

# **Benton Community School Corporation**

## **COVID-19 Plan 2021-2022**

It is essential for Benton Community School Corporation to work in unison with our staff, parents, students, and community to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19. Our goal in introducing these new rules and regulations is to create a safe and effective environment for students and staff while still providing a quality education program. All guidance within this document comes directly from the CDC, the Indiana Department of Education, the Indiana Department of Health, and the Benton County Health Department. As state mandates are updated throughout the school year, Benton Community School Corporation will implement those changes regardless of when those changes are reflected in this document.

Please review this document in its entirety to ensure you know exactly what to expect. Please understand that this plan may and most likely will change as directives and guidance are given to schools throughout the year. We will continue to evaluate and make adjustments as needed. As always, we will communicate any changes that are made as they occur.

At this time we plan for our schools to open at the regularly scheduled start date with our students returning on Wednesday, August 11, 2021.

**Please visit the Document Change Log at the end of this document to see changes.**

### **Table of Contents:**

[Health Protocols](#)

[Social Distancing in the School Environment](#)

[Cleaning Guidance](#)

[Special Education Overview](#)

[Student Transportation](#)

[Communications Guidance](#)

[Benton Community Distance Learning](#)

[Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Re-Entry](#)

[Document Change Log](#)

## Health Protocols

**Screening** Benton Community School Corporation has provided and will continue to provide information to parents, students, and staff about the symptoms of COVID-19. All individuals are required to self-screen before coming to school.

A fever of 100.4° F or greater or chills	New loss of taste or smell	Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing	Nausea or vomiting
Fatigue	Muscle or body aches	Headache	Sore throat
Cough	Congestion	Runny nose	Diarrhea

Students and employees exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 without being otherwise explained, are prohibited from coming to school, and if they do come to school, they will be evaluated.

### Benton Community School Corporation Nurses

<b>Benton Central</b> Jen Richey 765-884-3020 <a href="mailto:jrichey@benton.k12.in.us">jrichey@benton.k12.in.us</a>	<b>Benton Central</b> Renee Bunch 765-884-3020 <a href="mailto:rbunch@benton.k12.in.us">rbunch@benton.k12.in.us</a>	<b>Otterbein Elementary</b> Sarah Dalton 765-583-4401 <a href="mailto:sdalton@benton.k12.in.us">sdalton@benton.k12.in.us</a>	<b>Prairie Crossing Elementary</b> Amy Marquie 765-884-3000 <a href="mailto:amarquie@benton.k12.in.us">amarquie@benton.k12.in.us</a>
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All individuals (student, staff, or parent/guardian) are required to contact the school for any of the following reasons:

- Exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms
- If a student or a household member is awaiting COVID-19 test results
- If a student or family member has tested positive for COVID-19

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).

Students and staff members will be excluded from school if they test positive for COVID-19, exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, or are identified as a close contact following the Indiana Department of Health guidelines.

**Tested Positive - Impact on School Operations** When there is confirmation that a person infected with COVID-19 was on school property, the school will inform the direct contacts of their exposure and provide quarantine and exclusion instructions to all involved with the confirmed case. We will consult with the Benton County Health Department to determine when a threshold of positive COVID-19 cases or absence percentages are reached to trigger school closures.

## COVID-19 ASYMPTOMATIC OPTION 1: K-12 Alternative to 14-day Quarantine for Asymptomatic Close Contacts - Return on Day 11 after 10 days of quarantine

**Asymptomatic Close Contact** (student, teacher or staff) will quarantine at home **days 1-10**. May return after **day 10 of quarantine**

No testing needed to return to school on day 11

Utilize enhanced precautions\* days 11-14 and monitor for symptoms of COVID-19.

If symptoms develop on days 11-14, return home, isolate, and obtain a COVID-19 test

### NOTES:

- 14 Day Quarantine remains the preferred length of quarantine. Recommended by both CDC and Indiana Department of Health.
  - With Return on day 11, residual post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated to be about 1% with an upper limit of about 10%
- Immediately isolate and seek testing if you develop symptoms at any time during the 14 days after your exposure to someone who tests positive for COVID-19.

## COVID-19 ASYMPTOMATIC OPTION 2: K-12 Alternative to 14-day Quarantine for Asymptomatic Close Contacts - Return on day 8 after 7 days of quarantine

**Asymptomatic Close Contact** (student, teacher or staff) will quarantine at home **days 1-7**

Obtain PCR test on days 5-7 while continuing to quarantine through day 7

Obtain BinaxNOW antigen test at school on day 8 (if offered in your school)

If negative, may return to school on day 8 (but not before) and utilize enhanced precautions\* days 8-14

If positive, isolate at home for 10 days from date of positive PCR test

If negative, may return to school on day 8 and utilize enhanced precautions\* days 8-14

If antigen test is positive, return home and obtain a PCR test. Isolate until PCR test results are received

If PCR test is negative, may return to school and utilize enhanced precautions\* through day 14 of quarantine

If PCR test is positive, isolate at home for 10 days from date the positive PCR test was taken

### NOTES:

- Quarantine for 14 days remains the preferred option and is recommended by both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Indiana Department of Health.
  - With Return on Day 8, residual post-quarantine transmission risk is estimated to be about 5% with an upper limit of 12%.
- Immediately isolate and seek testing if you develop symptoms at any time during the 14 days after your exposure to someone who tests positive for COVID-19.

## COVID-19 SYMPTOMATIC GUIDANCE: K-12 Guidance for Symptomatic student, teacher, staff member



For the full document from the Indiana Department of Health, please visit this link:

[Indiana Department of Health - COVID Quarantine Decision Trees](#)

**Vaccinated Individuals** Individuals are considered fully vaccinated when the following requirements are met:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series.
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine.

If you do not meet these requirements, you are not fully vaccinated.

Individuals who have been fully vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 do not need to stay away from others, quarantine, or get tested unless they develop symptoms. Anyone who has been fully vaccinated and develops COVID-19 symptoms should isolate and get tested.

**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.

**Clinical Space COVID-19 Symptomatic** Benton Central Jr/Sr High School, Otterbein Elementary, and Prairie Crossing Elementary will each have a room or space separate from the nurse's clinic where students and employees who are feeling ill will be evaluated for COVID-19 symptoms. This clinical space will be ventilated if possible. Any individual proven to be symptomatic will be allowed to wait in this same area for pick up. Essential personnel entering this area are required to wear proper personal protective equipment in the form of a gown, gloves, and an N95 mask. Patients will be given a mask, if they do not have one, to be worn at all times until they leave the building. Only essential staff assigned to the room may enter. A record will be kept of all persons who entered the room, and the room will be disinfected several times throughout the day. Strict social distancing is required in this room. Students who are awaiting pick up due to COVID-19 symptoms will be walked out of the building to their parents.

**Proper Hygiene** Hand washing and avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth are important steps that must be taken to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others. Employees and students are encouraged to wash their hands often. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizing stations will be distributed throughout each of our buildings as an alternative. There will be key times built into the school day when all persons will have the opportunity to wash/sanitize their hands.

Students and staff should familiarize themselves with the following key times necessary for handwashing:

- Start of the school day
- Before eating
- After using the restroom
- After blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using shared equipment
- Before and after recess

### **Use of Face Coverings**

Face coverings for students and staff will be optional. If face coverings become mandatory at the state level, all students and staff will be required to meet that expectation.

**Access to Water** All water fountains will be closed in each school building consistent with recommendations from the Indiana Department of Health. Water filling stations, if available, may be used with proper procedures. Students and staff are recommended to bring in their own water bottles.

**Attendance Policy** Attendance bonuses and reward programs will be suspended to avoid encouraging employees and students to come to school when they are sick. Students who are out of school for an extended period of time due to COVID-19 (individuals who have tested positive, individuals who have been in direct contact with a person who has tested positive, or individuals who are symptomatic) will be expected to stay current with their academics by communicating with their teachers.

## **Social Distancing in the School Environment**

In order to maintain social distancing to the best of our ability, our corporation will put in to place the following practices:

- Space between students will be increased as much as possible.
- Seating charts will be utilized and kept up to date.
- All large group activities that combine classes or grade levels will follow safety protocols.
- Whole staff gatherings/meetings will follow safety protocols.
- Visitors to the classrooms will be scheduled and follow safety protocols.

**Breakfast and Lunch Procedures** Students at all levels will continue to have group lunches. Each building will attempt to follow social distancing guidelines if possible. Some buildings may utilize additional spaces outside of the cafeteria to allow students more room to space out. Additional steps that will be taken to help control the spread of germs will be as follows:

- Food-sharing is not allowed.
- Cash transactions will be accepted, but are not encouraged.
- PPE will be provided to all food service staff.

## **Cleaning Guidance**

Custodial staff will work to continually sanitize common areas. Deep cleaning procedures will be used when students are out of the building.

## **Special Education Overview**

**Case Conferences and Annual Case Reviews** Benton Community Schools will continue to conduct annual case reviews within the one year timeline, regardless of school closure status. Case conference meetings with parents will be scheduled to review the provision of services and the educational progress of each student. These discussions will determine whether or not there is a need to adjust the frequency or duration of services for each individual student.

Educational needs will be measured by considering:

- Whether the student participated in continuous learning opportunities provided by the school and district during the COVID-19 school building closure.
- Parent observations of the student's learning during the continuous learning opportunities provided by the school.
- Teacher observations of the student's learning in the continuous learning opportunities provided by the school.
- Whether there were services identified in the student's IEP prior to the school closure that the school or district was unable to provide during the building closure due to restrictions of in-person services.
- Whether the student continued making progress toward meeting his/her IEP goals.
- Whether the student experienced any additional or new social-emotional health issues during building closure.
- Whether the student experienced any regression during the period of school building closure.

**Future Services/Compensatory Services** Benton Community School Corporation will be required to make an individualized determination as to whether compensatory services are needed under applicable standards and requirements. This does not mean that the school must immediately offer compensatory services to all students with IEPs; rather, it requires the case conference committee to lead a discussion on the educational needs of the student, including the potential loss of skills. Based on these individual needs, the CCC may consider the appropriateness of collecting data for an agreed-upon time following the student's return to school and subsequently reconvening to discuss the need for future services at that time.

**Transition IEPs** Transition assessments will continue to be updated annually. When updating transition assessments, teachers of record (TORs) may conduct assessments virtually or in person. Assessments may be administered prior to or during the meeting. In all cases, assessment information will be documented within the Summary of Findings utilizing the

SPIN method - Strengths, Preferences, Interests, and Needs. Ways to provide transition assessments virtually are available as a part of the eLearning Resources for Secondary Transition document.

Transition services will be created with both in-person and remote ways to accomplish objectives and goals to accommodate for the fluidity of the COVID-19 situation.

**Evaluations** Requirements for evaluations remain unchanged. Evaluations may be conducted virtually.

**Students who are Medically Fragile** The determination of the services to be provided for students who are medically fragile must be made by the CCC (Case Conference Committee) based upon the individual student's medical and educational needs. Special education and related services determined by the CCC could be provided online or in a virtual instructional format, through instructional telephone calls, or through other curriculum-based instructional activities (511 IAC 7-42-10). If the services are to be delivered through online or virtual instruction, technological competency and the need for additional assistive technology will be considered along with the medical condition and stamina of the student.

**Homebound Services** Students who were receiving services in a homebound placement pursuant to their IEP will remain in that placement until the CCC determines that a different placement is appropriate. Whether the location of the homebound services identified in the student's IEP is in the student's home or an out-of-school location other than the student's home, school personnel will follow appropriate health guidelines to assess and reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Homebound instruction may be provided virtually.

**Homebound Timelines** The CCC will continue to reconvene at least every 60 instructional days (this instructional day count includes remote learning days used pursuant to our Continuous Learning Plan) when a student is receiving services in a homebound setting. Changes to the IEP related to a safer service delivery method during school closures and re-entry may be considered by the CCC at these 60 day reconvenes.

**Special Transportation** If a student is being provided in-person services and requires transportation, then the IEP will reflect this service. Administrators will collaborate with the school transportation director to implement a bussing plan (including pick-up, in-transit, and drop off).

**Therapy** By following the provision of IEP-required therapies in accordance with the CDC community-level guidance for schools, our corporation will implement the following:

- Intensified cleaning and disinfecting of equipment and surfaces between therapy sessions.
- Class and therapy group size reductions, staggered (alternate days/rotation) scheduling and/or spaced seating to facilitate physical distancing, restricted sharing of equipment/learning aids.
- Instruction about and observance of frequent handwashing and face covering recommendations.
- Remote therapy needs, including assistive technology, as necessary, for special student populations who cannot yet safely return to congregate settings.
- Contingency planning to continue services if COVID-19 transmission requires intermittent or extended school building closures.
- Technology training and access for therapists to serve medically fragile students, such as those who are ventilator-dependent and have tracheostomies.
- Flexible and adaptive scheduling to maximize therapy service provision despite personnel shortages, staff illness/isolation, and limited access to students.

## **Student Transportation**

**Transportation Preparation and Cleaning** Staff will inspect all buses and transport vehicles for cleanliness and safety before and after routes. Per the CDC, face coverings are still required on public transportation, including school buses.

Students will have assigned seats on every bus. Whenever possible, bus windows will remain open and family members will sit together.

Benton Community students using the transportation system to get to and from school are allowed to have one consistent bus stop in the morning and one consistent bus stop in the afternoon. An example of a consistent stop is when a student may get picked up at home every morning and then get dropped off at home on Monday-Wednesday-Friday and daycare on Tuesday-Thursday in the afternoon.

These stops are the only place to which your child will be permitted to ride to and from school. The updated policy does not allow for transfers or changes to bus stops or alternative routes or stops. This policy is for the safety of all students and drivers, as well as to create consistency for students, bus drivers, office staff, and teachers, while also helping to eliminate any miscommunication. Family emergencies will be taken into consideration and handled in a case by case situation and will be handled via communication with the transportation department.

Encourage custodial-arranged, reimbursable transportation for McKinney-Veto, foster, and medically fragile students.

## **Communications Guidance**

**Reporting Positive COVID-19 Cases** All teachers, administrators, staff and students (parents/guardians) are required to report any documented positive cases of COVID-19 in their school.

## **Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities**

### **Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities**

- All State and local guidelines for group limitations will be followed.
- Any student who prefers to wear a face covering for activities will be allowed, so long as doing so will not cause a health risk.
- Athletes are required to wear face coverings only if the opposing school requires it.
- All students and staff will be required to self screen for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to participating in workouts, rehearsals, or practices. See Health Protocols section.
  - Any person with COVID-19-related symptoms, without being otherwise explained, will not be allowed to take part in workouts, rehearsals, or practices and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate healthcare professional.
  - Coaches must track COVID-19 impacted attendance and report to district/school administration.
  - Athletes and coaches will follow Franciscan Health guidelines related to returning to participation. Execution of these guidelines will be overseen by the Athletic Training Staff.
- Cleaning schedules will be created and implemented for all facilities and equipment to mitigate any communicable diseases.
- No sharing of clothing, shoes, towels, or water bottles.
- IHSA safety protocols will be followed.
- Shared equipment will be cleaned.
- Water fountains will be closed. Individuals should bring their own water bottles from home. Water bottles will be available to those who need one.
- Spectators, media, and vendors can be present but should follow safety protocols.
- Concessions will be open, and all food handlers and cashiers will utilize appropriate PPE.



## **Document Change Log**

Any changes made to this document will be noted below in order to allow easier identification for readers.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Page Number(s)</b>	<b>Summary of Change</b>