

PRAIRIE HEIGHTS



PANTHERS

Back To School Plan

2021-2022

Prairie Heights Community School Corporation will start the 2021-2022 school year on August 11 at full capacity. We will not be offering any virtual options to our students. We believe that the best instruction for our students takes place in the classroom with our teachers. In order to accomplish this, we will consider recommendations and guidelines from the CDC, Indiana State Department of Health, LaGrange County Health Department, and the Department of Education.

Key Areas of Focus:

Focus Area 1: Health and Safety

Focus Area 2: Operations/Logistics

- **Arrival/Dismissal**
- **Classroom Environment**
- **Food Service/Lunch**
- **Field Trips**
- **Buildings and Grounds**
- **Transportation**

Focus Area 3: Extra-Curriculars

Focus Area 1: Health and Safety Protocols – (Modified from the IDOE's IN-CLASS Document)

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).

Symptoms Impacting Consideration for Exclusion from School

Students and employees shall be trained to recognize the following COVID-19 related symptoms:

- A fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater
- Cough or unexplained shortness of breath; especially a new, uncontrolled cough
- Chills
- Headache; new or severe, especially with fever
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea, vomiting
- Diarrhea

What happens if a student/adult tests positive for COVID-19 or has been exposed?

Once the school nurse is aware, a positive case and any close contact(s) that occurred in a school building or on school property will be reported in the state database. The LaGrange County Health Department and Indiana Department of Education are notified through this system. PHCSC will also communicate with individuals/families that may be involved.

PHCSC will follow the current recommendations for those with a positive test or COVID-19 symptoms. If a student or adult shows any of the above symptoms or tests positive, the current recommendations are as follows:

Untested

Persons who have not received a COVID-19 test but experience symptoms may return if the following conditions are met:

- Fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication; AND
- Symptoms have improved within 24 hours and no additional symptoms; AND
- Individuals who have continued symptoms, worsening symptoms, or multiple symptoms, may be asked to see a doctor, be tested, or stay out for 10 days if neither of the other two options were used.

Tested Positive- Symptomatic

Persons who experience symptoms and have tested positive for COVID-19 may return to school if the following conditions are met:

- Fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication; AND
- Symptoms have improved (cough, shortness of breath, headache); AND

At least 10 calendar days have passed since the first symptoms appeared (may return on day 11).

Tested Positive- Asymptomatic

Persons who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID-19 may return when they;

- Have gone 10 calendar days since a positive test (return on day 11).
- Improvement of any symptoms that may have developed.

Screening

All staff and students will be asked to self-screen at home on a daily basis.

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

Even without symptoms, if a student or employee has recently had contact with a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19, PHCSC may exclude the student or employee from the school building and recommend that they monitor for symptoms for 14 calendar days and self-quarantine for 7-10 days depending on the development of any symptoms and test status. This excludes individuals who are fully vaccinated and remain symptom free.

Personal Protective Equipment for Employees

All PHCSC employees will have the option to wear personal protective equipment. Face shields will be allowed instead of masks. PHCSC employees will be required to wear personal protective equipment if mandated by the state or federal government.

Personal Protective Equipment for Students

All students will have the option to wear masks inside the school building. Masks should follow PHCSC dress code guidelines. Students will be required to wear masks if mandated by the state or federal government.

Clinic

Masks are optional inside the clinic and social distancing will be in place as much as possible. Vinyl curtains will be placed between beds and both will be cleaned regularly.

Clinic Space Non-Covid-19 Related

Students who do not display symptoms of COVID-19 can be seen and treated in the nurse's clinic. These would include students who are injured during the school day or students with special health care needs such as those with chronic health conditions (i.e. - diabetes or seizures), those requiring medical treatments (i.e. - suctioning, tube feeding), and those with individual health plans.

The use of nebulizers will be permitted during the school day in an alternate location.

Immunizations

Immunization requirements will remain unchanged. The corporation nurse will continue to coordinate with local and state health officials and parents as needed. The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is available to individuals ages 12 years and older. Contact the school nurse for more information.

Preventative Measures

The priority for preventing the spread of disease in the school setting is to insist that sick students and non-students stay home. Additionally, students and non-students should remain home if someone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms or is being tested for COVID-19.

Some people can be infected with COVID-19, but show no signs of illness even though they are contagious and can spread the disease to others. It is also unknown how contagious people are the day or two before they begin to exhibit illness symptoms. Thus, these employees or students may be present at school, will show no signs of illness, but be capable of transmitting the disease to others. In these situations, the three most important mitigation strategies are social distancing, frequent handwashing, and appropriate PPE.

Handwashing and avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth are also important steps a person can take to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others. PHCSC will reinforce that employees and students wash their hands often and if soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

PHCSC will promote the use of handwashing/sanitizing in the following situations:

- 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

Water fountains will not be used, but the automatic bottle fillers may be used by students. Students may also ask teachers to refill water bottles at designated water stations.

All staff will receive professional development training regarding COVID-19 symptoms, screening, and prevention.

Quarantine/Close Contact related to students

- Individuals who are fully vaccinated will not need to quarantine regardless of close contact or travel as long as they remain symptom free.
- We will not require school contacts to quarantine, but will notify parents if their student was a close contact (3-6 feet for longer than 15 minutes) and ask to monitor for symptoms.
- If notified by the school as being a close contact, parents will have the option to quarantine their child at home without attendance penalties.
- School contacts may be required to quarantine if they are also out of school contacts (ex: rode in same car together, spent the night together, etc.).
- Close contact outside of home:
 - Includes any individual who is within six feet for more than a cumulative of 15 minutes while indoors. Then they will need to quarantine and monitor for symptoms.
 - They may return on day eight since the contact IF:
 - No symptoms have developed and have either a PCR test done on day 5, 6, or 7, or a rapid test done on day 8. Test results must be negative.
 - They may return on day 11 since the contact IF:
 - No symptoms have developed. No test is needed for this option.

- If a close contact develops symptoms, they will be asked to be tested with a PCR to confirm COVID-19. If not tested, they will be treated as a positive and asked to isolate for ten days since the onset of symptoms.
- Close contact inside of home:
 - Includes any individual living with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
 - Distance from the positive individual. If unable to distance then the close contact's quarantine will not start until the positive person's isolation is complete.
 - They may return on day 8 since the contact IF:
 - No symptoms have developed and have either a PCR test done on day 5, 6, 7, or a rapid test done on day 8. Test results must be negative.
 - They may return on day 11 since the contact IF:
 - No symptoms have developed. No test is needed for this option.
 - If a close contact develops symptoms, they will be asked to be tested with a PCR to confirm COVID-19. If not tested, they will be treated as a positive and asked to isolate for ten days since the onset of symptoms.

Testing

- Any staff or student that is COVID-19 tested is asked to stay home until results are in.
- Any children of staff or siblings/parents of a student that is being tested may be at school as long as they do not have any symptoms. They are advised to distance from the tested individual to limit possible exposure in the event that the test is positive.

Focus Area 2: Operations and Logistics

- **Arrival/Dismissal**

- Student drop-off – Students will come in and go to regular locations, social distance as much as possible.
- Buses will be dismissed individually at MS/ES to allow for social distancing. Different entrances will be used for the HS.
- Locker use will be determined at the MS and HS levels and subject to change.
- Change to middle school and elementary pick up – Middle school parents will park in the parking lot in front of the AG Building/Bus Garage. Students will walk down the sidewalk and then out to cars. If a parent has an elementary student and middle school student, they will also park in the MS lot to help with traffic flow at the elementary. Elementary students will be walked down to the MS lot. No buckling students in cars, that is the parent's responsibility.

- **Classroom Environment**

- Social distancing should occur as much as possible, rearrange desks and tables to increase space between students.
- Students will sit in assigned seats.
- Masks are optional for teachers and students unless mandated by the state or federal government. Student masks should follow dress code guidelines.
- Group work or sharing of supplies should be limited. If this should occur, students should sanitize or wash hands immediately afterwards. Supplies should be cleaned when possible.
- All classrooms will be provided hand sanitizer for students to use. Students are allowed to bring their own hand sanitizer.
- At the classroom teacher's discretion, doors or windows may be propped open for air movement.
- High school students will still participate in vocational programs. (IMPACT, ICE, etc.)
- Additional procedures may vary between buildings.

- **Food Service/Lunch**

- Students in grades K-8 will be eating in the cafeteria. Assigned seating is required to allow for contact tracing.
- Elementary students are allowed to eat in the classroom at the teacher's discretion.
- Students in grades 9-12 will eat in the cafeteria or classrooms upon teacher availability. Assigned seating is recommended to allow for contact tracing.
- Self-serve items will be available if guidelines allow.
- Prohibit food sharing.
- Ensure personnel handling cash do not handle food.
- Provide access to hand sanitizer at lunch.
- Food service personnel are required to wear PPE including masks and gloves while preparing and serving food.
- Breakfast will be offered at all three buildings. Elementary and middle school students will grab their breakfast from the cafeteria and take it to their classroom. High school students will eat breakfast in the cafeteria and socially distance while eating.
- Microwaves will be available for high school and middle school students to use at lunch.

- **Field Trips**

- Field trips will be allowed to take place. All staff and students will follow the local requirements that are in place at each destination.

- **Buildings and Grounds**

- High touch areas will be cleaned as much as possible during the day.
- All classrooms will be disinfected each night.
- Sneeze guards will be placed on secretary desks at their discretion.

- **Transportation**

- Students have the option to wear a mask on the bus unless mandated by the state or federal government.
- Drivers have the option to wear a mask unless mandated by the state or federal government.
- Family members should sit together.
- Assigned seating is required and drivers will keep a seating chart for contact tracing.
- Open windows during the route are encouraged for increased air ventilation.
- Buses will be disinfected daily.

Focus Area 3: Extra-Curriculars

Summer Activities

- Athletes/Participants should self-screen and stay home if not feeling well.
- Athletes/Participants should notify the coach or supervisor if they are a close contact or test positive.
- Facilities will be cleaned frequently.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available.
- Social distancing is encouraged when possible.
- Masks will be optional unless mandated by state or federal government.
- We will consider all recommendations from the IHSAA regarding summer activities.
- We will follow all host site guidelines that are in place.
- Restrooms will remain available for staff and students, social distancing is encouraged.
- No sharing of clothing, shoes, personal gear, towels, or water bottles.

In-Season Extra-Curricular Activities

- All guidelines from the summer will remain in place.
- We will consider all recommendations from the IHSAA.
- Masks will be optional for participants and spectators unless mandated by the state or federal government.
- Capacity at events will be determined by local and state guidelines.
- Concessions – will consider state and federal recommendations or guidelines.

Positive Test – Athlete

- Opposing schools will be notified if a COVID positive student participated in a competition two days prior to symptoms or test.
- The athlete will follow COVID-19 positive guidelines.
- The team will be notified to monitor for symptoms and report to the school if any symptoms develop.
- The positive athlete will be monitored when returning to play and will need to report any symptoms such as chest pain, unusual shortness of breath, fainting, or dizziness that is not related to dehydration to the coach, nurse, or athletic trainer.

MASK POLICY

The use of masks for the 2021-2022 school year will be optional for all staff and students unless mandated by the state or federal government.

Plans are subject to change.

