

Phelps County R-III School District

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

The safety and well-being of Phelps County R-III students and faculty/staff is our top priority in all decisions related to conducting school and providing a quality education to all students we serve.

The guidelines and protocols outlined in this document below are subject to revision as needed to reflect local, state, and federal guidance. The District's guidelines incorporate many best practices as advocated by school associations and groups.

Phelps County R-III School District continuously reviews guidance and data from the CDC and local health departments. The district will review and revise this document as needed in accordance with the guidance and data provided by the CDC and local health agencies. The review of this document will take place no less than every six months and after consultation with stakeholders as required by statute.

Please refer to this document often to stay informed about the most current guidelines and protocols our district is following. Parents/guardians with questions or concerns are asked to call the Phelps County R-III School District at (573) 435-6293 to discuss and address those concerns.

Continuity of Services

The Phelps County R-III School District has been providing in-person instruction five days a week since August 25, 2020 and has no current plans to deviate from that. However, if, in consultation with the Phelps-Maries County Health Department, modifications are determined to be necessary, modes of instruction would be adapted, as needed, based on current health conditions.

The social, emotional, and mental health of our students and faculty/staff is a top priority of the Phelps County R-III School District. An instructional aide is available in all classrooms for small group and individual tutoring and mentoring. The counselor is available upon request. Activities throughout the year to address the social, emotional, and mental health of our students will be conducted in accordance with proper COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

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Understandable Language

Phelps County R-III School District can provide this plan to stakeholders in the language of their oral tradition. To receive this plan in a language other than English, please contact the superintendent's office.

Understanding and Recognizing COVID-19

Faculty and staff will be trained to recognize symptoms that may be associated with COVID-19. Training will include, but not be limited to, online modules provided by the Missouri United School Insurance Council. The CDC lists the following as possible symptoms of COVID-19:

- A fever of 100.0 degrees or higher/chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Nausea or vomiting, diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat/congestion or runny nose
- Newly emerged loss of taste or smell

Vaccinations

Staff and eligible students are encouraged to obtain an approved COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine is available at local health facilities. Information for where to receive the vaccine can be obtained by contacting the superintendent's office. The school does not provide the vaccine on site but can provide information about the vaccine.

Staying Home When Appropriate

- Faculty/staff and families will be educated about when they/their child(ren) must stay home and when they can return to school.
- Employees and students who are sick or who have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 are encouraged to stay home. Attendance incentives have been removed and virtual learning and telework options will be utilized as feasible.
- **Faculty/staff and students must stay home if they have tested positive for or are showing COVID-19 symptoms.**
- Faculty/staff and students who have recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 must stay home and monitor their health.

Students with Disabilities

PCR-III will provide appropriate accommodations for all children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies in place due to the prevention or response to COVID-19. Parents of students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the superintendent for more information.

General Health Information for Students and Faculty/Staff

- Parents and students, as well as faculty/staff members, are encouraged to self-screen for potential COVID-19 symptoms before coming to school. Anyone with symptoms of illness must stay home until symptoms have subsided.
- Students at school who display health symptoms that could suggest COVID-19 concerns will be checked by the nurse. If evaluation by the nurse suggests potential for COVID-19 infection, the student will be placed in a separate area and masked (if appropriate for health) until picked up by a parent/guardian.
- **Students with a temperature of 100.0 degrees or higher will be sent home.**
- A student excluded from the school environment due to COVID-19 concerns may return to school in accordance with guidelines provided by the health department. Please understand that guidelines may change over time. At the time of this publication, the guidelines are as follows:
 - **Students not tested for COVID-19 may return if the following conditions are met:**
 - No fever for 72 hours without use of medicine that reduces fever. Students will be required to report to the nurse for a temperature screen upon their return.
 - Other symptoms have improved (cough or shortness of breath). At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
 - **Students with symptoms, but that tested negative for COVID-19, may return if the following conditions are met:**
 - No fever for 24 hours without use of medicine that reduces fever.
 - Other symptoms have improved (cough or shortness of breath).
 - They have received 2 negative COVID-19 tests in a row, with at least 24 hours between tests
 - **Students that have tested positive for COVID-19 may return if the following conditions are met:**
 - 10 days have passed without symptoms.
 - They have received two negative COVID-19 tests in a row, with at least 24 hours between tests.
 - Released and given written approval to return by a healthcare provider.
 - Other scenarios regarding student health will be handled according to guidance and consultation from the Phelps/Maries County Health Department.

Transportation Information

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to drop students off at school instead of using bus service. Drop-off and pick-up systems will be organized to ensure social distancing to the greatest extent possible.
- Students will be required to wear a mask on the bus.
- Students who ride the bus will load the bus from back to front. Therefore, the first students who are picked up will be sitting in the back of the bus and students will continue to fill up the bus to the front.
- Students riding the bus from the same household will be required to sit together.

- Students will remain seated when they arrive at the school. Each seat will be dismissed by the driver.
- Bus drivers should practice all safety actions and protocols as indicated for other faculty/staff (e.g., hand hygiene) to clean and disinfect school buses or other transport vehicles.
- Buses will be sanitized after each route.
- Hand sanitizer will be available on school buses.

General Information for Students and Faculty/Staff

- Students and faculty/staff will have the option to wear a protective mask. All masks must be school appropriate.
- Students who have a persistent cough due to allergies will be asked to wear a mask.
- Masks must be in clean, sanitary condition.
- Students may not share masks, or provide masks to other students at school.
- Students may need to remove mask as classroom activities are dictated (i.e. speech).
- Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette (CDC Guidance)
 - Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students and faculty/staff.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains alcohol can be used for those who can safely use hand sanitizer. Younger students will be supervised.
 - Encourage faculty/staff and students to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Students will be guided to wash hands multiple times per day.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided at multiple locations throughout buildings and will be located in each classroom.
- Drinking fountains will be removed from service, except for those with bottle filling capabilities.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (e.g., playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) within the school and on school buses at least daily or between uses as much as possible. Use of shared objects (e.g., gym or physical education equipment, art supplies) should be limited when possible, or cleaned between uses.
- A schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection has been established.
- The district encourages parents to provide a refillable, plastic or metal water bottle. These bottles should be sanitized twice a week. Students should bring the bottle to school empty, so that textbooks and library books are not damaged in their backpacks. Students may only have water in their bottles. Students may not share water bottles.
- Social distancing will be observed to the extent possible by all faculty/staff, and students. Social distancing is more achievable in hallways, outdoor areas, and gymnasium.
- Students with diagnosed medical conditions that are related to COVID-19 susceptibility, or that request virtual instruction for other reasons, will be provided opportunities for distance learning and other accommodations as appropriate and practicable.

Arrival at School

- Student drop off time is 7:00 am to 7:50 am. All drop offs will enter through the front doors.
- Students will either enter the cafeteria for breakfast or go to their classroom.
- Parents/visitors will have limited access to the building including the district office.
- Visitors in the building will be limited and must be approved prior to arrival.

Students Arriving Late, Dismissal or Early Pick-ups

- Students who arrive late to school should be signed in by their parent in the front foyer.
- Students who need to be picked up early should be signed out in the foyer by their parent. Let office personnel know which child you need.
- Parents who pick their child/children up in the evening need to make sure the office is aware your child is being picked up. Parents will need to remain in the vehicle, and your child/children will be escorted to the car.

During the School Day

- PK-4 students will remain with their class all day.
- 5-8 students will change classes only when necessary. Classrooms will be sanitized between each class exchange.
- Sharing of student supplies (art, other) will be minimized and/or eliminated.
- Equipment used by more than one student will be sanitized between uses.
- No field trips, assemblies, or visiting presenters will be allowed at this time.

Modified Layouts

- Space seating/desks at least 6 feet apart when feasible.
- Turn desks to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other), or students will sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart.
- Assigned seating in all settings to assist with contact tracing as needed.

Shared Objects

- Sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect will not be permitted.
- Each child's belongings will be separated from others and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or locker areas as much as possible.
- Students will be discouraged from sharing electronic devices, library books, and textbooks.
- Library books will be sanitized prior to being reshelfed.

Cafeteria/Meal Times

- Breakfast/Lunch shifts will be staggered as possible to minimize the number of students gathered.
- Students will wash hands prior to eating and prior to engaging in other activities after eating.

Food Service

- Faculty and staff will wear gloves when handling all utensils and removing trash.
- All kitchen staff will wear a mask and gloves during meal preparation and serving.
- All tables will be cleaned thoroughly between uses.
- All non-disposable food service items will be handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher. Individuals must wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.

Interruption to In-Person Learning

In the event that the entire school is shut down due to COVID, the district will follow the approved AMI plan of instruction. A copy of the the AMI plan can be received by contacting the superintendent's office.