



# HENDERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan - 2021/2022

Henderson County Public Schools [District] is required to provide information from current and ongoing plans addressing health and safety concerns related to in-person learning during the pandemic in response to the following questions and topic areas:

How will the District maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and PSU staff?

The District employs the following:

- Work with NC DHHS, NC DPI, and the Henderson County Department of Public Health to use their guidance in determining effective mitigation strategies, and health and safety procedures and protocols
- School nurse staff are readily available and fully trained to respond to COVID-19 incidents and concerns, and handle possible/presumptive/suspected/confirmed COVID cases
- Maintain adequate PPE and cleaning supplies at all facilities in the District
- Provide training for all staff
- Provide information for all families
- Provide information about COVID testing
- Provide information about COVID vaccinations

It is essential that the PSU plan contain precise information about how PSUs will focus on prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 specific to their communities, in order to keep students, staff, and families healthy and to avoid future shutdowns. Describe the extent to which the District has adopted the key prevention and mitigation strategies identified in the CDC guidance.

The District will continue to:

- Conduct daily symptom screening, where required and when appropriate
- Encourage families to keep students who are sick at home
- Require positive / presumptive / close contact students and staff to quarantine according to local protocol
- Employ social distancing to the fullest extent possible
- Require and encourage the proper wearing of face coverings
- Provide information and assist in facilitating vaccination clinics
- Maintain designated sick areas at all sites
- Implement increased hygiene efforts - handwashing, frequent cleaning of high touch areas, daily deep cleaning and sanitization of facilities and buses
- Provide adequate supplies to support mitigation efforts (hand sanitizers, soap, paper towels, etc)
- Limit visitors in schools, when necessary and appropriate, and require visitors wear face coverings
- Post recommendations for face coverings/social distancing/hygiene

Describe the extent to which the District has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the CDC's safety recommendations including:

Universal and correct wearing of masks

Currently require universal wearing of face coverings/masks in all indoor facilities.

Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)

The District will continue to:

- Use visual cues to maintain social distancing
- Increase distance for cafeteria and bus seating to the fullest extent possible

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

The District will continue to:

- Educate staff on handwashing and respiratory etiquette
- Have staff provide age-appropriate modeling and instruction for students in hygiene
- Install additional hand sanitizer dispensers

Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

The District will continue to:

- Conduct frequent cleaning of high touch areas
- Employ additional custodial staff
- Provide supplies for classroom teachers
- Electrostatic spray of buses and high touch areas
- Address maintenance and mitigation of HVAC systems
- Encourage and facilitate outdoor instruction

Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments

School health staff will continue to partner with the local health department to develop and implement procedures for notification, contact tracing and quarantining related to positive cases and exposures

Diagnostic and screening testing

The District will make available rapid antigen tests for symptomatic staff and students, partner with local health/medical entities to continue provision of diagnostic and screening testing, and communicate resources to stakeholders

Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities

The District will continue to:

- Partner with local health department to provide information on and

- opportunities to receive vaccinations
- Have school health personnel and other school personnel participate in community vaccine clinics, where appropriate

Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies

The District will continue to:

- Allow exceptions for individual student needs for face coverings
- Provide ability-level instruction to aid students with tolerance to face coverings
- Provide additional PPE for staff and students
- Offer clear masks / safety shields to aid in communication with students and when working in close proximity

Coordination with State and local health officials

District will continue to work with state and health officials in the following ways:

- School official is a member of the local county government Emergency Operations Team
- School health staff and administrative participation in weekly meetings with local health department to monitor current conditions, respond to issues, and implement contact tracing and quarantining protocol
- Regular meetings with state officials on changing advice and guidelines maintain open information and communication lines with stakeholders
- Attend all NC DHHS meetings to receive updates and latest information on prevention and mitigation
- School staff will participate in vaccine clinics, and assist with information and resource dissemination

Describe how the PSU will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

The District will continue to:

- Offer in-person instruction for all students
- Provide additional counseling services for staff and students
- Continue to utilize school MTSS problem-solving teams to address academic, functional and behavioral needs
- Maintain partnerships with community mental health providers
- Increase student access to devices
- Provide meal distributions
- Implement federal free meal program for all students
- Partner with local organizations to provide weekly food bags for students in need
- Provide six-week Summer Learning Program for at-risk students in grades K-12

Until September 30, 2023, the PSU must periodically, but no less frequently than every six months, review and, as appropriate, revise its plan. The PSU must seek public input and take such input into account in determining whether to revise its plan and, if it determines revisions are necessary, the PSU must seek public input on whether to revise its plan and on revisions to its plan no less frequently than every six months (taking into consideration the timing of significant changes to CDC guidance on reopening schools). If the PSU revises its plan, the revised plan must address each of the aspects of safety currently recommended by the CDC.

The District will periodically review and revise this plan no less frequently than every six months taking into consideration changes in guidance, stakeholder input, and the need to address recommended health and safety areas.

The PSU plan must be: in an understandable and uniform format; to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent.

The District will maintain and post plans in plain, understandable language with alternate formats and translation resources available via contact with the District office at 828-697-4733.

Questions or concerns related to the District's plans or posted information should be directed to Dr. John Bryant at the same contact number, 828-697-4733.