



## Southwestern Jefferson County Consolidated School Corporation

### Plan for the Re-Opening of School – Fall 2021

#### Overview

The Southwestern Jefferson County Consolidated School Corporation is committed to providing our students with the best possible learning environment. As we re-imagine the 2021-22 school year, we are focused on returning to school safely, while providing students with an optimal education. Guidance from IN-CLASS (Indiana's Consideration for Learning and Safe Schools), professional organizations, legal counsel, and recommendations from the Jefferson County Department of Health have been considered to develop the following plan with the intent to ensure a safe start to the school year. This document is based on the current guidance provided by our state and local health departments and may need to be adjusted accordingly as the status of COVID-19 changes.

These are a few of the highlights:

- Normal start date. First student day will be Thursday, August 5, 2021.
- Training will be provided for students and staff and available via common methods of reporting (such as websites) to parents on healthy practices and symptoms regarding COVID-19.
- While we cannot provide social distancing on buses or in buildings, every attempt is being made to provide more space in common areas and classrooms.
- A return to a traditional, in-person educational model for all students.
- The Indiana Department of Health and the Jefferson County Health Department have indicated that masks will help lower the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, we **highly recommend that masks be worn by students and staff in situations where social distancing is not possible.** *Face masks will be REQUIRED to be used on buses as well as in certain classes.* We ask that all students bring a mask to school to be used as necessary. An N95 mask is not necessary. Disposable masks, cloth masks, bandanas, and buffs are all sufficient. Face shields are an acceptable alternative.
- Families, classrooms, and schools must be prepared to go to virtual instruction daily.
- We are all in this together. There are practical and physical limitations to being able to socially distance in a school. Students will be in classroom or cohort groupings whenever possible. Every attempt will be made to create separation and maximize safety.
- Contact tracing will be very important for our local health department to make decisions about closing and quarantining should there be a positive COVID-19 test of a student or staff. Thus, assigned seating on buses and classrooms will be a necessity. A contact is defined as being within 6 feet of another person for 15 minutes or more. Contact tracing will be conducted as needed.

- **Students and staff will be expected to complete a self-wellness check each day before coming to school or participating in any school related activities.**
- Given the fluidity of current information, this document is subject to change.
- Details are provided in this document by topic and will be updated as guidance from the state and local health department is provided.

# Health Protocol for Schools

It is essential for the school community to work together to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment and in the community while still providing a quality education program. State statute gives public school districts the authority to exclude students who have a contagious disease such as COVID-19 or are liable to transmit it after exposure (IC 20-34-3-9). In addition, the local health department has the authority to exclude students from school and may order students and others to isolate or quarantine (IC 16-41-9-1.6). As such, districts/schools are encouraged to work closely with their local health departments. Symptoms Impacting Consideration for Exclusion from School Students and employees should be trained to recognize the following COVID-19-related symptoms:

- A fever of 100.4 or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore Throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Students and employees should stay home from school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 based on CDC Guidance that is not otherwise explained.

## **Return to School After Exclusion**

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC. Currently those guidelines are:

**Untested** - Persons who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 but experience symptoms may return if the following three conditions are met:

- They have not had a fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); **and**
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); **and**
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

**Tested Positive- Symptomatic** - Persons who experienced symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 may return to school if the following conditions are met:

- The individual no longer has a fever (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); **and**
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); **and**
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared: **or**
- The individual has received two negative tests at least 24 hours apart.

**Tested Positive- Asymptomatic** - Persons who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID-19 may return when they have gone ten calendar days without symptoms and have been released by a healthcare

provider. Students may also return if they are approved to do so in writing by the student's health care provider.

### Medical Inquiries

Federal law typically limits the type of medical inquiries that can be made, but given the nature of the pandemic more leeway has been given to districts/schools in this circumstance to make additional medical inquiries of staff and students than would otherwise be allowed.

- If a parent tells the district/school that a student is ill, the district/school may ask the parent whether the student is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19.
- If an employee calls in sick or appears ill, the district/school can inquire as to whether the employee is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.
- If a person is obviously ill, the district/school may make additional inquiries and may exclude the person from school property.

## Transportation

- Safe operation of the bus is the first priority.
- Transportation by school bus is planned to be provided on a normal and regular basis.
- Electrostatic sprayers will be used multiple times a week to clean and disinfect all buses, using a hospital-grade disinfectant.
- The Indiana Department of Health and the Jefferson County Department of Health have indicated that masks will help lower the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, we highly recommend that masks be worn by students and staff in situations where social distancing is not possible. Face masks will be **REQUIRED** to be used on buses as well as in certain classes. We ask that all students bring a mask to school to be used as necessary. Face shields are an acceptable alternative.
- Students should wear masks at the bus stop if they are not able to social distance.
- SWJCS will conduct a thorough cleaning and disinfection of all buses and transportation vehicles prior to the start of school.
- Busses will be sanitized after each run (both am and pm).
- Drivers will assign a seat for each student, as well as having members of the same household sit together to assist the local health department with contact tracing.
- SWJCS will ensure that staff has the appropriate personal protective equipment they choose for their own protection.
- SWJCS will ensure that drivers are properly trained with correct information about COVID-19: how it spreads, the symptoms, and risk of exposure, etc.
- SWJCS will ensure that drivers know who to contact if a student or the driver exhibits symptoms of COVID-19.
- Use appropriate methods, tools and products for cleaning buses, including opening doors and windows for effective circulation and to avoid extensive exposure to cleaning fumes.

## Facilities

- Sanitizing stations will be available in each classroom as well as various other areas throughout each school building
- Water fountains will be turned off. Water bottle filling stations will be added in various locations of each school building. Students are encouraged to bring a personal water bottle and take home to sanitize each night.
- Electrostatic sprayers have been purchased for deep cleaning in buildings and on buses using approved disinfectant.

- Maintenance and janitorial staff have been trained on the proper methods of cleaning using the new equipment and prevention of the spreading of communicable diseases.

## School Offices

- Sneeze guards will be installed where appropriate.
- Office protocol will be established: how teachers/parents/students enter, check mailboxes, meet and greet, use copiers, etc.
- Access to offices by the general public may be limited.

## Food Services

- All kitchen staff will undergo good hygiene training. This training will cover hand washing, hairnets, gloves, and COVID-19 symptoms and protocols. All kitchen staff will be required to wear hairnets, gloves, and masks during their shift.
- Schools may require students to eat lunch in the classrooms
- Sneeze guards will be utilized on serving lines on the patron side.
- Partitions will be installed at the cashier stand to protect patrons and kitchen staff.
- All reusable products (tray, cups, silverware) will be handed to the student by kitchen staff. At the conclusion of the mealtime, the student will discard their trash and place reusable products appropriately. Cleaning of reusable products will then be handled by kitchen staff with gloves. Cleaning will consist of rinsing, washing, sanitizing via heat or chemical treatment through a conveyor dish machine. These machines have been inspected by chemical representatives to ensure proper chemical concentration. Machines will be cleaned and sanitized daily.
- All disposable products will be provided to the student by the kitchen staff and then disposed of following use by the student.
- Additional lunch sessions may be added to lower occupancy.
- Tables will be sanitized between dining periods.
- Decisions on process and procedure will be made in each school based on building level considerations

## Breakfast

- Buildings may serve a “Grab and Go” breakfast that will include the choice of hot items and then go directly to their classroom to eat.
- Depending upon the building, this may be available as the student enters the building or the student may go to the cafeteria to get their “Grab and Go” breakfast and then go to the classroom.
- Some buildings may only be able to offer breakfast in the cafeteria.
- Students who enter the cafeteria will follow traffic flow directions and will maintain social distancing as much as possible in line.
- Cafeteria staff will hand students utensils and requested meal items.
- Contact tracing will be very important for our local health department to make decisions about closing and quarantining should there be a positive COVID-19 test of a student or staff. Thus, assigned seating on buses, classrooms and cafeterias (where possible) will be a necessity.
- Decisions on process and procedure will be made in each school based on building level considerations.

## Lunch

- Students may eat in the cafeteria and will be separated as space allows.
- Efforts are being made to add additional seating and/or additional lunch periods to reduce the number of students in the cafeteria at one time.
- Some classrooms may be served lunch in their room daily or on a rotating basis depending upon the school.

- Students will be allowed to socially interact with one another during lunch regardless of where they are eating lunch.
- Cafeteria staff will hand students utensils and requested lunch items. There will be no “self-serve” items such as a salad bar.
- Students who enter the cafeteria will follow traffic flow directions and will maintain social distancing as much as possible.
- Contact tracing will be very important for our local health department to make decisions about closing and quarantining should there be a positive COVID-19 test of a student or staff.
- Decisions on process and procedure will be made in each school based on building level considerations.

## Classrooms

- Classroom doors may remain open when possible for improved circulation.
- Students will follow a highway model (walk on the right side of the hallway) when two-way passage is necessary.
- Sharing items (pencils, crayons, calculators, books, etc.) will be highly discouraged.
- Where possible (self-contained classrooms), students will be kept in “cohort groups” for the purposes of “contact tracing” and reducing possible exposure.
  - Specials teachers will come to the classroom
  - While classes will not be properly social distanced during lunch, classes will be socially distanced from one another during lunch and recess, as much as possible.
- Students will be spaced out and facing the same direction, but social distancing will not be possible in all classrooms or at various times of a student’s day.
- Students will be encouraged to bring a water bottle.
- The Indiana Department of Health and the Jefferson County Health Department have indicated that masks will help lower the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, we highly recommend that masks be worn by students and staff in situations where social distancing is not possible. Face masks will be required to be used on buses as well as in certain classes. We ask that all students bring a mask to school to be used as necessary. Face shields are an acceptable alternative.
- Classrooms will be free of clutter and will have only easy to clean surfaces on items touched on a regular basis.
- Students and staff will share the responsibility of disinfecting classrooms where age appropriate.
- Decisions on process and procedure will be made in each school based on building level considerations.

## Instruction

- **Only a traditional in-person classroom option will be available. We will not be offering a virtual classroom option at this time.**
  - Traditional classrooms and/or buildings may become virtual at any time due to a positive COVID-19 test and the ability to “contact trace” all involved parties.
- Contact tracing will be very important for our local health department to make decisions about closing and quarantining should there be a positive COVID-19 test of a student or staff. Thus, assigned seating on buses and classrooms will be a necessity.
- Students will continue to travel to the Southeast Career Center and The University Academy (Austin).
- **Families, classrooms, and schools must be prepared to go to virtual instruction at any time, on a daily basis.**

## Recess/Physical Education

- Outside when possible and stay in cohort groups.

- Protocols for playground equipment will be established.
- Classrooms can have recess equipment, but it will need to be wiped down after usage

## Library

- Students will be allowed to use the library, but safety protocols will be in place such as:
  - Protocols for returned books will be established.
  - Students cannot reshelf books after viewing and determining what they do not want.
  - Students will be assigned seats while in the library to facilitate contact tracing.
  - Tabletops must be disinfected in between classes.

## Absences

PLEASE keep students at home with fever or symptoms of illness and report the nature of these symptoms to the school

## Fieldtrips

**Fieldtrips may be limited.** The issue will be revisited after the start of school once more information is available

## Special Education Considerations

### Special Education Meetings, Evaluations and IEP Decisions

- All special education law compliance timelines for school districts will continue to be followed (evaluations, annual case reviews, etc.).
- Annual Case Reviews: Case Conference Committee (CCC) must use available information to determine the need to adjust the frequency and/or duration of services.
- Evaluations for special education services: No changes in pre-referral, referral, and evaluation protocols
- CCC meetings may be provided remotely using Google Hangouts/Meet.

### Enhanced Cleaning Considerations for Special Classrooms

Students with significant disabilities must be provided services in a more restrictive setting to address basic health needs, toileting, feeding, and mobility issues. In addition to building-wide cleaning/disinfecting protocols, self-contained classrooms, resource rooms and therapy rooms will receive enhanced attention, including:

- Cleaning of shared equipment and learning spaces, with approved disinfectant cleaners after each use by school staff (much the same way exercise equipment is cleaned after each use by an individual at a public gym);
- Removal of furniture/play items that may be difficult to disinfect (such as stuffed animals, bean bag chairs, etc.);
- Hand washing/sanitizing area for students to continue to learn/practice healthy hygiene skills; and,
- Deep cleaning use of electrostatic sprayers several times per week or upon staff request.

### Transportation Considerations

- Special needs buses will be cleaned with hospital grade disinfectants two times per day (after students are brought home for the day and after they are dropped off at school each morning)
- Efforts will be made to practice social distancing of students and staff while loading, unloading buses and while in transit.
- The Indiana Department of Health and the Jefferson County Health Department have indicated that masks will help lower the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, we highly recommend that masks be worn by

students and staff in situations where social distancing is not possible. Face masks will be **REQUIRED** to be used on buses as well as in certain classes. We ask that all students bring a mask to school to be used as necessary. Face shields are an acceptable alternative.

## Safely Providing Special Education and Related Services

- Social distancing among students and staff will be taught, encouraged, and expected, but cannot be guaranteed.
- Students are encouraged to wear protective face masks that are comfortable and familiar to them (getting them used to a mask before the opening of school would be a big help!).
- Staff and students will be expected to wash hands frequently and at scheduled times each day.
- Staff and therapists in self-contained classrooms will use gloves, face masks, and face shields when appropriate based upon individual student needs in order to safely assist our students with meeting learning goals and activities of daily living (feeding, toileting, mobility assistance, etc.).
- Many of our students with disabilities need individual therapies and specialized assistance to meet their Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals. This requires 1:1 interaction with our teachers, occupational and physical therapists, speech/language pathologists, school psychologists and counselors. Protective partitions will be used to safely facilitate these individualized IEP services.

## Considerations for Students with Disabilities (SWD) Who are Deemed “Medically Fragile”

NOTE: If you are the parent or guardian of a student that has been recently ordered to stay home from school by his/her medical doctor due to COVID-19 concerns, please contact your school’s principal immediately.

- Students deemed medically fragile that may incur severe medical complications if exposed to COVID-19 may be unable to attend school.
- These students will require remote services that will be decided upon by the CCC and address their specific educational needs.
- Services may be delivered on-line or in a virtual format, via instructional phone calls or other curriculum-based instructional activities.
- CCC must consider technological competency and the need for assistive technology to support on-line and/or virtual learning.

## Homebound Services Related to COVID-19

- Districts must provide special education and related services to a student with a disability who has been ordered by a physician to be absent from school for an extended period of time (10 or more consecutive school days).
- Scenarios:
  - Homebound not related to COVID-19 (usually medically fragile and considered at-risk prior to pandemic);
  - COVID-19 infection requiring mandatory absence from school; and,
  - COVID-19 homebound placement due to a family member’s infection.
- All scenarios require a CCC meeting to establish change of placement and determine appropriate services. Placement, when applicable, will be reviewed every 60 school days.

If you have questions or concerns about special education and related services related to COVID-19 safety precautions and the opening of schools for the 2021-2022 school year, please contact **Jenna Homola**, Director, SWJCS Special Education Department.

Phone: 812-599-2556 Email: [jhomola@swjcs.us](mailto:jhomola@swjcs.us)



# Masks

- The Indiana Department of Health and the Jefferson County Health Department have indicated that masks will help lower the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, we highly recommend that masks be worn by students and staff in situations where social distancing is not possible. Face masks will be REQUIRED to be used on buses as well as in certain classes. We ask that all students bring a mask to school to be used as necessary. Face shields are an acceptable alternative.

# COVID-19 Definitions and Contact Tracing

- Social distancing is defined as being at least 6 feet away from another person.
- A contact is defined as being within 6 feet of another person for 15 minutes or more.
- When a positive case is identified, any and all potential contacts will be identified, and this information will be shared with the Health Department.
- Anyone identified as a “contact” will be advised as follows:
  - A) If the contact provides proof of FULL COVID VACCINATION --- quarantine will not be necessary.
  - B) If the contact cannot/does not provide proof of full COVID vaccination --- contact will be required to quarantine for 10 calendar days
- Contact tracing will go back 2 days before the first day of symptoms presenting or 2 days before a positive test for someone who was asymptomatic.

# Health Services

- The Indiana Department of Health and the Jefferson County Health Department have indicated that masks will help lower the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, we highly recommend that masks be worn by students and staff in situations where social distancing is not possible. Masks will be required in the health clinics of each building and in fragile health classrooms. (Note: fragile students will be encouraged to wear masks, but it is not mandatory.)
- Students and staff will perform self-screenings on a daily basis and self-report if symptoms are present
  - Information will be provided to both students/parents and staff on how to check for symptoms and the importance of doing so
- Buildings will have separate areas for COVID-19 symptomatic patients and non-symptomatic patients.
  - Full PPE (masks, gown, gloves, face shields) will be required for anyone caring for individuals with suspected COVID-19 symptoms
  - Log sheets have been developed and will be used to track any individual caring for those in the sick area
- The state is developing training videos for parents/students and staff and training will be presented to staff on opening day; video will be shared via social media on schools and corporation facebook sites and websites
- Staff (opening day) and students (day 1 of class) will be trained on the following topics
  - Hand hygiene
  - Respiratory hygiene/etiquette
  - Avoidance of facial contact
  - Social distancing
- Visitors will be discouraged from entering the building.
- When a notification comes in of a positive Covid test -
  - There is a protocol in place for Health Services Coordinator to be notified
  - Health Services Coordinator will determine extent of exposure within school building and/or buses



- All information gathered will be shared with local health department
- The extent and length of closure of a room, building or corporation will be a local health department decision, as will quarantining all who were in contact with a positive case up to 2 days prior to positive test results.
- We will maintain Sick Room Log for purposes of contract tracing.

## COVID-19 Response Protocol

The following protocol should occur when the school receives a call from a parent or staff member reporting a positive case of a student or school employee, while school is in session.

- Secretary/ School Nurse receives a call of a confirmed case of COVID-19
- Secretary/School Nurse will notify the Health Services Coordinator
- Health Services Coordinator will contact health department and begin contact tracing on school side by identifying class impact, bus/car rider/walker, after school activity participation and then notify appropriate personnel as applicable
- Health department will make decision on closure based on risk and extent of exposure
- Janitorial staff will be notified for cleaning protocol

## Staff Training for a Pandemic Outbreak

The following training protocols will be utilized before and/or on the first day of return to school during the time of a pandemic and presented by the Health Services Coordinator for the school corporation.

### All Staff Training

- COVID-19/MIS-C
  - What is it?
  - How is it transmitted?
  - How can I minimize spread?
  - What do I do if I am symptomatic?
- Self-screenings
- Hand Hygiene
  - Proper hand washing
- Respiratory Hygiene/etiquette
  - Proper ways to cough and/or sneeze utilizing tissues or sleeve (elbow)
  - Minimizing contact with face
- Face Mask Training

### Specialized Training for Select Staff Members

- Reporting of cases
- Proper use of PPE
  - Donning and doffing
- Recognizing symptoms

### Students on Day 1 of Class

- COVID-19/MISC
  - Adjust and present information based on grade level understanding
- Hand hygiene
- Respiratory hygiene/etiquette
- Proper ways to cough and/or sneeze utilizing tissues or sleeve (elbow)
- Minimizing contact with face

- Face mask training

## In-School Cleaning During a Pandemic Outbreak

The following protocol should be utilized and a shared responsibility between staff and students during the school day for high frequency contact. This cleaning should be performed on an as needed basis and/or at student or staff request.

- All commonly used surfaces identified (Desks, tables, chairs, class equipment, door handles, etc.)
- If surfaces are soiled or dirty, then they will be cleaned first with soap and water before disinfecting
- Disinfecting of surfaces will be conducted using EPA approved non-aerosolized products to wipe down high impact areas

## After-School Cleaning During a Pandemic Outbreak

The following protocol should be utilized when cleaning school property during a pandemic. During cleaning, janitorial staff (HAZMAT team) should always wear appropriate PPE, including gloves and face masks. Gloves should be changed after leaving each confined area to minimize spread of germs to the next area. If the building has been unoccupied for 7 days or more, then normal routine cleaning is advised.

- Affected areas will be closed for 24 hours, if possible
- Outside doors and windows will be opened to increase air circulation
- If surfaces are soiled or dirty, then surfaces will be cleaned with soap and water before proceeding to disinfection
- All surfaces will be disinfected using EPA approved products, with a focus on highly touched areas



