we will offer a second virtual option. This option allows the student to utilize the virtual distance learning option at home while still being enrolled in an activity class. Students in this option must be enrolled during this one period on site in order to participate. This model again sets Tecumseh Public Schools apart from the typical statewide virtual school in that students can still be actively involved in student activities in their home district. Students may transition between In Person instruction and either of the Virtual Distance Learning options one time through the school year within five days of the start of a new quarter. Other exceptions will be reviewed by request based on an individual need.

## 3. Other Potential Options may develop over the course of a school year. We will continually review these options as the need arises.

### Notes:

- a. The students that are working through the Tecumseh Canvas Learning Management System may follow along with the class in real time or at their convenience later in the day to accommodate family schedules.
- b. In addition, the virtual distance learning platform will be in place for all students if at some point prior to the start of school or at any point during the school year it is determined that it is not safe for some or all of our students to be at school for Traditional In Person Instruction. This virtual distancing learning platform allows us to be ready to seamlessly switch to Virtual Distance Learning Instruction. While this is not the preferred or optimal plan, we realize that we must be prepared for this occurrence to ensure the safety of our students and employees and to continue to provide a quality education. We have worked diligently during the last two months to prepare ourselves for this possibility. This platform will provide the central point of education for every student, teacher and parent throughout the school year. This item is discussed in more detail later in the plan.

At this time the schedule options listed above represent our plans for providing a quality education to our students in the safest, most efficient manner. We understand that circumstances may change at various points during the school year that require us to reevaluate our education delivery method in order to meet changing health and safety concerns. Any other options that may be developed under these circumstances will be communicated to you to allow the necessary time for planning.

# Technology/Virtual Distance Learning

## 1. Tecumseh Learning Management System (LMS)

One of the lessons learned during the school closure last spring was that we must be better prepared for any future distance learning needs. Our teachers and staff worked hard to provide a quality educational format and lessons that were intended to help our students to both work on previously learned standards and to introduce new standards that had not yet been taught. This distance learning model was put together in a short two week window of time and was implemented without the technology resources that would assist both teacher and student in the educational process. Our solution to this issue was to purchase a learning management system (LMS). Simply put, the purpose of an LMS is to provide a software platform that allows us to manage all of our learning environments (course work, software programs, documents and video) in one location. The Canvas (LMS) program allows us to provide one location for teachers to access resources, curriculum, develop lesson plans, create lessons and then to share them in multiple, varied formats that would be appropriate for the age group, subject area taught or curricular need. For the student, the advantages are the same. The LMS allows the student to login to one account and from this login, access all of their classes and assignments. It also provides a calendar of assignments to assist the student in keeping track of homework, assignments and upcoming tests. Finally, the LMS will allow the parent to monitor the student's grades and assignments and to help partner with their child's teacher to ensure educational success.

## 2. Technology Devices

The purchase of an LMS is only the first part in the success of the virtual distance learning program. The second key is that our students must have a device (Chromebook, laptop or iPad) in their hands in order to have the capability to access the LMS and participate in the daily distance learning instruction. Tecumseh Public Schools has been working towards the 1:1 concept of putting a device in all students' hands. The current experience with school closure and distance learning has made this requirement a reality. We have purchased additional Chromebooks and iPads to help us reach this goal of 1:1. We will be there this fall.

## 3. Connectivity

The third piece of a successful distance learning program is the requirement of connectivity. In order to participate actively in an LMS or any virtual distance learning program, we must increase our connectivity to allow each student the access to the LMS and their classroom teacher. During the recent school closure and distance learning time period, we identified approximately 450 students that were in need of assistance to participate in the distance learning opportunity provided. We have purchased enough of the hotspot devices to allow us to meet these needs and to assist our students in their participation in the daily virtual distance learning program.

**Note:** August 13, 2020, represents the start of a new school year. From the beginning, attendance and grades will be taken and counted in order to meet the standards established by Tecumseh Public Schools and the Oklahoma State Department of Education. While attending the Tecumseh Virtual Distance Learning program, attendance will be counted when a student logs in to the program, participates and completes assignments. Both attendance and grades will be counted on a daily basis as if the student was attending the traditional in person program.

## Transportation/Buses

We have a large school district and many of our families depend on our bus service to provide transportation for their children both to school in the morning and home again in the evening. Due to the lack of available buses, bus drivers and existing site schedules, this is an area that will be very difficult for us to provide social distancing opportunities for our students. We will work to create the safest environment by requiring all bus riders and drivers wear masks while they are on the bus. In addition, we will follow the suggested guidelines to increase bus air flow in our buses by opening windows when weather permits. We are continuing discussions regarding options to assist with the transportation issue. These options may include staggering start times to allow for the creation of additional routes to provide fewer numbers on the bus at any one time. We ask if parents can bring their students to school, we would appreciate the help provided to lower these bus numbers.

## Child Nutrition/Meal Service

The meal delivery system that we implemented during the school closure this spring and summer was a big success. We fed over 115,000 meals to students throughout the school district during a great time of need for our students and their families. The child nutrition program will be a large part of a successful program for the fall. Obviously, our delivery method will be dependent on how we are able to start school and could be subject to change as we progress through the school year. While in a Traditional In Person setting, we will try to create sufficient social distancing by utilizing classrooms, outdoor areas and the cafeteria to limit the numbers in any one space during the meal time. We are working with our child nutrition director and building principals to develop these scenarios to help us make adjustments as seamlessly as possible. Our goal in this process will be to provide this much needed program while maintaining and ensuring the safety of our students, employees and visitors.

## Closing the Achievement Gap

With the loss of in person instruction during the spring, coupled with the normal summertime away from school, students will need some additional review to assist them with being ready for the next grade or course level. Each site will schedule some time during the first few weeks that will be directed towards addressing these needs. We have partnered with the Oklahoma State Department of Education with a program called Exact Path. This program will allow each teacher to assess the student's current skill level in the areas of math, reading and language arts. Through this assessment, each student receives a plan of study that directly addresses their individual needs in these areas. This plan of study provides a curriculum for the student to follow that is prescribed for their individual needs. Each site will work to make this a routine part of the schedule as we help each student close the achievement gap.

## What will we do if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 with one of our students or staff?

Upon confirmation from a healthcare professional that a student or employee of the district has tested positive for COVID-19, the following actions will be taken.

- 1) The district will cooperate with local, county, and state health authorities in identifying all individuals who may have come into contact with the person who has tested positive for COVID-19 and assist, as requested, in notifying these individuals. Please note that the district will not be able to give names or other personal information of individuals who may test positive for COVID-19 at any time.
- 2) The area(s) in each school site where the affected individual has spent time will be quarantined and cleaned per CDC recommendations. This will include school buses or other district-provided vehicles that the individual may have used.
- 3) Depending on the magnitude of the exposure, the district will determine an appropriate course of action for each individual situation. These actions will include specific, timely communication with all affected stakeholders including parents about what has occurred and the district's specific response. Communication will occur regularly through our district website, district app, and/or district phone calls. In these situations, one or more of the following actions may be required:
  - a. Enhanced social distancing protocols may be put into effect for students and teachers involving increased use of masks or other appropriate PPE.
  - b. Classroom closure where one or more classrooms in a building will be sealed for the CDC-recommended timeframe may occur. Teachers and students who normally attend school in these classrooms will be relocated for a time to other locations in the same school site if space is available to allow for proper sanitation but will maintain normal routines as much as possible.
  - c. Changing of enrollment schedules for students at a specific site to allow for better social distancing may be required. This may require the use of an A/B schedule where students attend school on-site for two days each week on staggered days and engage with their teachers in distance learning for the other three days each week.
  - d. Short-term school closure where one or more school sites in the district may be closed temporarily for cleaning and sanitation purposes. During a time of short-term school closure, students and teachers will transition to a distance learning model using Canvas until the building can safely be reopened. These closures will be short-term lasting 3-5 days depending on the level of sanitation required for the magnitude of the exposure.
  - e. As a last resort, the district will consider long-term school closure. Long-term school closure where one or more school sites in the district may be closed indefinitely due to a large outbreak. During this time of long-term school closure, students and teachers will transition to a distance learning model using Canvas until the school(s) can return safely to a regular schedule.

## What will happen if my child becomes sick at school?

There are many ways that your child may become ill at school, and we recognize that not all symptoms or sicknesses are a result of COVID-19. Some symptoms that present themselves such as running a fever will require immediate precautionary actions. If your student presents with a fever at any time while at school, s/he will be moved to a separate room until a parent or guardian can come to school to take him/her home. The student will be asked to remain at home until s/he is fever-free for three days without the use of medication before returning to school.

If a student has been confirmed with a case of COVID-19, that student must remain at home in isolation for 10 days with the last 24 hours being free of fever without the use of medication and showing improvement in all other symptoms. Distance learning services will be provided for each day the student is not able to attend school, and s/he will not be counted as absent if attendance requirements for distance learning are met on those days.

Siblings or other students who reside in the same household as a student who has a confirmed COVID-19 case must isolate these 10 days and quarantine for an additional 14 days after the COVID-diagnosed individual has finished isolation. Staff or students who have been directly exposed to a person who tests positive for COVID-19 must quarantine at home for 14 days before resuming their regular schedules. Distance learning will be available to these students during the entire isolation and/or quarantine period.

Before a student returns to school after having tested positive for COVID-19, the student's parent must complete a Pre-Return Conference with one of the district's school nurses to verify that symptoms have improved and fever is no longer present. In addition, before returning to class on the day of the student's return to school, the student will report to the site's Nurses Station to have temperature verified.

If the school receives confirmation of a COVID-19 test of a student during the school day, the classroom(s) where the student has been will be closed for cleaning. Students will be relocated to other suitable locations around the campus. Parents/Guardians will be contacted using the district's messenger system with appropriate details for their students for the following day.

If the school receives confirmation of a COVID-19 test of a student during the school day, the classroom(s) where the student has been will be closed for cleaning. Students will be relocated to other suitable locations around the campus. Parents/Guardians will be contacted using the district's messenger system with appropriate details for their students for the following day.

*For more info about our plan or for enrollment information, please contact us at one of the locations listed below.*

Tecumseh Early Childhood Center  
(405) 598-2967

Barnard Elementary School  
(405) 598-3169

Cross Timbers Elementary School  
(405) 598-3771

Tecumseh Middle School  
(405) 598-3744

Tecumseh High School  
(405) 598-2113

Board of Education Office  
(405) 598-3739



### **Breakfast and Lunch**

Students will be encouraged and given opportunity to wash their hands prior to eating. When feasible, they will eat in the cafeteria while being seated with spaces between students. When this is not feasible, students will eat in another area, such as their classrooms, in order to social distance themselves from each other. Students will be reminded that sharing food or drink is not a sanitary practice.

No guests will be allowed to have breakfast or lunch on-site during this time of operational adjustments being made due to COVID-19. If it is necessary to have fewer students in the cafeteria during breakfast or lunch to ensure adequate spacing for social distancing, there may be a need for half of the students to eat in their classrooms or other suitable locations on campus on one day and the other half eat in the cafeteria and then alternate days throughout the week.

### **Student Supplies**

When students share supplies, such as pens, art materials, and calculators, they are also sharing their germs. For this reason, we are asking students to come to school fully prepared with the materials they will need and to avoid sharing school supplies. If a student is unable to provide an item due to its expense, the school will make every effort to seek funds or materials to support the child.

### **Mental Health Challenges**

Most of the focus in recent months has been on the physical health of our students and staff, but we recognize that their mental health is just as fragile in these times. We encourage all students and staff who may need mental health support to contact a member of the administration for assistance. The district has counseling and mental health supports available along with additional resources that can help during these troubling times.

### **Oklahoma State Department of Health COVID-19 Alert System**

<https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov/covid-19-alert-system>

### **Harvard Global Health Institute COVID-19 Risk Levels Map**

<https://globalepidemics.org/key-metrics-for-covid-suppression/>

**For more information and to read the research that this plan was based on, please review the following links:**

### **Wearing Masks**

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p0714-americans-to-wear-masks.html>

<https://www.wsj.com/amp/articles/face-masks-really-do-matter-the-scientific-evidence-is-growing-11595083298>

<https://www.foxnews.com/health/wearing-mask-cuts-own-risk-novel-coronavirus-65-percent-experts-say>

### **Handwashing and Hygiene**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/hand-hygiene.html>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/handwashing-for-kids-infographic>

<https://www.rwjf.org/en/blog/2020/03/a-happy-habit-of-healthy-handwashing.html>

### **Social Distancing**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Social-Distancing-Why-Keeping-Your-Distance-Helps-Keep-Others-Safe.aspx>

<https://www.redcross.org/about-us/news-and-events/news/2020/coronavirus-what-social-distancing-means.html>

