

Diamond R-IV School District



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

Board Approved on 6/9/2021 and to be revised before 12/9/2021

The purpose of this document is to provide information to the community in preparing for and conducting an effective and successful re-entry into education services for the 2021-2022 school year programming in the Diamond R-IV School District. Because experts are continuing to learn more about COVID-19 and the conditions surrounding the crisis are continually evolving, this document will likely change, be amended or added to. Diamond Schools has worked in coordination with local authorities and health officials for review and approval of this plan. Diamond Schools will adhere to the most recent recommendations from the Newton County Health Department. Each school will be updating their individual plans as needed and communicating with our students and families any needed changes.

SERVING THE DIAMOND COMMUNITY: As a learning organization, we are committed to serving our community. Ultimately, we respond to the needs of those we serve. Diamond has historically provided a robust program, providing enrichment and remediation to students in all grade levels. While the current pandemic has presented challenges, Diamond Schools is committed to meeting the needs of our students this school year and hoping for normality. In addition to the general school handbook, the below protocol and guidelines will be followed:

OPENING OF SCHOOL

All three buildings will open as scheduled on Monday, August 23rd for full day classes. We plan to have an in-person school schedule based on our BOE approved 2021-2022 Hybrid Four Day School Calendar schedule from 7:30 am - 3:30 pm daily. Other than four scheduled Mondays and four possible weather make-up Mondays students will attend in person for onsite instruction on Tuesday through Friday throughout the school year.

Each building has plans in place to socially distance whenever possible and keep our students as separated as possible. Teachers will keep the same groups of students (cohorts) together as much as possible during class time, lunch, and transition times. We plan to have all the regular classes in their respective classrooms; PE, Band, Choir, as well as all other non-traditional or elective classes.

Students will not be allowed to enter the buildings prior to 7:20 a.m. to ensure adequate supervision and social distancing. At 7:20 a.m. students will enter the buildings, pick up breakfast if desired, and go to their assigned classroom.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

We ask that all parents teach healthy habits to children before school begins.

- Educate your child on viruses and the signs of illness
- Teach appropriate hand washing, good hygiene, keeping surfaces clean, and social distancing
- Help explain to your child why material sharing could be limited
- Teach your child how to appropriately wear a mask and when to use them (if needed)

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- Educate students on viruses and the signs of illness
- Have students maintain personal supplies versus communal supplies
- Reinforce appropriate hand washing, good hygiene, keeping surfaces clean, and social distancing
- Teach students how to appropriately wear a mask and when to use them (if needed)

Measures will be taken to decrease students congregating in one location:

- Students will pick up breakfast if desired then report straight to their classroom upon entering the buildings and staff will monitor to ensure no congregating occurs
- Students will be required to stay with their assigned class (cohort) to promote social distancing as much as possible
- Elementary restroom breaks will be scheduled by classroom, outside emergencies, with good hand washing after use
- Students will have assigned seating in all classrooms and social distancing when possible
- In locations where students line up, teachers will help promote social distancing
- Appropriate accommodations will be made for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies.

Minimizing Building Access if Needed

To ensure the health and safety for all faculty, staff, and families in the District, it may be necessary to minimize the need for people to be in our buildings other than employees and students if our COVID-19 cases increase in our area and it is deemed necessary by the superintendent. The District has developed the following guidelines for when building access may need to be limited:

- Parents are asked to call ahead if they have a need to visit the school, outside of emergency situations or a scheduled appointment
- Parents may not be allowed beyond the school entryway, outside of emergency situations or a scheduled appointment
- Parents may not be allowed to visit the classroom or eat lunch with their child
- Visitors, outside necessary employees providing student instruction and student services, may not be allowed in the building

Breakfast, Lunch, And Snacks

- Breakfast will be bagged (grab and go) and available for every student at 7:20 a.m.
 - Elementary, Middle School, and High School students will eat breakfast in the classroom
 - Middle School and High School students will have the opportunity for a 2nd chance breakfast
- Students will be scheduled to eat lunch with assigned classes (cohorts) in the cafeteria, FEMA, or commons depending on the building and will practice social distancing

- Food should not be shared with other students
- Snacks for special events should be store bought and individually wrapped to ensure the safety and health of our students

Dismissal

- Students who ride a bus will be released to the designated bus pickup area at the assigned time
- Elementary students will be picked up using the car line ONLY to ensure student safety and parents must remain in their vehicle

Playgrounds / Alternative Locations

- Staff will monitor students for social distancing
- Hand washing and hand sanitizer will be used upon returning to the building from the playground
- Frequently used playground and alternative locations will have surfaces cleaned routinely

HEALTH PROTOCOL

Any student who is sick or showing any symptoms of COVID-19 needs to stay home until all symptoms have concluded. Students and employees will adopt these hygiene measures:

- We ask that all of our parents to please pre-screen their children before sending them to school and notify the school if they have symptoms and will remain at home
- All persons are required to wash hands or use hand sanitizer when they come to school, and throughout the school day
- Encourage students to leave personal items at home unless necessary, backpacks will be stored separately from others
- Require all persons to wash hands after blowing noses, coughing or sneezing or when in contact with bodily fluids
- Encourage classes and employees to create their own hand signals to replace shaking hands, hugging, or giving high-fives
- Avoid using classroom items that are frequently touched but not easily cleaned such as fabric
- To avoid the use of traditional water fountains, students will be provided a refillable water bottle to use throughout the day. Each school has no-touch bottle filling stations

Students and employees will be excluded from school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 based on CDC guidance that is not otherwise explained.

- Fever of 100.4 or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

However, additional criteria for exclusion may be provided by the local health department at the time of exclusion based on the most current Newton County Health Department and CDC guidance.

Students (with assistance from parents) and employees should self-screen prior to coming to school or expect to be screened before entering the school building. Those exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 without other obvious explanations will be prohibited from coming to school, and if they do come to school, they will be sent home.

Wearing Masks and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Any person is welcome and recommended to wear a mask or PPE in the school building if desired (a washable cloth mask has been donated for each student and staff member)
- Parents who send their child with a mask should teach them appropriate usage and proper cleaning and/or disposal
- PPE must follow current CDC guidelines

Return to School After Exclusion

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return only if they satisfy the recommendations of the current CDC guidelines, which are subject to change.

At the time of writing this document, the CDC / DESE / Local Health Department guidelines state:

1. Symptomatic:

Persons who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 but have experienced symptoms consistent with COVID-19 may return when the following conditions are met:

- a. Fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication and all symptoms are gone.
- b. At least ten (10) calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared if they tested positive.
- c. If they have received a negative test they may return when all symptoms are gone, fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication,

2. Confirmed COVID-19:

Persons who have experienced symptoms and have tested positive for COVID-19 may return when all three of the following conditions are met:

- a. They no longer have a fever (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); and
- b. Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved).
- c. They have completed their quarantine set by the local Health Department and are cleared to return to school/work.

3. Siblings or Other Students in the Household:

If a student is excluded from school due to COVID-19 symptoms or has had a positive COVID-19 test, his or her siblings or other students living in the same household may be quarantined if deemed necessary by the Newton County Health Department for 14 days past the date of last contact with the excluded sibling (who tested positive) and or 14 days from the day the excluded sibling (who tested positive) is released if they remained in contact. The District will continue to consult with local health authorities for further guidance in this instance.

4. Self-Quarantine:

If a student or employee has recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 symptoms or diagnosed with COVID-19 or has recently traveled from somewhere considered to be a “hot spot” or out of state by the CDC, the District may exclude the student or employee from the school building and recommend that they self-quarantine but currently is not required. If you have questions about your specific situation you can contact the Newton County Health Department at (417)451-3743.

District Response to Exclusion from School or Self-Quarantine

As soon as the District becomes aware of a student or employee that may have COVID-19 or that has been excluded from school or recommended to self-quarantine, the custodial staff will be informed so that all desks, lockers and workspaces of the person are thoroughly disinfected. If the school is not open when notification occurs, the custodial staff will wait 24 hours or as long as possible prior to disinfecting and instead will block off the area so that others do not have contact. However, if that is not possible or school is in session, the cleaning will occur immediately.

Separation While in School

Each school will have a room or space separate from the nurse’s office where students or employees who may have COVID-19 or another communicable disease will wait to be evaluated or for pickup. Students will be given a mask to wear. Only essential staff and students assigned to the room may enter, all will sign in so that there is a record of the persons who entered the room, and the room will be disinfected several times throughout the day. Strict social distancing is required, and staff must wear appropriate PPE. Students who are ill will be walked out of the building to their parents.

Care Rooms for Students with Physical Needs

Each school will designate a location separate from the nurse's office for the care of students with special care needs such as suctioning, tube feeding and nebulizers to minimize exposure to students who might be ill. The room will be disinfected frequently, and all staff members present will wear appropriate PPE. The student will be provided a mask.

Confirmed Case of COVID-19 in the School Building

When there is confirmation that a person infected with COVID-19 was in a school building for a sustained time period under circumstances where transmission was likely to occur, the District will contact the local health department immediately. Unless extenuating circumstances exist, the District may close the school building if necessary (this is highly unlikely and would only be done if absolutely necessary) and work with the local health department to assess factors such as the likelihood of exposure to employees and students in the building, the number of cases in the community and other factors that will determine when the building should re-open.

The District will contact parents/students and employees and notify them that a person who tested positive for COVID-19 was in the building and encourage cooperation with the District and the local health department to trace contacts with the individual. The individual who tested positive will not be identified in communications to the school community at large but may need to be selectively identified for contact tracing by the health department. If a school building is closed, all school activities may be cancelled if absolutely necessary or rescheduled, regardless of whether the activity was to take place in the building or another location, including extracurricular activities, before and after-school programs, and field trips. Parents/students and employees may be encouraged to stay at home until more information is provided by the District or the health department.

Diagnostic and Screening Testing

The District has an agreement with Freeman Health Systems for TeleHealth services and currently has three TeleHealth machines (one in each building). Any student (procedures are posted on our website) or staff member can utilize these services at any time during school hours or when our district nurse is available. The district also has some diagnostic testing kits but availability is limited based on the supply chain currently.

Efforts to Provide Vaccinations to Educators, Other Staff, and Students

All District staff members were provided access to vaccinations this past spring and all educators, other staff, and students will be notified of future opportunities for vaccinations.

ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

At this time, MSHSAA is planning a full athletic and extracurricular schedule. This is of course subject to change, but at this time all athletics and extracurricular activities will be taking place.

LEARNING

Diamond R-IV Schools are committed to providing meaningful instruction to help overcome the effects of the disruption we have had on student learning. While teachers will still have autonomy to engage students in creative ideas and projects this year, we will also have specific district guidelines teachers will use to assess students on core instruction. This assessment data will be used to drive instruction throughout the year.