

2021-2022 Rising Sun-Ohio County Community Schools
Return to Learn

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*This document is an **ever-changing** document and changes are expected*

We are excited to welcome back students to schools on August 2, 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are many changes in procedures in response to guidelines from local and state health officials, Indiana Department of Education [IN-CLASS document](#), American Academy of Pediatrics [guidance](#), and Center for Disease Control [guidelines](#). We will continue to collaborate, share information, and review plans with the Ohio County Health Department and Dr. Walcott to help protect the whole school community, including those with special health needs. This plan is designed to complement other community mitigation strategies to protect high-risk populations, the community's healthcare system, and minimize disruption to teaching and learning while protecting students and staff from social stigma and discrimination.

This plan could change depending on [current statistics for Ohio County](#) and guidance from the Ohio County Health Department. Indiana has adopted a new platform that will provide guidance to school districts on when to close certain activities and/or school.

Our decision to recommend all students come back to school in person derives from the American Academy of Pediatrics reasoning with which we concur with:

The AAP strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school. The importance of in-person learning is well-documented, and there is already evidence of the negative impacts on children because of school closures in the spring of 2020. Lengthy time away from school and associated interruption of supportive services often results in social isolation, making it difficult for schools to identify and address important learning deficits as well as child and adolescent physical or sexual abuse, substance use, depression, and suicidal ideation. This, in turn, places children and adolescents at considerable risk of morbidity, and in some cases, mortality. Beyond the educational impact and social impact of school closures, there has been substantial impact on food security and physical activity for children and families. (COVID Planning Considerations, para. 3)

Additionally, Dr. Box, Indiana's lead health expert stated "I firmly believe that the best thing for our students is to get them back into the classroom, even if that is in a modified form. We need to do this, not just for their educational development, but also for their physical, their social, and their mental well-being."

Appendix A: Forms of Instruction

However, we do understand that some students need an online learning option due to personal health concerns and/or relatives with compromised health conditions. Rising Sun-Ohio County Schools will offer a virtual learning option for these students. A description of the different learning options are as follows:

Traditional Instruction	Virtual Learning	eLearning
• Face to Face Instruction	• Learning from home	• Learning from home

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 days per week • 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. • Practice social distancing • RSHS dual credit opportunities • K-12 Spanish instruction • Extracurricular activities • SCC opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MS & HS=Indiana Virtual Academy • K-5=Edmentum • 5 days per week • No dual credit opportunities • Spanish instruction only available at HS • SCC opportunities (Must ride RSHS bus) • Students must commit to a semester of virtual learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only used in case of a school closure • Less rigorous • 4 hours per day • Mostly review material • Instruction from Rising Sun classroom teacher • Dual credit opportunities • No extracurricular activities • No SCC opportunities • Virtual learning students will continue virtual learning through provider
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Risk Mitigation Approach

- Conduct self-screening (prevent sick students and staff from attending school)
- Provide learning options
- Promote hygiene (handwashing)
- Increase cleaning (disinfect surfaces)
- Keep kids in cohort groups as much as possible (support tracing)
- Maximize distance (as feasible)
- Avoid large groups (where possible)
- Allow masks (support those who do)

Appendix B: Health Protocols

This protocol has been devised in accordance with the [county specific data](#) from the Indiana State Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control [guidelines](#), and in collaboration with Dr. Walcott, Ohio County Health Officer, the Ohio County Health Department, and Rising Sun-Ohio County School Corporation.

Masks and vaccinations

Face masks and face coverings are no longer required but are permitted. Any staff member or student who is fully vaccinated is exempt from exclusion protocols listed below. For exclusion of the policy, proof of vaccination is needed.

Overview of Health Protocols

1. Based on Indiana law (IC 20-34-3-9) the school district has the authority to exclude a student or employee from school at any time. A student or employee can also be ordered to quarantine or isolate based on the guidelines from this document. Additionally, Indiana law (IC 16-41-9-1.6) provides the local health department the authority to exclude students and staff from school and may order students and others to isolate or quarantine.
2. Each morning, employees will prescreen including a temperature check prior to attending school. Parents are encouraged to complete this same daily routine with their child(ren). Employees and staff observing symptoms as outlined in this document should not attend school and are advised to seek medical advice. Also, students and employees should refrain from attending school and/or school events if they have direct contact with person that has tested positive for Covid-19.
3. Students and employees living in the same household with someone that **is getting tested or** has tested positive for Covid-19 need to call or text the school's phone dedicated to Covid-19 and may not return to school until results are obtained. **The number to report Covid-19 cases to is 812-577-7140.** This number is only to be used to report COVID-19 testing and results. Texts that are not related to testing and results will not be answered.
4. Based on the Indiana State Department of Health [guidance](#) and Indiana Department of Education's [IN-CLASS document](#), each building will have a room designated for students or staff members that are experiencing any of the symptoms listed below. While in the COVID room, students and staff may be required to wear a mask at the discretion of the employee caring for the student. Based on the school nurse or designee's evaluation of the symptoms, the student or staff member may be required to have a negative COVID-19 test prior to re-entry into the school. A covid-19 test requirement from the school does not indicate that the student or staff member has COVID-19.

5. If symptoms of Covid-19 are present, the student must be picked up within 60 minutes of the time the parent was contacted. Students and employees required to be tested must submit the original test results from the laboratory/facility that performed the test either by fax at 812-438-2456 or delivery to the office of the building that the student attends or employee works.

Symptoms Impacting Consideration for Covid-19 Testing and Exclusion from School

- *Fever over 100.4 degrees F or greater*
- *Cough*
- *Shortness of Breath or Difficulty Breathing*
- *Chills*
- *Nausea*
- *Vomiting*
- *Diarrhea*
- *Muscle pain*
- *Headache*
- *Sore Throat*
- *New loss of taste or smell*

RETURN TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES AFTER EXCLUSION

Student/Staff required by a school health personnel to receive a COVID-19 test are:

- Required to get a COVID-19 test completed within 24 hours of exclusion from school. Testing can be completed at a free testing site included on the [test site list](#), by your primary care physician, or in an emergency room or urgent care setting. Testing will **NOT** be done at school.
- Excluded from school for 48 consecutive hours fever free (without medication), improving symptoms, and a negative test result.

Student/Staff with positive test and symptoms (*Symptomatic*) will be:

- Required to submit the original results from the laboratory/facility that performed the test prior to return.
- Excluded for a minimum of 10 calendar days from the day of the first symptom AND must be fever free (without medication) for 48 consecutive hours with improving symptoms.

Student/Staff with positive test and NO symptoms (*Asymptomatic*) will be:

- Required to submit the original results from the laboratory/facility that performed the test prior to return.
- Excluded for a minimum of 10 calendar days.
- If student/staff develops symptoms in those 10 calendar days, refer to the guidelines above for an individual positive for Covid-19 with symptoms.

Student/Staff that has been required by school health personnel to test that refuses to obtain a test within 24 hours will be:

- Excluded for a either a minimum of 10 calendar days or can return on day 7 with a negative test result on day 5, 6, or 7 from exposure.
- If student/staff does not have symptoms but develops symptoms of Covid-19, he/she will be excluded for 10 calendar days from the first day of symptoms and until fever free (without medication) for 48 consecutive hours.

Student/staff with temperature greater than 100.4 degrees who are not suspected of having Covid-19 will be:

- Excluded from school and must be fever free (without medication) for a minimum of 48 hours to return.

Positive Covid-19 cases in your student's classroom

- Classroom will be deep cleaned and disinfected immediately when student/staff is identified.
- The Positive case's name will be provided to the Ohio County Health Department. A representative from that entity will contact the individual. At this time, the COVID positive individual will explain all close contacts (6 feet or closer for 15 minutes or longer) during the contagious phase. These close contacts will be called to explain that they have been exposed. If the exposure was at school and the student was properly masked, he/she will not have to quarantine (Effective January 6, 2021). If the student was a close contact outside of the school day or was not properly wearing the mask during the school day, he/she will have to quarantine for either 1) a minimum of 10 days or 2) a minimum of 7 days with a negative test result on day 5, 6, or 7.
- In middle school and high school, the first period class will be monitored with temperature checks for the next 5 calendar days.

Approved Test Options

- Primary Care Physician
- Emergency room or Urgent care
- [Free Test Sites](#) (list included, on school website, or refer to Indiana State Department of Health Website)
- NOTE: The Ohio County Health Department will only test for Covid-19 upon request by the school district.

Extra-Curricular Activities and Sports

- Above guidelines apply to all school sponsored activities.
- If a test is required, and a test is not obtained within 24 hours (including all activities that take place on school breaks), the student/staff will be excluded from all ECA/sports for a minimum of 10 calendar days.

- If a student is a close contact at school and properly wearing a face mask/shield, the student will be allowed to attend practice as long as the student is masked and stays at least six feet from other students. The student can participate in light activity.
- If a student is positive for COVID, the student must quarantine based on the above guidelines. Also, the student will have to complete a return to play protocol.

Absences from School

- Parents are required to contact the office of the school their child attends to report all absences on the day of the absence.
- If a student/staff member is ill, the parent/staff will be asked about symptoms related to Covid-19.
- Follow-up calls and evaluations will be made by school staff for anyone with suspected Covid-19 symptoms.
- In the event of an undocumented absence of a student, the Student Resource Officer will contact the parent on the following day.

Suspected Covid-19 Contact

If a student/staff (1) has had recent contact with a person positive for Covid-19, (2) lives in the same household with a person confirmed as positive for Covid-19, or (3) has recently traveled to an area with increased cases of Covid-19, the district and/or the Ohio County Health Department may exclude that person and require testing and/or quarantine for 10 calendar days. Cases will be handled on a case by case basis in collaboration between the school and the health department.

Positive Covid-19 Cases and School Closure (eLearning)

- School closures will be handled on a case by case basis at the discretion of the school administration and the Ohio County Health Department.

Appendix C: Attendance

The easiest and safest way to lower the spread of Covid-19 is for sick students and staff to stay home. In turn, our attendance policy for both buildings will be modified for the 2021-2022 school year.

Attendance policies have been modified to allow for extended absences for any student who is COVID-19 positive, exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, or has been in contact with someone COVID-19 positive. Students will be excused with no discipline for these types of absences. Guardians will need to call into the building office that their child attends to explain the reason for the absence. A series of questions will be asked to the guardian for better contact tracing of the student population.

The following charts will provide an overview of our plan for different areas of the school day.

Addressing Community Spread in Ohio County		
Low to No Spread	Moderate Spread	Substantial Spread
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low to few known active and confirmed cases at school buildings• Establish and maintain communication with the Ohio County Health Department• Deep clean buildings and buses with a concentration of areas of possible exposure• PPE is provided for students and staff, but not mandated (strongly recommended). Staff will wear PPE in hallways• Students and staff are self-screened each day prior to attending school• A room will be designated in each building for students that have COVID symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderate active exposure cases at school buildings• Same as low to no spread and:• Re-evaluate the need to move lunches into the classroom• Deep clean buildings and buses with a concentration of areas of possible exposure• PPE is provided to students and staff, but only mandated for both in hallways and buses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• COVID-19 spread is such that school closure is evaluated by OCHD and RSOCS Administration• Same as moderate spread and:• Substantial active exposure of cases or absences impacting school building attendance and staffing• PPE is mandated all day for students and staff unless a signed parent permission to not wear PPE

Appendix D: Protective Measures

Protective Measures		
Low to No Spread	Moderate Spread	Substantial Spread
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff and students self-screen before starting the day • Masks are not required but permitted • Teach and reinforce good hygiene practices like hand washing, covering coughs, etc. • Signs are posted throughout the building about how to minimize the spread, how to wash hands, and staying home when you are sick • Hands are washed/sanitized at the start of school, prior to eating, after using the restroom, after blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing, and after using shared equipment • Playground-small recess groups, and cleaning between groups • Seating charts are maintained on a weekly basis at the minimum • Students are kept in cohort groups in grades PreK-8th • Assigned restrooms per grade level at high school • Longer passing periods at HS • Smaller class sizes (when possible) • Minimize the use of shared supplies • Water fountains will be turned off. Students will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as protective measures for low to no spread and: • Re-evaluate mask use policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Ohio County Health Department to determine if closing school is necessary

<p>use water bottles and the water bottle filling stations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• UV lights installed in large capacity HVAC units to lower the likelihood of airborne transmission.• Clorox sanitation machine used in classrooms daily		
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Appendix E: Transportation

Transporting Students		
Low to No Spread	Moderate Spread	Substantial Spread
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are recommended to transport their child(ren) to and from school • Students will sit in grade level cohorts • Masks are not required but are permitted • Athletic teams and HS band will be assigned one bus for use throughout the whole season (as possible) • Buses will be sanitized after every route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as transporting students in low to moderate spread and: • Students will have assigned seats as much as possible • Re-evaluate the mask policy • Buses will be deep cleaned and sanitized after every route. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as transporting students in moderate spread and: • If school is still open, buses will operate at 50% capacity. Midbuses will be in use and routes modified. • Students will have assigned seats. • Masks are mandatory for students and staff. Students not willing to wear a mask will be transported by the guardian.

Appendix F: Food Service

Serving Meals		
Low to No Spread	Moderate Spread	Substantial Spread
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All students and staff wash hands prior to breakfast and lunch• Hand sanitizer is provided for students and staff• Scan cards used in place of keypads• Cafeteria is cleaned between each meal• Food should not be shared	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Same as serving meals in low to no spread• Consider serving pre-packaged “Grab and Go” meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If school is still in session, same as serving meals in moderate spread• Pre-packaged “Grab and Go” will be eaten in the classrooms• If school is closed, meals will be delivered one day to reduce contact per week• 5 breakfasts and 5 lunches• All staff in masks

References

This document was created through a combination of original resources created by Indiana state agencies and plan outlines created by other states. Additionally, development relied heavily on materials developed from the following documents:

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