



Jennings County School Corporation

Return to School Panther's Prepare & Care

2021-2022



Introduction

As we prepare for the 2021-22 school year, we know our families want to know what to expect in school as we continue to navigate the end of our pandemic. To provide some guidance, we are sharing the Return to School: Panthers Prepare and Care Plan with you. The guidelines and recommendations in this document will be updated at the end of each semester and may change more frequently to address changing conditions or guidance from the CDC or the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH). We will communicate with you frequently as updates are provided.

This Return to School Plan is based on guidance from the IDOH and decisions our local Jennings County Board of School Trustees have made in the best interest of our students and staff.

While we are able to provide a more “normal” school environment for the upcoming school year, it is important that our families understand that we are still having cases of COVID-19 and will need to have guidelines in place to address this ongoing concern. We are encouraged by the numbers of staff and older students (ages 12-18) who are being vaccinated. For fully vaccinated staff and students, no quarantines, school absences, missed practices, games or events will be necessary unless individuals become symptomatic. Life will return to normal for these groups. For our younger students and those not able to be vaccinated, close contacts will still be identified, quarantines will be necessary and precautionary measures will be taken, which are outlined in this plan. For all students and staff, while social distancing will be maintained, masks are optional, unless an individual is returning early from quarantine (days 11-14) or is at high risk and the family wants the student to wear a mask.

Students will be required to wear a mask on school buses at this time. It is required by Federal guidelines. If this changes, we will adjust our policy as well.

Our school year will begin on August 9 and students will return to school five days a week. We will continue to stock our schools and classrooms with hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies to ensure that we are providing our students and staff with clean and safe environments. We will also review our expectations and remind students frequently to wash their hands and maintain social distancing. By continuing to work together, we will keep everyone safe.

Online Learning Model

While almost all students are returning to school for traditional school, we do have a small number of students who applied and were accepted to attend an online school JCSC is offering. Our remote learning option will look very different from the 2020-21 school year. We have a

partnership with Edmentum to deliver the content and they will teach our small group of online students. JCSC teachers will not be serving in this capacity. Students will be expected to actively participate in learning every day of instruction and connect with their teachers as expected. If these students do not actively participate, they will be required to return to traditional school and/or be dropped from the online option. An application, screening and approval process will be used for any enrollment requests. Enrollment and changes in the online option will only occur at the semester.

Special Populations

We will continue to provide all appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities as outlined in their IEP, 504, or ILP. Should anyone have questions regarding special accommodations, please contact our Programs Department at 812-346-4483 and ask to speak to Todd Ebinger, Director of Elementary Programs or Mandy Sullivan, Director of Secondary Programs.

Transportation

We will continue to provide transportation for our students who need that service. Students are required to wear a mask on the bus due to Federal requirements. For students who do not wish to wear a mask on the bus, parents can choose to provide transportation.

In Closing

I can assure you our goal is to plan for quality teaching and learning for students in a safe environment that meets the needs of our community. We also understand our plan needs to be fluid and adaptable. One important reminder for everyone for the upcoming school year, if a student or adult is sick, PLEASE stay home. It is important for anyone with COVID symptoms to stay home until you are fever free for 24 hours, without any fever reducer, and be screened for COVID. Anyone with a COVID positive test should quarantine for 10 days and be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. For students living in a home with a positive COVID test, they also need to be quarantined for 14 days, after the last contact with the positive person, unless they have been vaccinated or were diagnosed with COVID within the last 90 days and recovered from the illness. *Students may return to school on day 11, if they are asymptomatic and follow the enhanced safety procedures included in this plan for days 11-14.* **It is critical that any positive or suspected cases of COVID are reported to your child's school.** We want to make sure that we use common sense when addressing this upcoming school year. If you have any questions about our plan and need assistance, please contact your building principal.

While navigating a Pandemic is new for all of us, we have been doing our best to take care of our students. As we work through our plans for fall, we will continue to keep our students at the

center of our decision making and will keep our community informed as we move forward. We appreciate your support and look forward to working with you as we return to school on August 9, 2021. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Teresa A. Brown
Superintendent

The Jennings County Schools will operate our traditional schools with the following guidelines to return to school for 2021-22:

MASKS, SOCIAL DISTANCING, CLOSE CONTACTS, QUARANTINE

SUMMARY

Vaccinated staff and students:

- Masks are NOT necessary (optional for anyone with increased risk or feels more comfortable wearing a mask);
- Use good judgment regarding social distancing;
- No quarantine needed if identified as a close contact as long as staff/student remain asymptomatic.
- If an adult or student is identified as a close contact, they will have an option to share their vaccination information to prevent the need to quarantine.
- If a student or staff member develops symptoms, they must isolate and obtain a COVID-19 test to rule out COVID-19.

****EXCEPTION:** At this time masks are required on the bus per current federal orders. When/if this order changes, we will adjust this requirement.

Unvaccinated staff and students:

- Masks are optional and recommended for students considered at high risk, or anyone who feels more comfortable wearing a mask, except when eating;
- Social distancing of at least 3 feet if all students are facing forward in the classroom; social distancing of at least 6 feet in all other areas of the school;
- Masks are recommended for small group instruction that cannot maintain social distancing guidelines. Disposable masks will be available for this purpose.
- Quarantine if identified as having had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.
- For outdoor activities, masks are only recommended for high risk situations.

- Students should still maintain physical distance outdoors and must quarantine if identified as a close contact or isolate and obtain a COVID-19 test, if symptoms develop.

****EXCEPTION:** At this time masks are required on the bus per current federal orders. When/if this order changes, we will adjust this requirement.

The Indiana Department of Health has shared the following guidance:

REMEMBER MASK:

M: Minimize risk by getting vaccinated

A: Anyone fully vaccinated can resume most normal activities

S: Stay aware of local requirements

K: Keep taking precautions if you're unvaccinated

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Recommendations for grades K-6 and those who are not vaccinated:

At least 3 feet between all students in a classroom, during the educational school day.

At least 6 feet of distance:

- Between adults in the school building and between adults and students
- In common areas, such as school lobbies and auditoriums
- When masks can't be worn, such as when eating
- During activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band practice, sports, or exercise. Whenever possible these activities should be moved outdoors or to large, well-ventilated spaces whenever possible.
- In community settings outside the classroom

Recommendations for grades 7-12 who are not vaccinated:

Physical distancing is recommended.

For those vaccinated: Use good judgment regarding physical distancing

HAND HYGIENE

- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds whenever hands are visibly soiled and in the following situations:
 - Before and after meals and snacks
 - Before and after recess
 - Before and after sharing supplies or equipment
 - After going to the restroom

- Build time into daily routines to incorporate hand washing
- Hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol will be available for everyone near frequently touched surfaces, doors, shared equipment, and where soap and water are not readily available
- We will promote hand hygiene throughout the school by placing visual cues

CLEANING

- Follow a daily cleaning schedule for routine cleaning
- Clean high touch surfaces and objects more frequently
- Limit sharing of high touch objects that are difficult to regularly clean and wash hands before and after using if sharing items
- Sanitize surfaces when food is involved, including before and after food prep and eating meals and snacks
- Disinfect in areas such as:
 - Nurse clinic and isolation room
 - In space occupied by people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (i.e., special education classrooms)

Note: If there has been a sick person or someone who tested positive for COVID-19 in the facility within the last 24 hours, we will clean AND disinfect the space.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/clean-disinfect-hygiene.html>

VENTILATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider being outside as much as possible. If indoors, bring in as much fresh air into classrooms and buildings as possible. Bringing fresh, outdoor air indoors helps keep virus particles from concentrating inside.
- Open windows and doors, when possible, use fans to increase the effectiveness of open windows, and decrease occupancy in areas where outdoor ventilation cannot be increased.
- Ventilation, including opening windows, when possible, is also important on buses and other transport vehicles.

NURSING CONSIDERATIONS

- If an individual becomes symptomatic while at school, they will be isolated until they can be transported home
- Parents will be encouraged to seek COVID testing or other evaluation for COVID infection if symptoms suspicious for COVID - 19

- The nurse will determine vaccination status of symptomatic individuals
- The nurse will report positive cases through the K-12 Gateway portal as required by the Indiana Health Department
- Symptom list is not all-inclusive and symptom list should also be used when assessing students for other infectious illness

SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 ILLNESS

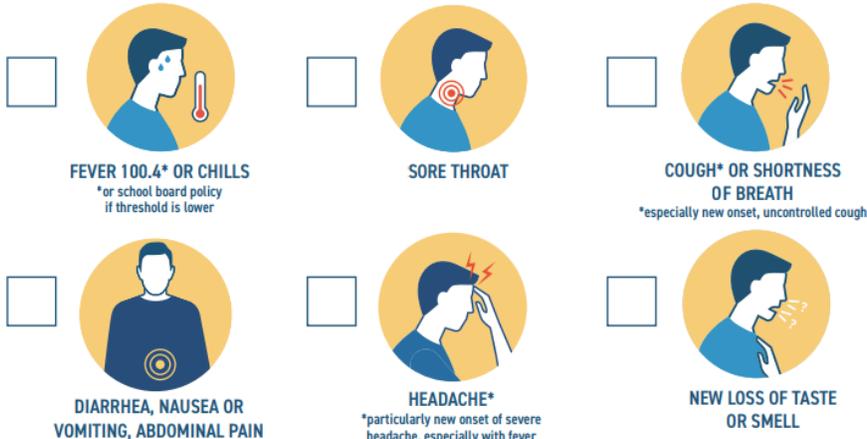
- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

DAILY PARENT SCREENING TOOL

Parents should monitor their child daily and should keep their student home if symptoms of COVID-19 or other illness are present.

COVID-19 Screening for Parents

Every morning before you send your child to school please check for signs of illness:



**May present with more than one symptom. This list does not include all possible symptoms.*

- 1 Does your child have any sign of illness above?
 - 2 Were you in close contact (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes over a 24-hour period) with anyone confirmed with COVID-19?
 - 3 If the answer is **YES** to any of the questions, **DO NOT** send your student to school. Instead, begin isolation of your child and contact your healthcare provider. Have you been tested for COVID-19? Only a positive test or provider diagnosis can confirm if someone has a current infection.
 - 4 Please keep your student home until they meet the criteria.
- ➔ *If you have trouble breathing, chest pain, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake or bluish lips or face* **CALL 911!**



QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION

- Quarantine should be used for students, teachers, and staff who might have been exposed to COVID-19. Close contacts, identified through contact tracing, should be quarantined unless they are **fully vaccinated, or have tested positive in the last 3 months**, and do not have any symptoms.
 - Students, teachers, and staff who are in quarantine should stay home and follow the direction of the local public health department about when it is safe for them to be around others.
- Isolation should be used for individuals with COVID – 19 illness to separate them from those who are not infected (even at home).
 - At home, anyone sick or infectious should separate from others, stay in a specific “sick room” and use a separate bathroom if available.

- Stay home for at least 10 days following the onset of symptoms or a positive test result. Individuals may return after 10 days as long as symptoms are improving, and they are fever free for at least 24 hours without use of fever reducing medications.
- Guidance documents from IDOH will be updated over the summer and as CDC guidance updates. This plan may change accordingly.
- All fully vaccinated individuals who remain asymptomatic (even if a close contact) do not need to quarantine but should monitor for symptoms throughout the 14 days following their exposure.
- Close contacts who are unvaccinated MUST quarantine

Options for Quarantine:

- Asymptomatic close contact may return after Day 10 with enhanced precautions (see below) in place for Days 11-14.
- Asymptomatic close contact may return on Day 15. May return to all prior activities without enhanced precautions or testing

Enhanced Precautions for Day 11 (Early) Return for Unvaccinated Individuals Include:

- Masked at all times on the bus and during the school day, no exceptions!
- Distance of at least 3 feet from others when inside the classroom, forward facing and receiving instruction during the school day.
- Lunch to be eaten separately from others as the mask will be off when eating. Remain 6 ft. from others, no exceptions.
- Prioritize hand hygiene
- Symptom monitoring daily by parents and if needed by school staff during the school day.
 - If ANY signs or symptoms of COVID – 19 are identified while at home, student/teacher/staff should NOT come to school.
 - If symptoms develop during the school day, the individual should be sent home as soon as possible.
 - The individual should obtain a confirmatory PCR test.
 - 1) If PCR test is positive, begin 10 days of isolation starting from the date symptoms began.

- 2) If PCR test is negative, you must complete the remainder of the 14-day quarantine at home.

Enhanced Precautions for Day 11 (Early) Return for Unvaccinated

Individuals Also Include:

For ALL extracurricular activities including but not limited to athletics, cheerleading, band, choir, orchestra.

- Masked at all times – no exceptions both inside and outside
- If a mask cannot be worn due to risk associated with the mask during activity, students should not practice, compete, or attend the activities until after a full 14-day quarantine is complete.
- Distance at least 6 ft. away from others (when the activity is indoors). When the activity is outdoors, mask at all times and distance as much as possible.
- If 6 ft of distance between others cannot be maintained at all times when indoors, students should not practice, compete, or attend the activities until after a full 14-day quarantine is complete.
- Wash hands with soap and water or utilize hand sanitizer before and after playing/touching equipment
- Stay home if symptoms appear or if feeling sick

NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS K-12

- Practice hand hygiene before and after meals by providing hand washing stations or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for employees, students and visitors.
- We will continue to stagger times and reduce the numbers of students during meals and snack times.
- Students should remain 6 feet apart while eating.
- We will clean and sanitize surfaces that come into contact with food. If individuals eat at desks or tables, the areas will be cleaned and sanitized before and after use.

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

Current guidance from CDC and National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT)

- Requirement for face masks on public transportation includes on school buses
- Corporation routes are being reviewed and adjusted to level bus capacity
- Contract routes are being reviewed and discussed with drivers to level bus capacity

- Additional shuttle buses will be added, one per elementary school as needed
- Assigned seating on the bus to assist in contact tracing
- Families/Households will sit together
- 40 students or less per bus (when possible)
- Students will be seated on the bus in a strategic way to extend distancing
- Windows will put ½ way down to increase circulation, when weather permits
- Eating and drinking on the bus is prohibited unless medically necessary

PLANS FOR EXTENDED CLOSURE AND FLEXIBILITY FOR CHANGING CONDITIONS

Grades K-12

- If the above plans are carried out successfully using the points above AND eligible staff and students are vaccinated, schools should be able to remain open during the 2021-22 school year. However, if the number of cases of COVID escalates and guidance changes from the local or state health department, more restrictive measures may be taken.
- In the unlikely event that JCSC needs to transition to a completely online situation it would be a smoother task for staff and students if we are prepared. With this in mind, while schools are in a traditional setting:
 - Students and teachers should practice using digital tools and assignments in traditional classrooms in preparation for a closure possibility.
 - All students and parents should be familiar with Google Classroom, Google Suite and know how they can communicate with teachers and staff.
 - Grade levels and departments should be ahead on planning and materials and have an aligned curriculum to be ready for a closure situation.

COMMUNICATION

- JCSC will communicate expectations to families, students, and staff through:
 - Skyward
 - Mass emails
 - Mass phone calls
 - Newspaper
 - Radio
 - Social media
 - Mail

- Class Dojo

TECHNOLOGY:

JCSC will provide all students and staff access to electronic devices meeting the device ratio and addressing internet access for all of the students in the corporation. JCSC has a limited supply of hotspots for students without connectivity who are enrolled in the online option.

- A surplus of iPads and Chrome books will be available for students to access
- iPad, stands, and mic for recorded lessons to place online
- Support for WiFi connections will be provided for students and staff who do not have access to internet capabilities at home
- Each school in JCSC now has parking lot WiFi access available for our students.
- A partnership with IPBS allows for students to have access to datacasting.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

- All state and local guidelines for group limitations must be followed and social distancing is encouraged.
- Any student who prefers to wear a face-covering for activities will be allowed if doing so will not cause a health risk.
- Social distancing should be used as appropriate.
- Each building will come up with an alternative schedule for clubs so they are not meeting the same day.
- All after school events will follow state recommended guidelines to the extent possible: drama, reading, archery, basketball, wrestling, academic teams, clubs. For contact sports, **parents will need to weigh the risk/benefits of participation for their individual student and decide accordingly.** State recommendations should be followed for activities to the extent possible.
- Clubs will be permitted as long as state and local health guidelines are followed.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING SUPPORTS

- During the first two weeks of school, emphasis will be placed on Trust-Based Relational Interventions (TBRI) and making connections with your new students. This will be messaged from each principal.
 - TBRI will continue throughout the year.
- **K and 1st grade** will be provided with an integrated approach to SEL skills within the Wonders curriculum.
- **2nd - 6th grade** will receive SEL skills embedded in reading lessons through the Wonders curriculum.

- [SMEKENS SEL Lessons](#) for remote lessons (optional).
- **JCMS** - The first two days will be focused on building relationships/fostering student connections and setting up school procedures and classroom teach-to's . This will give students an explanation of what school will look like according to different scenarios. The instructional coach will provide lessons for teach-to's.
- 1 Day [Botvin](#) training (at minimum: Coping with Anxiety, Social Skills, Communication, Coping with Anger, Resolving Conflicts)
- **JCHS** - First two days will be focused on building relationships/student connections and setting up school/classroom procedures. This will give students an explanation of what school will look like according to different scenarios.

The following are mental health supports which are available for students and educators who are struggling due to COVID and its public health response:

- [The Science of Happiness Course](#) from IDOE (staff)
- Road Map for SEL Re-entry - [Educator Wellness](#) (page 3-4)
- [Employee Assistance Program](#) (staff)
- Bowen (7th - 12th grade students)
- Counselors (students)
- Centerstone (Limited Students)
- [TCU Blog](#) - this blog has resources available for educators, parents, and students on social emotional health and the TBRI model.