

2022-2023 CORONAVIRUS PLAN

Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan



Columbia
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Introduction

We believe the best opportunity for students to learn is in person with their teachers in our buildings.

Should coronavirus disruptions to public education occur, Columbia Public Schools' priorities are:

- providing environments that are as safe as possible for students and staff
- providing high-quality education for students
- balancing our continued need to mitigate the spread of coronavirus with the importance of having students in school

In order to keep our students and staff healthy and avoid disruptions to learning, this plan will be reviewed, updated and changed as needed by Columbia Public Schools' administration and the Board of Education. Previous coronavirus plans of action may be reviewed and incorporated, should status or conditions change, with regard to transmission in our community. The Centers for Disease Control also continues to monitor the transmission of COVID-19 and provide guidance to the public on mitigation strategies.

We thank our community for partnering with us to help keep our facilities safe and healthy and for your ongoing understanding and support.

Mitigation and Prevention

Health Screening and Healthy Habits

Students, staff and visitors should self-assess before coming to school or work. Stay home and consider consulting with your physician if you experience symptoms associated with any contagious illness, including Coronavirus COVID-19.

How families can help keep students healthy and safe:

- Please review handwashing instructions with your students. [A video is available as part of the district's Parent-Community University series.](#) Additional information on handwashing can be found in Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools: [Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette](#)

All students and staff should practice handwashing and respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes) to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses, including coronavirus.

- Students and staff who are ill will be asked to stay home and report the absence to the school attendance office or supervisor.
- Additionally, all families should continue to monitor symptoms daily. Self-screening outlines that you should not enter a building if, you are currently experiencing:
 - Fever (100.4 or higher) or a sense of having a fever (you don't feel well)
 - Chills, shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, headache
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
 - New loss of smell or taste, new muscle aches

(Symptoms:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID19-symptoms.pdf>)

- Students and staff who visit the school nurse for illness will be screened for symptoms of coronavirus based on CDC guidelines. Students who exhibit coronavirus-like symptoms, not otherwise explained, will be sent home. A note from a physician, or a negative COVID test, will be required in order to return to school.

If your student is sick, please have the student stay home.

Related Board of Education Policy & State Law:

[Policy EBB](#)

[Missouri Revised Statute 167.191](#)

Face Coverings

Face coverings are no longer required of students, staff or visitors and a building-level threshold to determine if students, staff and visitors must wear a face covering will no longer be utilized.

However, students, staff and visitors may choose to wear face coverings to address their own individual health needs. The CDC continues to encourage the wearing of a well-fitted face covering when the COVID-19 Community Level is high and/or if you have symptoms, have a positive test, or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.

We expect our community to be respectful of the choices of others.

[Check Boone County's Community Level](#)

Physical Distancing

We will continue to work with students, staff and families to address individual health and medical needs. Physical distancing may be one of the layered mitigation strategies for addressing personal health safety.

Cleaning and Maintaining Facilities

CPS will maintain adequate supplies of soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, and tissues throughout each school. The Custodial Services Department will ensure the distribution and maintenance of these items for schools.

CPS will clean frequently-touched surfaces and objects (e.g., tables, water fountains, and doorknobs) with district-supplied cleaning and disinfectant products. Computer safe disinfectant methods will be used for computers and keyboards.

CPS maintains ionization units and systems in its buildings. CPS also has regular maintenance and filter changing for its HVAC systems to maintain air flow and ventilation.

Testing

When you have symptoms of COVID-19, testing is key to reducing the spread in our school communities. We encourage you to take advantage of free at-home testing kits to keep on hand at home and consider consulting with your physician. The district also has a supply of home test kits that will be made available by the school nurse to those in need, while supplies last.

[Request an at-home test kit](#)

Vaccinations

Vaccination for all students and staff is encouraged. While COVID-19 vaccination is not required to attend public school in Missouri, it can protect your child and others at school from serious illness.

[Vaccination Clinic Locations](#)

Contact Tracing

The district has established guidelines and protocols concerning notifications and contact tracing should there be a student or staff member who tests positive for coronavirus or is exposed to the virus. CPS will notify guardians if there is an outbreak of multiple students within a stable group or elementary classroom. Guardians of positive students and positive staff members are encouraged to notify their close contacts.

Coronavirus Screening Guidance

Screening Results	Does the Student/Staff Require a COVID-19 Test?	When can the Student/Staff Return to School?
Exposure to a person with COVID-19	Yes , if symptoms develop, even if fully vaccinated	Asymptomatic exposed staff and students may remain in school and monitor for symptoms. *Symptomatic exposed staff and students will need to isolate. Please refer to CPS isolation and exposure protocols.

Coronavirus Isolation and Exposure Protocols

If You Test Positive for COVID-19

Everyone, regardless of vaccination status:

- Stay home for 5 days. *If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever is resolved for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.*
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are improving and you are fever-free without medication after 5 days, you can return to work or school.
- Wearing a well-fitting mask around others through day 10 is recommended.

If You Were Exposed to Someone with COVID-19:

- Begin monitoring for symptoms. *If you develop symptoms get a PCR or rapid antigen test as soon as symptoms develop and stay home.*
- Get a PCR or rapid antigen test on day 5.

Student Services

Maintaining the health and safety of our students continues to be of paramount importance. With that in mind, it is crucial we ensure student information remains up to date. In the event that a student becomes ill, we must be able to get in contact with the legal guardian or their designated alternate contact. Guardians had the opportunity to update their information via the annual registration process. If the district or school building registrar is unable to reach the family, Home School Communicators will attempt to locate families. In some instances, it may be necessary to wait until the student returns to school to determine the accurate residence information.

In the event a student needs to be sent home:

- For students who exhibit symptoms (fever, cough, etc.), as defined by the health department guidelines, and whose families are unable to be located, the alternate contact person will be called to pick up the student.

- A Home School Communicator (HSC) may be asked to transport the student home for families who are unable to pick up their student because of a lack of transportation. Both the HSC and the student will be required to wear a mask. Whenever possible, the student will ride in the back seat of the vehicle with the windows open.

Special Services

Accommodating All Students

Schools will partner with families and students to ensure equity and access to instruction. Accommodations will be made as needed for students who are medically vulnerable or require individualized education plans. School nurses and other district personnel will work with families and students with disabilities to ensure they receive continued care, allowing students priority visits and/or private visits with the nurse as needed, so a student has their healthcare needs met and also minimizes exposure to ill students.

Athletics and Activities

The Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) governs nearly all student athletics and activities for Missouri school districts. MSHSAA coronavirus protocols and procedures, including return to play information, is available on the [MSHSAA website](#) or through your student's coach or activity sponsor.

Health and Safety Decisions for Students and Employees

In a pandemic or health crisis, schools may be closed and/or opened by the order of the Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) or his/her designee. (See 19 CSR 20-20.050 Quarantine or Isolation Practices and Closing of Schools and Places of Public and Private Assembly.) Due to the need for consistency throughout the state, school closures and/or openings to protect the public health and safety will be directed at the state level.

The Board of Education establishes the academic calendar for the school district and determines any long-term district closures or changes in learning modes ([Policy IC](#)).

In Missouri, local public health authorities (LPHA) and/or the director of the DHSS have the authority to close and/or open schools for public health and safety trigger points, previously noted above.

Schools may be closed to all staff and students or to just students. If schools are closed only to students, staff members are expected to work regular schedules or use appropriate leave (unless otherwise directed by Human Resources). When schools are closed, there may be opportunities to bring back small groups of students for specific intervention or instruction on a case-by-case basis. This decision will require district approval and must meet Health Department guidelines.

The superintendent may cancel all activities on district property by outside groups, even if some schools in the district remain open. When a school is closed, activities scheduled at that school, including use by community groups, may be canceled. Activities held at another location that involve

students and staff from a closed school may be canceled at the discretion of the building principal, in consultation with local health authorities and the school district's health services coordinator.

The decision to close CPS schools may be made as a means to prevent the further spread of an epidemic or in response to high student and/or staff absenteeism. The Superintendent will make district, school or classroom closure decisions in consultation with the Incident Command Team, the Columbia/Boone County Health Department, health and medical professionals.

Possible School Closure Trigger Points:

- student absenteeism
 - when it is not economically prudent to keep the school open
- teacher/Staff absenteeism
 - when the number of staff available to supervise and instruct students drops below what is necessary to maintain a safe learning environment
- confirmed case(s) of coronavirus
 - a school or classroom may be closed at the direction of the safety and security director
- to protect the public health and safety
 - when advised to close by the Governor or state and local health authorities

The decision to close on these triggers is the school district's decision in conjunction with guidance from local, state, federal health and medical professionals.

[State Statute RSMo 171.011](#) provides as follows: "The school board of each school district in the state may make all needful rules and regulations for the organization, grading and government in the school district. The rules shall take effect when a copy of the rules, duly signed by order of the board, is deposited with the district clerk. The district clerk shall transmit forthwith a copy of the rules to the teachers employed in the schools. The rules may be amended or repealed in like manner."

The Board has adopted Board Policy [BCD](#), Board-Superintendent Relationship, which authorizes the Superintendent to manage the District within the framework of Board policies.

ARP/ESSER Funding

Columbia Public Schools received COVID relief money from the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP/ESSER III) funds.

The federal funds projected for the 2022-23 school year are from ESSER III funds enacted in March 2021 through the American Recovery Plan. The District's appropriation is nearly \$24 million, \$9.8 million of which will be used in the operating funds for personnel and technology related purchases during the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years and \$13.4 million of which will be used in the capital projects fund for air quality improvements and upgrades to district facilities.

To receive funds allocated under the ARP, school districts must publish information on their website that addresses mitigation and prevention strategies, continuity of services during interruptions to in-person learning, and periodic review and revision, if needed, of the district's plan.