

# Harrah Public Schools

## Safety Protocols

### Public Health Protocols

Protocols described in this staff framework are meant as a guide to each site in providing the safest and most healthy learning environment when students return to school. Guidelines are written to be the most practical, feasible and appropriate for the students' developmental ages. Recommendations outlined in this section of this document have been derived from research from resources including but not limited to the American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Oklahoma State Department of Education Return to Learn Oklahoma: A Framework for Reopening Schools and the Oklahoma State Department of Health: Reopening Guidelines for Schools and Day Camps.

### Masks for Staff

Masks or face shields will be required; therefore, all staff are asked to have a face shield or mask available at all times. All staff will be required to wear a face shield or mask when working within six feet of students or colleagues. While you can provide your own masks, school sites will be given budgets to purchase masks and shields for staff.

### Masks for Students

Face masks or face shields are required for all students while in the building. These masks are essential any time social distancing is difficult to accomplish. When combined with social distancing, masks provide a significant layer of protection to both wearer and contact. Masks, however, will not be provided by the school.

### Temperature Checks

It will be the responsibility of all staff to be aware of their temperature daily through a self-screening process at home. Parents will be asked to check their children's temperature before they leave home each day. Faculty to check student temperature daily upon entry to school building/practice facility.

### Illness or Exposure at School

If a student is identified with a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or a staff member is identified with a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or if either a student or staff member begins exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (shortness of breath, fever or chills, muscle or body aches, loss of taste and smell, cough.) while at school, he or she will be isolated, sent home immediately, and encouraged to be tested.

Individuals found to have COVID-19 should not return to school until they have met the CDC's criteria for being around others. This criteria includes 3 days with no fever,\* improved respiratory

function and symptoms, and a 10-day period of isolation since symptoms first appeared. When students or staff are ready to return to school after a COVID related absence, the staff member (or student's parent/guardian) should call the school one day prior to returning for a COVID pre-return check-in.

This conversation will clarify the following: 1) No symptoms for 3 days without medication,\* absent of respiratory symptoms, and at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared; or ( 2) two consecutive negative COVID-19 tests 24 hours apart; or 3) a release from a physician stating the individual may return to school or work. Then, on the individual's first day back, he/she must check-in at the front office prior to reporting to work or class for a temperature check with the office.

In addition, staff or students who have had close contact with a person with COVID-19, even if they feel healthy, should quarantine until 14 days after the exposure, check their temperature twice a day, watch for symptoms of COVID-19, and stay away from people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from the virus. \* By contrast, for non-COVID related absences, staff is required just 24 hours of fever-free body temperature. [Please refer to this diagram for interpreting the specific extent of a person's exposure.](#)

#### **Staff Attendance**

If you develop any COVID-19 symptoms or feel you have been directly exposed to COVID-19, please contact your supervisor immediately to seek guidance on appropriate leave to take.

#### **Student Attendance**

For the school year of 2020-2021, any COVID-19 related absences will be considered "a significant medical condition" and be exempted from the count attributed toward a child's record under the chronic absenteeism classification. Medical documentation must be provided to substantiate the absence as COVID related.

#### **Good Hygiene Practices**

Frequent and thorough handwashing practices have proven to be critical in the mitigation of any virus, especially COVID-19. Schools will plan and prepare for additional handwashing opportunities throughout the day. All students will wash their hands before eating breakfast or lunch. In addition to increased opportunities for handwashing, there will also be increased opportunities for students to use hand sanitizer in the classroom and at multiple hand sanitizing stations throughout the school building.

#### **Social Distancing**

By maintaining social distancing in the various settings that students will occupy, schools will decrease the threat of transmission of the virus. Teachers will be arranging students' learning environments in a manner that seeks to have all of the class facing the same direction and

avoiding small group arrangements. Extra furniture and classroom displays that inhibit an appropriately distanced arrangement of student desks may be removed from the classrooms while the threat of COVID-19 remains in the community. ***When feasible***, students will be separated by approximately six feet.

### Guests

Non-essential visitors in the school setting will be discouraged during the period of time that COVID-19 remains active in the community. On the occasions that guests are deemed appropriate, they will be expected to wear a mask while on campus and check-in through the school's screening protocol, which will include a brief questionnaire as well as a temperature check. As always, all guests must display their Driver's License prior to entering the school building.

### Water Fountains and Restrooms

As school opens, all traditional water fountains will be disconnected. Students and staff are encouraged to bring filled water bottles or other non-breakable water containers to school with them. Student restrooms will be cleaned multiple times throughout the day by the site custodial staff, who will use portable disinfectant foggers to sanitize the areas. Staff restrooms will also be disinfected periodically throughout the school day.

### School Breakfasts and Lunches

Typical cafeteria meal settings make it difficult to social distance, thus increasing the possibility of exposure and transmission of the virus. For this reason, schools ***may choose*** to create alternate dining areas to include outdoor spaces, common areas, hallways, classrooms, or any other area that will offer a clean, spacious dining experience.

### Transportation

***When possible, parents are encouraged to drive their children to school in order to reduce the number of students riding the school bus each day.*** This will allow for greater levels of social distancing among those who do ride the bus. When feasible, school bus windows will be down to increase ventilation and inhibit the virus contagion. In addition, students will be assigned seats on the bus to achieve optimal social distancing and to provide for contact tracing should a bus rider come down with COVID during the day or overnight. Parents of students riding the bus to school will be expected to check their child's temperature each day prior to them getting on the bus. A student with a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater will not be allowed to ride the bus.

### Teacher and Staff Lunches

When teachers and staff are free to enjoy a duty-free lunch, they should consider having their meal in an area other than the teacher's lounge or teachers' cafeteria area where tables and chairs are typically set up at close range with little physical distance between chairs. Congregating in shared spaces, such as staff lounge areas, should be discouraged.

### Teacher and Staff Personal Children

Before and After School Children of teachers and staff should be where their peers are, following the same guidelines and procedures established for all students. Prior to and after teacher contract time, these children should remain in their parent's classroom or other designated area as defined by the site administrator.

## Elementary School Day

### Face Masks/Shields for Elementary Students and Staff

Face masks for elementary students are required. Masks are essential anytime social distancing is difficult to accomplish; therefore all students are encouraged to have a mask available at all times. Student masks will not be provided by the school.

### Arrival & Dismissal

As students arrive at school in the morning, they will be directed to go to a general area in which social distancing is feasible. Students will not be gathered in large groups to congregate and wait for their school day to begin as they may have been in the past. **Parents will not be escorting their children into the building.** All parents will be asked to remain in their cars and drive through the line to ensure health and safety precautions are followed. Adults and those assisting with arrival procedures will have masks on as they maintain social distancing when feasible.

At the end of the school day, while awaiting dismissal, students will still follow social distancing guidelines by avoiding large groups, as much as possible. When their bus number or car tag number is called, they will walk down the hallway to exit through the designated doors. Students attending an on-site Before/After Care program will also remain in their classrooms until the designated time for them to go to Before/After Care.

### Classroom Organization

By maintaining social distancing in the various settings that students will occupy, schools will decrease the threat of transmission of the virus. Extra furniture and classroom displays that inhibit an appropriately distanced arrangement of student desks will be removed from the classrooms while the threat of COVID-19 remains in the community.

As often as possible, while the threat of COVID-19 remains in the community, students will stay in one classroom area. Teachers and staff will keep students in cohorts to reduce the mixing of students. Keeping students in a cohort helps to minimize exposure and mitigate the virus. For grades that are departmentalized such as 4th and 5th grades, when the threat of the virus is at

a heightened level, students will stay in their homeroom to assist with keeping a common cohort of students together. Rather than having students transition to different classrooms for different subjects, the teachers will rotate instead.

### **Hallways & Passing Times**

When Feasible, students should travel in the hallways 6 feet apart from each other. Each site will be specific on how to visually teach and remind students of how best to maintain social distancing while in the hallways. If students have masks, they should be worn in the hallways during passing times.

### **Media Center**

Honoring the importance of reading for both pleasure and research, the school media centers will remain open for student use. While there may be some changes in routines and scheduling, it is our intent to keep our media centers open and available to our students and staff. Students will be allowed to check out books from the Media Center. As books are returned, they will remain untouched for 24 hours, then will be sanitized prior to being placed back on the shelves for checkout again.

### **Student Clubs**

The traditional format of student clubs will not be feasible during the threat of COVID-19. However, any club that can operate in a virtual manner or in a small group, social distancing, being outdoors, etc, may continue with the approval of site administration.

### **Schoolwide Assemblies**

Schoolwide assemblies will only occur through a virtual setting. There will not be large gatherings experienced in a traditional format such as weekly "Rise & Shine" assemblies, programs and fundraising events. Each site will develop procedures and protocols to carry on such events, when feasible, through a virtual experience.

### **Music and Performances**

During a heightened threat of the virus, music or PE programs or plays will not be held.

### **Book Fairs**

During a heightened threat of the virus, Book Fairs will only be held in a virtual format.

### **Fundraisers**

Fundraising events will only be held in person when they can be limited to small groups of students, maintaining social distancing and following CDC guidelines. Otherwise, all fundraising efforts will need to be held virtually.

### **Breakfast & Lunch**

Students will wash their hands prior to eating. When feasible, they will eat in the cafeteria while being seated with spaces between students. When this is not feasible, students will eat in another area, such as their classrooms, in order to social distance themselves from each other. No guests will be allowed to have lunch on-site during this time of operational adjustments being made due to COVID-19. If it is necessary to have fewer students in the cafeteria during lunch to ensure adequate spacing for social distancing, there may be a need for half the grade to eat in their classrooms on one day (i.e. M/W) and the other half eat in the cafeteria then switch for (T/Th), etc.

### **Student Supplies**

Sharing of supplies such as crayons, markers, scissors and pencils will not be allowed. Students will keep their individual supplies separated from those of others in individually labeled containers or cubbies.

### **Learning Manipulatives**

Any manipulatives needed for instructional purposes will not be shared without first being sanitized prior to being used by another student. The best case scenario will be that each student has their own manipulatives, or that students alternate days in which manipulatives are used by students to allow for time for cleaning. Hand washing should be promoted before and after touching shared supplies or equipment.

### **Recess**

Each elementary site will develop a recess schedule that allows for outdoor playtime daily for all students. Recess schedules may vary from site to site due to limiting the number of students in one area at each time.

### **Snacks**

No classwide snacks will be allowed or distributed at school. Students choosing to bring a snack to school may bring an individually wrapped snack for themselves.

### **PTO Events**

Traditional PTO sponsored events such as popcorn days, Spirit Stores, carnivals will not be held during the time of a threat of the virus. Events that can be held virtually could be considered, but only if approved by the site administrator.

## Secondary School Day

### Face Masks/Shields for Middle & High School Students and Staff

Secondary students and staff alike are reminded that by wearing a face mask at school, they are protecting both themselves and those around them. As the school year commences, students should include a face mask in their list of school supplies. With respect to the spread of the virus, the optimal, safest situation is for all students and staff to mask at all times. When a student wears a mask at school, it is a sign of respect for both classmates and teachers; and by extension, it is confirmation that the wearer understands his/her responsibility to his/her immediate family, extended family, the school family, and the greater Harrah community. The same is true for the staff. For this reason, Harrah's secondary students, along with teachers and staff, will be expected to wear masks or face shields throughout the day. Masks or shields are expected to be worn in hallways and classrooms

### Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizer

Teachers are encouraged to wash their hands at every opportunity or to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when hand washing is not feasible. Practicing this prevention tactic as an often-repeated habit not only protects the teacher but also serves as a great reminder for students to do the same.

### Arrival & Dismissal

Arrival routines will look different this year in an effort to allow students to maintain a safe physical distance from one another as they wait for the first hour bell to begin class. Each site will work with the layout and options in their specific building to maximize opportunities for student distancing in the minutes before school begins.

At the end of the day as much as possible, students will be released in a staggered manner to avoid all of them traveling through the halls toward the same exit. Student supervision will be imperative during these gathering times as students come and go each day, requiring teachers to assist more than usual with a rotational system of unpaid duty assignments.

### Classroom Organization

To the extent possible, classroom desks will be arranged to all face in the same direction. To facilitate the difficult challenge of social distancing in a classroom, it will be necessary to remove any extraneous furniture from the environment. Some classes may consider setting up a learning space outdoors or in a common area. High-touch surfaces like door handles and light switches should be cleaned frequently throughout the day. Student desktops should also be wiped with a sanitizer wipe between classes.

When feasible, middle schools may choose to have students remain in one classroom for all of their core classes while the teachers rotate. Otherwise, schools should consider the issue of class change to see if a plan can be implemented to reduce the number of students in the hallway simultaneously

### **Locker Use**

For those students who choose to use their school lockers, daily visits to store and pick up materials will be limited in a manner that reduces the number of students in a hallway area at any one time. For instance, lockers with a number that ends in an even digit may be asked to visit lockers after even-numbered class periods and similarly, odd-numbered lockers.

Middle schoolers will not be using lockers. At every opportunity, we will be seeking ways to minimize unnecessary material and items being brought into the school.

### **Media Center**

Honoring the importance of reading for both pleasure and research, the school media centers will remain open for student use. While there may be some changes in routines and scheduling, it is our intent to keep our media centers open and available to our students and staff. Students will be allowed to check out books from the Media Center. As books are returned they will be sanitized prior to being placed back on the shelves for checkout again.

### **School Activities**

Extra and co-curricular activities and athletics of all descriptions are vital elements of a secondary student's experience. Responses to COVID-19 in these environments will vary, always with a keen eye to proven practices and research in prevention and protection. Various organizations will be consulted for guidance and insight into the challenges and recommendations for special interest organizations.

### **Vocal Music, Band, PE, Drama Classes**

Because vocal, band, drama, and PE are likely to involve high volumes of oral expectorant, there is a strong likelihood that aerosol distribution of COVID-19 will occur in these courses' classrooms. Mitigation techniques, such as cloth masks, distancing, and outdoor classrooms, are all opportunities that are presently being considered as we await the results of the study. Moving forward, Harrah teachers will be a strong voice in the conversation of curriculum and performance planning. At this point, there are no absolutes, and as has been stated often, much can change in the weeks and months to come. Your patience is kindly appreciated!

### **Schoolwide Assemblies**

Schoolwide assemblies will be limited at the beginning of the school year to avoid the likely possibility of exposure that would occur when hundreds of students gather to chant and cheer their teams on to victory. Outdoor gatherings may be a suitable and safer alternative. As the year wears on, such events may be reinstated if the virus takes a turn toward diminishing infections.



### **Fundraisers**

Fundraising events will only be held in person when they can be limited to small groups of students, maintaining social distancing and following CDC guidelines. Otherwise, all fundraising efforts will need to be held virtually.

### **Breakfast & Lunch**

Students will be reminded to access lavatories for hand washing prior to meal service. Accessible hand sanitizer dispensers will be available too. Because mealtime, by its very nature, presents many opportunities for the spread of germs, schools will be offering students a variety of seating options to provide safer situations than the typical cafeteria setting would allow. Students will be reminded that sharing food is not a safe practice.

### **Student Supplies**

When students share supplies, such as pens, art materials, and calculators, they are also sharing their germs. For this reason, we are asking students to come to school fully prepared with the materials they will need and to avoid sharing the materials. If a student is unable to provide an item due to its expense, the school will make every effort to seek funds or materials to support the child. Expectations for individual student materials should always be assigned with the cost in mind.

### **PTO Events**

Traditional PTO sponsored events such as pizza days, donut days and apparel sales will not be held during the time of a threat of the virus. Events that can be held virtually could be considered, but only if approved by the site administrator.

### **Mental Health Challenges**

Most of the focus in recent months has been on the physical health of our students and staff, but just as fragile in these times is the mental health of everyone in our school community. If you or any of your colleagues experience a need for counseling, the district has established a contract with a local private counselor to provide a limited number of sessions to offer support in the area of mental health. Your site's principal or guidance counselor with those additional resources.