

## Introduction

As Climax Springs R-IV School District transitions into the 2020-2021 school year the district knows that families and our community want schools to be ready to reopen as soon as possible with guidance from Camden County Health Department, State and CDC health officials. Our top priority is to ensure that children re-enter schools with safety as our top priority so that learning can continue, and students can develop the social and emotional connections necessary for their growth. Reopening schools in a manner that is responsive to the needs of families and our community will involve challenges with many undetermined factors. To that end, we have examined all aspects of the organization and created this guide to organize a set of directions and protocols aligned to the guidance of medical experts to prepare for the 2020-2021 school year. The Department of Homeland Security formally declared teachers essential workers and now considered critical infrastructure workers.

## CDC Guidelines

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection. Therefore, personal prevention practices (such as [handwashing](#), [staying home when sick](#)) and environmental [cleaning and disinfection](#) are important principles that are covered in this document. Fortunately, there are a number of actions school staff can take to help lower the risk of exposure to and spread of COVID-19 during school sessions and activities (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2020).

One of the actions that can be taken to help lower the risk of exposure is the use of face coverings. Face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school. Face coverings should be worn by staff as feasible and are **most** essential in times when physical distancing is difficult. Individuals should be repeatedly reminded not to touch the face covering and to [wash their hands](#) frequently. Information should be provided to staff, students, and students' families on [proper use, removal, and washing of cloth face coverings](#) (CDC, 2020).

## Symptoms of COVID-19

People with COVID-19 have reported having a wide range of symptoms – from mild symptoms to severe illness. [Children](#) have similar symptoms to adults and generally have mild illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat

- New loss of taste or smell

This list is not all inclusive. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea (CDC, 2020).

## **Health & Mitigation Strategies**

### **Hand Washing**

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

### **Physical Distancing**

Avoid close contact by putting an appropriate distance between yourself and others. Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus. Keeping an appropriate distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

### **Cover Coughs and Sneezes**

If you are in a private setting and do not have your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

### **Clean and Disinfect**

Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces will occur throughout the day. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks.

### **Masks/Face Coverings**

According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), face coverings are an important strategy to reduce transmission of the novel coronavirus, primarily by reducing the spread of infection from the wearer to those around. Young children may have difficulty complying with the proper use of face coverings and may have increased face

touching, mask chewing, mask trading, and other behaviors that could increase risk of infection. For this reason, continuous usage of face coverings is not recommended for young children.

Older children, such as those in middle and high school, are likely to be able to follow guidance regarding proper mask usage. Additionally, these students are less easily cohorted. Thus, the use of face coverings can provide an additional layer of protection against the spread of infection. Though we are not requiring it for any students

DESE advises that face coverings should be considered for all age groups during periods when students are not cohorted or cannot physically distance (e.g. in hallways or during entry and dismissal periods). It is also appropriate for all students to wear masks or face coverings while riding the bus. However, we are not going to require or enforce this.

It is recommended by DESE that school staff members wear face coverings, as the data indicates COVID-19 transmission is more likely from adult to student than from student to adult. Face coverings should be worn by staff members at all times when they are in close proximity to students or other staff members. However, for staff with respiratory concerns we will instead allow a face shield.

In lecture formats, where the teacher is stationary and appropriately physically distanced from students, face coverings may not be necessary. In some circumstances, such as when working with young children or deaf or hard of hearing students, the need to convey facial expressions and mouth movements is important; in these circumstances, the use of a clear face shield is preferred to no face covering at all.

**Bus drivers and monitors on board a school bus will wear personal protective equipment. Any teacher or staff member who is working closely with symptomatic children must wear medical grade masks and eye protections to ensure that staff are protected.**

### **Staff Member Health Protocols**

- Everyone should take their temperature before coming to work.
- One touchless thermometer will be available for employees to check their temperature at work.
- **If an employee is sick or has a fever, they should not come to work.** Follow sick leave policies and call 573-347-2351
- Any employee who comes in contact with a person who tests positive or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 must immediately call the superintendent or superintendent designee.
- Develop plans to cover staff duties if an employee is sick or needs to work from home temporarily.

### **Staff Member Daily Checklist**

- Everyone should take their temperature daily before coming to work.
- Self-screen daily before going into work for any of the following symptoms associated with COVID-19. Check the [CDC website](#) or contact your healthcare provider for the most current information.
  - Most common symptoms:
    - Fever
    - Cough
    - Shortness of breath
  - Less common symptoms:
    - Sore throat
    - Congestion
    - Headache
    - Chills
    - Muscle and joint pain
    - Nausea or vomiting
    - Loss of sense of smell or taste
    - Diarrhea
- If experiencing the symptoms listed above, call Caleb Petet at 573-347-2351.

### **While at work**

- Rigorously practice hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation.
- Maintain at least six feet of separation from other individuals. If such distancing is not feasible, wear a face covering (over the nose and mouth) for your protection as well as theirs.
- Continuously self-screen for the symptoms listed above. Each office is equipped with a touchless thermometer to check your temperature. If you begin to show symptoms, notify The Central Office immediately. Limit contact with other individuals. Contact your healthcare provider.
- Regularly wash or disinfect hands while at work and after any interaction with other staff members.
- Maintain cleanliness through removal of unnecessary personal items and debris to create clean workspaces and support of cleaning efforts on common surfaces. If additional cleaning is needed, please contact the Central Office.

### **Additional Health and Safety Measures for Staff**

Teachers will review new routines, and new procedures will be taught and practiced in all classrooms for arrival, dismissal, and lunch protocols. The following procedures should be implemented by teachers in their classrooms and workspaces on a daily basis:

- All employees should work to keep their office and workspace as clean as possible by cleaning and disinfecting their workstations, surfaces they commonly use, and other touchpoints.
- Employees should also avoid using others' workstations, supplies, tools and equipment. Additionally, whenever an employee uses standard office equipment (e.g., printer or fax machine), it should be wiped down prior to and following use. Employees will be supplied with disinfectant and towels.
- Implement a limit on the use of community supplies.
- Use technology devices for work submission instead of paper when possible.
- Use virtual manipulatives/tools as much as possible.
- Limit multiple students touching/interacting with the same materials.
- Keep students socially distant within the classroom as much as possible.
- Support social distancing between classes.
- Ensure students are facing the same direction as much as possible, by walking on the right side of the hallways.

#### **Limit Potential Exposure to other Students/Staff?**

- Staff should regularly wash hands for at least 20 seconds throughout the day with warm water and soap.
- Coughs and sneezes should be directed into a sleeve.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid using common areas.
- Employees will be responsible for obtaining their own food and beverage. If brought from home, it is preferred that it stay in an insulated bag. It is recommended that all personal dishware be taken home nightly for appropriate cleaning and disinfection.
- Conduct any meetings or gatherings in accordance with recommended restrictions for public gatherings regarding the number of participants. Virtual meetings are encouraged.
- Employees who are feeling sick are asked to stay home.
- Employees who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness should immediately seek medical attention and follow the guidance of a health care provider.
- Employees who have been diagnosed with or are aware they have been directly exposed to COVID- 19 should notify the superintendent as soon as possible.

#### **Preparations, Procedures & Protocols for COVID Exposure and Positive Test Results.**

**A student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 or was in close contact with someone who has tested positive.**

As you can imagine, the fall and winter will present some challenges as COVID-19 symptoms may be similar to other cold and flu symptoms. Therefore, the school nurse, in consultation with the Camden County Health Department, will determine if symptoms meet the criteria for a

concern of COVID-19. In the case that the school nurse determines the symptoms may be COVID-19 related:

- The student or staff will be separated from other students.
- Designated rooms for students identified ill with covid symptoms will be located in the front of the building and central office area. This is an effort to limit exposure to others, and to sanitize appropriately.
- Parent(s) will be contacted immediately to pick the child up from school.
- Siblings or others living in the same household as that child or staff member and attending school will also be screened.
- Information about testing locations will be provided to the family.
- All staff and students that may have been in contact with the individual will be identified. Those individuals may be asked not to return to school for 14 days. If at that point the individual(s) have not shown any signs or symptoms of COVID-19, they may return to school.
- Staff members who test positive for COVID-19 will be asked to not return until 72 hours have passed without symptoms and 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared or until cleared by a doctor.
- There is no guidance to quarantine staff who are secondary contacts to an unconfirmed, not symptomatic person. Therefore, if your spouse (for example) is quarantined for a potential exposure, our employee is not quarantined.

### **Defining Close Contacts:**

The CDC defines a close contact to COVID-19 as an individual who has had close contact (< 6 feet) for  $\geq 15$  minutes. Brief interactions are less likely to result in transmission; however, symptoms and the type of interaction remain important. Factors to consider when defining close contacts may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The proximity of the case to possible contacts.
- The duration of exposure (e.g., longer exposure time likely increases exposure risk).
- The symptoms of the case at time of exposure (e.g., coughing likely increases exposure risk).
- Type of interaction and/or activities (e.g., an infected person coughs or sneezes directly into the face of an individual, direct physical contact (hugging or through sports/recess, etc.), shared eating or drinking utensils.

### **Immediate Initiation of Contact Tracing for School Children**

The Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services, finding it necessary to protect public health and prevent the further spread of COVID-19, pursuant to the authority granted under section 192.020, RSMo, and 19 CSR 20-20.040, hereby orders the following: Upon receipt of a positive COVID-19 test for any individual at least three (3) years of age but no older than twenty-one (21) years of age, the local public health agency, as defined by 19 CSR

20-20.010(27), shall begin contact tracing such individual as soon as possible, but no longer than twenty-four (24) hours from the time of receipt.

### **PPE (personal protective equipment)**

- All staff will be provided an effective mask or face covering. Staff are also welcome to provide their own. Staff will be required to wear the mask when plausible. Students will only wear when parents ask and the student complies with that request.
- PPE (gloves, masks) will be provided for health room staff and employees who work in very close proximity to students with special needs.
- Face shields will be provided to nurses for use when conducting procedures on students.
- Touch-free thermometers are available for school use (digital thermometers at each office in the district).
- Sanitizers/cleansers, hand soap, and tissues are provided throughout all buildings.
- Surgical grade masks are available for:
  - Health room staff
  - Any employee working with a medically fragile child
  - Any person exhibiting symptoms

### **Academic Programming**

Based on guidance from the Center for Disease Control and other local medical professionals directly involved in leading the fight against COVID-19, the district has developed a proactive plan that places student and employee safety at the forefront of returning to school. Classroom teachers and support staff will play an increasingly important role in the health and wellness of students.

The district will offer a virtual learning option. This option will be selected for a semester at a time. When students need to quarantine, because they have Covid 19, or to ensure they don't, the district is prepared to rely on virtual platforms that we can provide as needed until the student is able to resume normal learning at school.

Virtual learning will not be as rigorous, or beneficial to a child's learning as in person instruction. THE district, DESE, Pediatricians, and every other agency advising what is best for students' social, emotional, and academic needs are advising that in school in a traditional setting is best. However, if that is too great a risk because of an immunocompromised person in your household, we can help.

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to see the **Learning Plan** for virtual learning and our shutdown protocols.

### **Additional safety measures:**

- Staff will be required to wear a mask during most of the school day, especially when social distancing is difficult.
- With recent evidence that COVID-19 can be aerosolized through exhalation, in the event that masks cannot be worn during activities such as indoor singing, running, etc., teachers will hold class outside with social distancing protocols or provide an alternative activity if adhering to greater than normal social distancing can not be observed.
- To the extent possible, students will be spaced throughout the classroom to promote social distancing.
- We will limit the use of community supplies (pencils, calculators, lab equipment, machinery, P.E. equipment, etc.) that are difficult to disinfect in the classroom or at recess.
- On the first day of school, and throughout the first week, these new safety procedures will be taught and practiced in all of our classrooms. Parental support and reinforcement of these new measures will be critical in providing the safest possible environment for students.

### **Breakfast and Lunch Protocol**

All Food and Nutrition staff are thoroughly trained in food safety. The health department routinely audits school kitchens. Using the public health guidelines, Climax Springs R-IV School District will utilize the following procedures:

Based on guidance from the CDC and Missouri School Boards' Association (MSBA), students will eat breakfast in their classrooms. Lunch will rotate, half our students in the cafeteria each day, and half in their classrooms each day. This allows us to limit large gatherings in situations in which social distancing and the wearing of a mask is difficult. Additional safety measures include:

- Desks will be disinfected between student usage.
- Students will wash or sanitize their hands prior to eating.
- Breakfast and lunch offerings will be served for the students, not by the students. This to continue with our lunch choices, without every hand touching serving utensils
- Meal substitutions and seating accommodations will be made for students with food allergies/intolerances, based on medical forms on file.
- Meals may be sent from home. However, some ingredients may be restricted to promote a safe environment for students with severe food allergies. Your student's teacher will notify you if this is the case.
- In addition to normal sanitizing procedures, the kitchen will be disinfected at the beginning and end of all food preparation shifts.

### **School Recess Protocol**

The school will develop recess schedules that limit the number of students on the playground or within a specific area of the playground. This may look differently at each grade-level due to the amount of playground space at each site.

### **Arrival and dismissal Procedures**

Arrival and dismissal can provide a challenge with large numbers of students congregating, making it difficult to socially distance. Therefore, we are creating a plan to have multiple entrances for students to use during arrival and dismissal. Please be looking for signs that will be placed outside as an indicator of where car riders will be dropped off. Buses will drop off in front of the building at the main front doors and over at the central office doors (this is the old preschool and counseling center doors). Car riders will drop off by the cafeteria doors near the ramp and lower library. Parents dropping off can circle the new concrete parking lot and not have to park if they are on time and just dropping off. Doors will open for students at 7:40. We would remind students to socially distance themselves from their peers while waiting for the doors to open, or to wait in cars and not congregate at the doors prior to 7:40.

Upon entering the building, all students 7-12 will go to the cafeteria for a free grab and go breakfast, then report to their classrooms. Elementary students will go straight to their classrooms where their free breakfast will be waiting for them.

Additional considerations for families include:

- Drop students off as close to the school start time as possible and not too early as to avoid the gathering of students before doors open.
- If possible, drive your child to and from school each day to reduce the number of students riding the bus.
- Upon dropping your child off, please remind them that their first responsibility as they enter the building is to either wash their hands or use the hand sanitizer located in the entrance of buildings or in their classroom. Students will be expected to wash their hands frequently throughout the day.

Please be patient with district employees as they work to implement new protocols. Arrival and dismissal procedures may initially take more time than in previous years. Your understanding is appreciated.

### **Co-Curricular and Elective Classes (art, Family and Consumer Sciences, Physical Education, Instrumental Music, library, Vocal Music, Ag. Science, etc.)**

Climax Springs R-IV School District is committed to providing all curricular opportunities possible while adhering to the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Camden County Health Department. Pending further guidance from state and local health officials, to the extent possible, Climax Springs R-IV Schools will adhere to the most current

recommendations concerning social distancing, gathering size and personal protective equipment (PPE) for students and staff at the time.

To the extent possible, the district expects all classroom activities to be performed while adhering to CDC and Camden County Health Department recommendations, including but not limited to:

- Weather permitting, students will go outside for all physical education and/or chorale classroom activities, unless social distancing is possible. Social distancing for chorale activities needs to be greater than 6 feet; we recommend 10+.
- Commonly-touched surfaces and equipment will be avoided when possible. Those surfaces and/or objects will be disinfected before and after use when avoidance is not possible.
- Upon the return of **library books**, each book will be disinfected prior to recirculation.
- Students in the library may need to wear gloves or not be allowed to touch books without help from an aid in the library.
- Clear guidelines will be established for students to follow when entering and exiting all classrooms.

### **Social and Emotional Learning**

Support staff (Counselors, teachers, and administration) will work to do the following:

- Create professional development for building staff regarding typical childhood reactions to stress and trauma.
- Collaborate with teachers on classroom activities to address student mental health upon return to school.
- Collaborate with community agencies on best practices.
- Provide classroom lessons on school expectations and structure around health safety and social distancing practices to help students re-adjust to a full school schedule.
- Reassure students that school looks different, but we are all still here to help them, teach them, and care for them.

### **Co-Curricular and Athletics**

**Extracurricular Activities (including athletics, marching band, and cheer):**

- Climax Springs R-IV School District plans to provide students the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. While offering these opportunities, the district will prioritize the health and safety of students and staff by adhering to the CDC and Camden County Health Department recommendations. We understand that as we abide by those recommendations, some, if not all, of those opportunities may be limited in the extent in which they can be provided.
- Additionally, the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) may further outline guidelines on how athletics and activities will be offered at district high schools and middle schools. As a district, we understand the importance of offering these

opportunities to our students and will continue to make every effort to do so. However, we know there may be decisions made by local, state, or national organizations that may prohibit some, if not all, extracurricular activities from taking place. To the extent possible, we expect all athletics and activities that can be performed in accordance with CDC and Camden County Health Department recommendations will be available for student participation.

### **Visitors to School Buildings**

- Visitors regarding school business (sales, deliveries, etc.) need to report to the Central Office at the rear of the building located in the gravel parking lot (Northeast side).
- Parent/student visitors will report to the front office. At that time, visitors will provide their name, phone number, address, email address, and the date and time of their arrival and departure.
- **While at school, all visitors will wear face coverings.** Please see the CDC guidelines for more information.
- If a visitor becomes ill within two days of coming to school, please call the superintendent's office at 573-347-2351.

### **Medication Delivery**

Please continue to do what you have done in the past and get the documentation completed by your physician. When you have the medicine and the consent form, please arrange a time to meet with the school nurse. Someone will meet you outside the building to get the medication and the form. We ask that you bring this to the Central office, not the main office this year to reduce the number of people in the front office.

### **Student Pickup Early from School**

Please call from the kiosk at the door when you arrive at school and let the office know that you need your child to be checked out early. A staff member will escort your child to the front door and ask that you sign him/her out for the day, from outside the building.

### **Students Tardy to School**

- It is ok to walk your child into the office and check him or her in. We do ask that you wear a mask upon entrance in the building and maintain social distancing protocols. However, if you do not feel comfortable walking your child into the building, please call the office from the kiosk at the front doors and a staff member will come to the doors and bring your child into the office.

### **Parent Attendance at School Parties or Have Lunch with Students**

- Parents may not drop off lunch for their students due to Covid-19. Students must bring their lunch in the morning, or eat what is provided.
- Students bringing lunches will not have refrigeration or microwaves provided.
- Unfortunately, to limit the number of adults in the building/classroom, we will temporarily discontinue allowing parent volunteers at school parties, and possibly discontinue school parties entirely. Visitors will not be allowed to eat lunch with students either. Meals will be served in classrooms with limited space. We look forward to returning to our normal procedures once we are through this pandemic.

### **IEP/504/Parent Meetings**

- IEP meetings will be held at school unless parents request another format (by phone or virtually).

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols**

- Staff will be trained on how to disinfect desks, chairs, and commonly-touched surfaces.
- Procedures to clean frequent touchpoints will be implemented for cleaning crews to disinfect critical areas daily.
- Staff will require student use of hand sanitizer regularly, along with hand washing. Before lunch and upon entering the cafeteria, students must sanitize their hands using the hand sanitation stations.
  - High school and middle school teachers will require students to sanitize hands when they walk into the classroom as well as before lunch and after lunch.
  - Elementary school teachers will build in time to have students periodically wash hands throughout the day including, but not limited to, the start of the day, before and after lunch, and following recess.
- Teachers will disinfect desks and chairs between groups of students with disinfectant, provided by the district.

### **Additional Health and Safety Measures**

Teachers will review new routines, and new procedures will be taught and practiced in all classrooms for arrival, dismissal, and lunch protocols. The following procedures should be implemented by teachers in their classrooms and workspaces on a daily basis:

- All employees should work to keep their office and workspace as clean as possible by cleaning and disinfecting their workstations, surfaces they commonly use, and other touchpoints. Employees should also avoid using others' workstations, supplies, tools, and equipment. Additionally, whenever an employee uses standard office equipment (e.g., printer or fax machine), it should be wiped down prior to and following use. Employees will be supplied with disinfectant and towels.
- Implement a limit on the use of community supplies.
- Use technology devices for work submission instead of paper when possible.

- Use virtual manipulatives/tools as much as possible.
- Limit multiple students touching/interacting with the same materials.
- Keep students socially distant within the classroom as much as possible.
- Support social distancing between classes.
- Ensure students are facing the same direction as much as possible.

### **General Precautions for Cleaning After a Student/Teacher becomes Ill?**

The area will be closed off and will not be available until cleaned and disinfected. Custodial staff will use **Electrostatic machines** to conduct a deep clean and disinfect the space from COVID-19 or flu like germs.

### **Locker Rooms and Gym Disinfecting**

Locker rooms will be disinfected, and commonly-touched surfaces in locker rooms will be cleaned throughout the day. Commonly-touched surfaces in large spaces (gyms, fine arts rooms, etc.) will be avoided when possible. Those surfaces, equipment and/or objects will be disinfected before and after use when avoidance is not possible.

### **Transportation**

Throughout the pandemic, drivers and aides will wear face masks and gloves. Students will fill the bus by sitting at the back and fill towards the front. Social distancing will be observed as much as possible. Students may wear a mask on the bus, though they are not required.

- Buses will be cleaned and disinfected at regular intervals. Touch surfaces on the bus, such as handrails and seats, will be disinfected after every route.
- To limit student-to-student contact, students will enter the bus and fill seats from back to front. At school or stops, students will off-load from front to back. Families will sit together.
- Drivers and aides will remind students of safe riding practices. Signage will also be on the bus to remind students about safe practices with regard to the pandemic.