

# JOHNSTON CITY CUSD #1

## Return to School Plan

### 2023-2024

#### Summary

As we continue to navigate the challenges presented to us over the past 4 years, Johnston City CUSD #1 has been working on its updated Return to School Plan for the 2023-2024 school year. The goal of this plan is to have students attend school in-person for a full school day Monday through Friday. When developing this plan we looked at the successes of our previous school years and updated our protocols for the 2023-2024 school year accordingly. The updates to the protocols in this plan are based on the most recent guidance.

#### On-Campus Protocols

The health and well-being of our students and staff are the top priorities. For this reason there will be strict protocols in place when students and staff are on campus. Johnston City CUSD #1 has divided these protocols into five categories:

- Health & Wellness
- Instruction
- Transportation
- Operations
- Communications

#### Health & Wellness

Following guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois State Board of Education, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Johnston City CUSD #1 has developed health protocols to allow for a return to in-person learning. A strong emphasis will be placed on practicing good hygiene among students, staff, and visitors and sanitization of buildings.

#### Isolation/Quarantine/Exclusion

- As mandated by IDPH/ISBE, Johnston City CUSD #1 will continue to follow the IDPH/CDC guidelines regarding student/staff isolation/quarantine/exclusion.
- The most recent Isolation/Quarantine/Exclusion guidelines can be found at ISBE and IDPH/CDC websites. These guidelines were frequently updated throughout the 2021-2022 school year and may continue to be updated.
- Students and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, should stay home and contact their healthcare provider for testing and care.
- Individuals who show symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day are to immediately report to or be escorted to the nurse's office. Students will either be sent home or be quarantined in the nurse's office while awaiting pickup/evaluation. Students and staff are required to wear

masks while in this area. Parents should ensure that ill students are picked up from school within 30 minutes of being notified. Ill students will not be allowed to utilize the school bus to return home. To facilitate COVID-19 diagnosis and inform the need for quarantine of close contacts and isolation, a rapid COVID-19 test can be administered on site only with parental consent.

- Contact the school nurse if you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or have COVID-19 symptoms to determine the date you can return to the school. You can also refer to the IDPH/CDC website for current protocols.
- Student absences related to a COVID-19 quarantine/exclusion will be recorded as excused. To ensure continuity of services, school work missed during such an absence must be made up.
- Social, emotional, mental health, or other needs will be provided in accordance with a student's IEP or 504 Plan. Parents of students who have social, emotional, mental health, or other needs outside of an IEP or 504 Plan should contact their child's principal to discuss needs.
- Remote learning will be made available for all students who are under quarantine/exclusion. These absences will look like a traditional excused absence. Students under quarantine/exclusion will be provided with work from their actual class. Students are expected to turn in assignments upon return to school unless other arrangements have been made with administration.
- Johnston City CUSD #1 will work with the local health department and state health guidelines regarding school closure.
- As new guidance emerges, guidelines may change.

### **Reporting Illness**

When reporting illness absences, be sure to report if your child:

- Is a close contact of someone with a positive COVID-19 test.
- Has signs of COVID-19.
- Has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Has been diagnosed with influenza (respiratory flu).

### **Screening Testing**

- Parents can request COVID-19 testing for their students by contacting the school nurse.
- At any level of community transmission, any staff member can request COVID-19 testing by contacting the school nurse.

### **Mask use**

- IDPH/CDC currently determine masking and testing recommendations based on COVID-19 Community Levels (low, medium, and high). Current community levels can be found on the IDPH/CDC website.
- Mask use is recommended indoors for students, staff and visitors when community levels are high.
- As is the case with everything in this document, if we see changes in transmission rates or new guidance is issued, mask use may be required for all individuals. (Appendix A)

## **Hygiene**

- Good hygiene including respiratory etiquette, will continue to be a regular topic with our students.
- Frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing are key to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. Staff and students must clean hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. In situations where soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used.
- Staff and students should avoid touching their mouth, eyes, or nose as much as possible.
- Hand sanitizer is available in common areas and classrooms throughout each school building.

## **Vaccination**

- Parents, students and staff can contact Franklin-Williamson Bi-County Health Department or visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find locations in our area where they can get vaccinated.

## **Collaboration with Public Health Officials**

District officials will continue to collaborate and consult with Franklin-Williamson Bi-County Health Department officials on various logistics and decision-making including, but not limited to, school health and safety protocols, screening/testing, vaccine clinics, and emergency school closings.

The District will work closely with the Franklin-Williamson Bi-County Health Department to track local transmission rates. In the event local COVID-19 metrics indicate further prevention and mitigation layers are required, the District will collaborate with the Franklin-Williamson Bi-County Health Department and consider necessary changes to these protocols and other school operating procedures.

## **Instruction**

Students will attend school five days a week and begin and end our day at normal times.

Student in-person attendance times Monday-Friday:

JCHS 8:10-2:46

Washington 8:05 - 2:41

Lincoln 8:05 - 2:41

Jefferson 8:05 - 2:41

## **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)**

SEL curriculum and additional supplementary services will continue to be provided for our students and staff. We will continue to implement the SEL curriculum with the addition of an intentional focus on student's emotional health which may be impacted by COVID-19. Other SEL supports will be developed to provide assistance to our students as needed. School Social Workers and staff will continue to monitor and identify students who may need additional support or interventions.

## **Disabilities or Other Health Care Needs**

Parents of students who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, or weakened immune systems should contact their student's IEP/504 case manager to discuss the need(s).

## **Operations**

### **Transportation**

- Johnston City CUSD #1 continues to work closely with Illinois Central Transportation Company to ensure procedures are in compliance with all applicable expectations.
- Students will be assigned a seat and must remain in that assigned seat each day.
- In order to increase ventilation drivers may open bus windows when weather permits.
- Student transportation vehicles will be sanitized each day. Sanitizing products will meet the
- EPA criteria and be used according to manufacturers' guidelines.

### **Facilities/Ventilation**

- School custodial staff will continue to conduct daily cleaning and disinfection using EPA approved cleaners. In addition, extra sanitation efforts will occur during school days which address high-traffic/common areas, including entryways, foyers, hallways, main offices, restrooms, and stairwells.
- School custodians will continue to regularly replace school ventilation system filters with high efficiency filters. Building ventilation has been assessed and updated as needed. HVAC systems have been adjusted to increase the outdoor air flow and continue to filter the building air for several hours after students leave the building.

## **Communications**

Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, Johnston City CUSD #1 will utilize the following communication methods to keep stakeholders up to date on changes regarding all protocols:

- Johnston City CUSD #1 Website
- Phone, text alerts, and emails
- Johnston City CUSD #1 social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

All parents/guardians who wish to receive communication should make sure email addresses and phone numbers are up to date in Teacherease.

## Appendix A

### **JOHNSTON CITY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #1 COVID-19 LAYERED MITIGATION MEASURES 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR**

IDPH/CDC recommends that schools implement layered mitigation measures.

The Johnston City CUSD #1 has implemented a layered COVID mitigation strategy.

Layered mitigation strategies are as follows:

1. The vaccine is widely available for ages 5 and above and the single most important prevention strategy.
2. 75% of staff vaccinated
3. Staff and students must stay home when they have a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting and should be tested for COVID before returning to school.
4. Diagnostic testing for staff and students with parent consent.
5. Parents and staff will monitor daily for COVID like symptoms.
6. COVID positive cases must quarantine per IDPH/CDC.
7. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette.
8. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities.
9. HVAC has been professionally assessed for proper ventilation and outfitted with high efficiency filters to improve indoor air quality.
10. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.
11. Physical distancing when possible.
12. Correct wearing of masks if required.