



West Plains School District

Fall 2021

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

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Welcome Back

#zizzersstrongertogether

#onceazizzeralwaysazizzer

The West Plains School District was fortunate that we were able to come together as a community and finish our 2020-21 school year in session when many schools around the state were virtual the majority of the year. We want to recognize the hard work and commitment of our staff, students, families, local health agencies and community for making that happen.

The purpose of this document, the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Plan (SRCSP), is to define how West Plains R7 will ensure continued safe operations to maintain the health and safety of students and staff. Because conditions surrounding COVID-19 are continually evolving, the SRCSP will be reviewed and revised, if necessary, every six months. The review process will include consultation with students, families, all levels of district staff and stakeholders representing the diversity of West Plains R7 students.

The intent of this document is to create a template to guide our district in reopening schools and is not a “one size, fits all” document. The material in the document is not required by law to be implemented and is evolving as new information and recommendations are issued by federal and state agencies. It is reasonable to expect that the protocols schools implement will change as the local conditions change.

Contact the district office if the information in this document is needed in a different language.



SAFE OPERATION LEVELS

In order to better inform parents, students, and staff of the current situation of the district and how best to prepare for situations, the district will use three levels so that everyone can plan and prepare for what to expect. Please note that the district could move quickly to Level 3 with little to no notice depending on the situation. The district will update its Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan (SRCSP) as needed throughout the year. Any changes will be communicated with stakeholders and the latest version will be published on our website.

The district will consistently review the following in determining the current situational level of the district.

1. Current community infection rates.
2. Current community vaccination rates.
3. Current student and staff vaccination rates.
4. Guidance from the CDC, DESE, Missouri Department of Health, as well as other appropriate agencies.

Level 1: (Green Level)

- School activities will be as normal as possible.
- Social distancing will be used when possible.
- Masks are optional in all situations for students and staff. The district may require visitors to use masks.
- Visitors to buildings may be restricted or limited.
- Hand washing/hand sanitizer will be available and frequently encouraged.

Level 2: (Yellow Level)

- Classes will either take place in person, not at all, or online if allowed by the state.
- Restrictions on school activities may be in place
- Capacity and attendance limits may be established for events or school activities
- Masks may be required for students and staff in all buildings for all students (kindergarten-12th grade) and any adults at all school activities on or off campus (district procedures developed from CDC and health department).
- Visitors to buildings may be restricted, limited or not allowed.
- Hand washing/hand sanitizer will be available and frequently encouraged.

Level 3: (Red Level)

- Classes will not be in session in person. Online learning will take place if allowed by the state.
- School buildings will be closed to students. Staff will still work from school to administer online classes. If any situation changes in the “Red Level” where it is not safe for staff to work from school, this will be adjusted to allow staff to work remotely.
- Health screenings will occur prior to entering buildings. Social distancing will be mandatory.
- All activities will be canceled or rescheduled.
- Re-entry plan will be determined for safe return to school.



UPDATED SANITATION GUIDELINES

- Hand hygiene continues to be a key everyday action to combat the spread of COVID-19. Cleaning your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol is one of the most important steps to avoid getting sick.
- Sanitizer will be available in commonly used areas.
- Be health courteous to others:
 - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
 - Throw used tissues in the trash.
 - If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.
 - Wash your hands immediately after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Personal water bottles will be encouraged. Refillable bottle stations above fountains will be the preferred method to refill water bottles. Water fountain spigots may be used.
- West Plains R7 custodial staff will disinfect high-use touch areas throughout the day including bathrooms, entrance/exit handles, handrails, walls, etc.
- After school hours, custodians will spray restrooms and high use areas with sanitizer.



UPDATED PHYSICAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES

- The goals are to limit exposure to as few other students and staff members as possible. Staff and students must do their best to maximize physical distancing as much as possible.
- Student seating/grouping decisions will be made in the best interest of the academic and social needs; however, desks and tables in classrooms will be spaced to maximize physical distancing.
- Classroom seating charts may be required in classrooms and on the bus to limit exposure and for contact tracing purposed in conjunction with local health departments (if needed).
- In order to prevent students from congregating in the hallways or common areas, buildings will likely only open 30 minutes before start times to ensure that students can be supervised in individual spaces as needed. Special arrangements for access into buildings outside of regular school hours (such as tutoring or extra/co-curricular activities) will be arranged by staff members and supervised accordingly.
- Lunches will be served in cafeterias (as reasonable for specific campuses). Some schools have elected to continue breakfast in the classroom, while others will be returning to the cafeteria as each site determines what is most functional for its particular needs.
- Modifications within the school day will be made as needed.

UPDATED SCREENING GUIDELINES



- Parent should screen children at home before children come to school. Students with symptoms (see updated list below) should stay home and parents should consult their healthcare providers.
- School staff members should self-screen at home (see updated list below) and stay home if they are sick.
- Student will be visually inspected for signs and symptoms of illness as they enter school and/or the classroom.
- Updated screening symptoms and exposure checklist:
 - Fever or chills
 - Cough
 - Headache
 - Muscle aches
 - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - New runny nose or congestion
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Sore throat
 - Close contact with a person with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Students and staff should always follow guidance of the local health department and their medical providers.



UPDATED MASKING GUIDELINES

- Masks required for students K-12 (only during the regular school day and on school transportation).
- Masks required for all employees beginning Monday, August 16.
- Early Childhood and certain special education student populations would not be required to mask.
- Students would be extended opportunities to unmask during the day when social/physical distancing can be achieved; and
- Masks required when riding the bus, per federal mandate.
- Students and staff will NOT be required to wear face coverings when they are outside for recess, PE, or when learning in an outdoor space.
- After school events are optional to attend and do not require masking.
- The Howell County Health Department will identify close contacts and quarantine guidelines.
- The CDC recommends that all individuals wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission and we encourage everyone in our school community to adhere to public health recommendations.
- West Plains R7 District may re-evaluate mask requirements as needed.
- Masks are required on school buses, per federal mandate and all vehicles transporting students.



IMPROVED VENTILATION

- Bus drivers will ensure that one rear window, one roof hatch and the driver's window will remain open to create a continuous flow of air through the buses as weather permits.
- District-wide, we will continue to use high MERV-rated air filters for improved air quality.
- Further investigation of improving air quality is taking place with an assessment of the indoor air quality in each building. The assessment will allow us to weigh options to improve air quality at buildings.

UPDATED VISITOR ACCESS TO BUILDINGS

- In order to minimize the exposure of all students and staff to others outside of the school population, access to hallways and cafeterias must be limited.
- Essential visitors will be required to enter through the main entrance and comply with West Plains R7 safety protocols for screening and tracking guests in district buildings. Visitors may be required to wear a mask.
- These restrictions will apply during the school day but may differ somewhat for evening activities, which are optional to attend.

UPDATED SCHOOL ACTIVITIES GUIDELINES

- In-school gatherings such as assemblies, rallies, dances, elementary holiday parties, etc., will be held depending on the district's operational level.
- Academics are considered a non-voluntary component of a student's education while co-curricular activity participation is voluntary. This approach will drive our planning and preparation for extra/co-curricular guidance.
- West Plains R7 will rely on the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) guidance regarding extra/co-curricular activities and competitions.



LEARNING DURING INTERMITTENT ABSENCES

- West Plains R7 understands the continued complexity of in-seat attendance during COVID-19. Therefore, for families who elect in-person instruction, the district is prepared to pivot learning environments for your child during intermittent absences related to COVID-19.
- West Plains R7 will utilize multi-tiered systems of support to provide for the academic needs of students during interruptions of in-person learning.
- School counselors, social workers, qualified mental health providers, nurses, teachers, and administrators will promote positive mental health by educating staff, parents, and students about symptoms of and help for mental health problems, social and emotional competency, and resiliency. The district will ensure a positive, safe school environment and will teach and reinforce positive behaviors and decision making. Problem-solving teams will be used to identify struggling students early so an intervention plan can be developed and implemented. Staff will be educated on strategies to address students' social-emotional needs.
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities will be provided through IEP and 504 plans. The IEP or 504 Plan will serve as the guidance for interruptions i.e., quarantines, isolation, etc. For long term closures, virtual learning will be utilized if deemed appropriate by the Multidisciplinary Team as outlined in each child's IEP.
- West Plains R7 will continue to provide for the nutritional needs of students during any interruptions of in-person instruction with Grab and Go, Drive-thru meals for students as permitted under the USDA Seamless Summer Option through school year 2021-22.
- Schools and districts are able to utilize Alternative Methods of Instruction (AMI) days to provide distance instruction (up to 36 hours) when building and district closures are determined to be necessary.



CONTACT TRACING

If there is a positive case with a school setting, the district will comply with local health department guidance. This could range from complete or partial quarantine to no quarantine based on the level of exposure. All procedures implemented will be based on health department recommendations and in accordance with policy.

Through a collaborative process, West Plains R7 is prepared to work alongside the local health department to provide necessary information when a student or staff member test positive for COVID-19.

- Close Contact: Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours or two days before the infected person had symptoms or tested positive.
- If both parties were properly masked, no quarantines will be issued.
- If a student is vaccinated, no quarantines will be issued.
- Close contacts should quarantine as is recommended by the local health department.
- Principals and teachers will work closely with local health departments to identify close contacts based on seating arrangements.
- The guidance from Governor Parsons on November 12, 2020, does not require close contacts in the school setting to quarantine during the school day when both parties are masked.



COVID 19 INFECTIONS

- Students or staff who display symptoms of COVID-19 while at school will be moved to a designated sick area within the school building to minimize contact with others until they go home.
- If West Plains R7 receives official notification of a student or staff member testing positive for COVID-19, close contacts will be quickly identified. If both parties were properly masked, no quarantines will be issued.
- West Plains R7 will continue to be in close communication with the local health department and medical providers to update staff on vaccine availability and assist staff in scheduling vaccination appointments.
- West Plains R7 will continue to provide Binax Now Covid-19 testing to symptomatic staff.
- West Plains R7 encourages staff to be vaccinated to ensure continued safe operations and maintain the health and safety of students and staff.
- West Plains R7 will partner with healthcare providers to offer vaccination clinics throughout the year.
- All individuals should follow the guidance from the health department and fully cooperate to help mitigate COVID-19.

