

Henry County Public Schools Opening Plan 2021-22

After receiving the Guidance for K-12 School Operations for In-Person Learning released by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and Kentucky Public Health on Friday July 16, 2021, and in consideration of the recommendations it contained, Henry County Public Schools has developed its Safety Plan for the opening of the coming school year. All initiatives of this plan will be implemented in order to create a safe and healthy in-person learning environment in which our students can be successful.

This plan contains prevention strategies that can be modified and/or strengthened as the situation evolves. All decisions regarding our COVID protocols are **SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME** based on community positivity rates and new or additional requirements from the state or other governing organizations. HCPS will rely on data provided by Kentucky Public Health to track COVID incidence rates and community transmission rates by county (<https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19>) and use the color scheme of county incidence rates (green, yellow, orange and red) to determine an appropriate level of response. We will also track all instances of positive cases and exposures among our staff and students, also using that information to adjust our prevention strategies as needed.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE, if rates increase to alarming levels pushing us into the “red” category or if we experience an increase in the number of cases among students and staff, we may move from these initial protocols into more stringent mitigation efforts which could include but are not limited to: discontinue group work; discontinue use of tables in classrooms and lunchrooms; require masks, cancel and/or restrict attendance at extra-curricular activities and athletics; postpone large gatherings like awards programs, prom, dances, etc.; move to a hybrid schedule; or full school closures with at-home learning. Families should also be aware that governing agencies may issue mandates of this same nature at any time, and that we will be required to implement those mandates.

The following protocols represent the first layer of prevention strategies that HCPS will implement at all our facilities as we begin the 2021-22 school year. (July 27, 2021)

Masks

Staff and students **will not** be required to wear a mask indoors or outdoors at Henry County Public Schools buildings, properties and on buses. It is ***strongly recommended*** that staff and students who are not fully vaccinated and those with underlying medical conditions continue to wear masks while indoors. All staff and students who wish to wear masks may do so. Also, no student or staff member should be harassed, belittled or teased for wearing or not wearing a mask while on school grounds.

Social Distancing

Students and staff should observe social distancing of a minimum of three feet when and where appropriate and feasible. However we understand that this is not feasible in all situations.

Examples include, but are not limited to meals in the cafeteria, center time, group work, some classrooms and on buses.

Attendance

If a student is sent home or stays home for general illness, it is not automatically excused unless they provide a parent note (5 days) or doctor's note (10 days before use of a Medical Excuse form) for clearance for return as was our policy prior to the 2020 school year amidst the COVID pandemic. Periods of COVID-related quarantine will count as absences for the student, but will be excused with proper documentation and will not count against the student's doctor's note or parent's note limits. Parents should consult the district's Attendance Policy for more detailed information.

Transportation

Bus passes will not be allowed this year, as bus routes are incredibly full and exact, and because districts are still asked to maintain contact tracing in the event of an exposure. Students will be allowed to ride up to two buses each day, with pickup at one location and drop-off at another, if needed and if consistent.

Prevention Efforts

- School personnel will teach and promote handwashing and infection control measures with students.
- Water fountains will not be in use; students and staff will instead use water bottles and utilize filling stations.
- We will continue to limit non-essential visitors into our buildings due to the continued need for contact tracing.
- We encourage teachers, staff and all eligible students and their family members to get vaccinated and will provide and promote opportunities to receive the vaccine.

Health Services

- No student or staff member should be asked if they are vaccinated. Whether an individual has been vaccinated is a personal decision that each student and staff will make on their own.
- Families are responsible for screening their students DAILY to determine if he or she has any COVID-related symptoms. If symptoms exist, that student should NOT be sent to school, and families are encouraged to have their student seen by a healthcare provider.
- Assigned seating should be expected in many settings as the district is still responsible for contact tracing following a report of a positive COVID test result.
- HCPS will follow Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Department of Public Health (DPH) guidelines for reported positive COVID cases and any incidences of exposure in regards to required quarantine periods. Students and staff will be asked to stay home pending COVID test results.
- All individuals that test positive for COVID-19 will be required to quarantine for 10 days after the start of their illness or testing date, or when released back to school or work by the local health department.

- Vaccinated individuals are NOT required to quarantine after an exposure if he or she is not experiencing symptoms.
- Unvaccinated individuals will be required to quarantine following an exposure for 10 days without testing and symptom-free OR after day seven if symptom-free and a negative COVID-19 test five days or later after the last date of exposure.
- HCPS will return to the 24-hour rule (fever and/or symptom free for 24 hours without the use of medication prior to return) for students and staff that stay home or are sent home due to illness. Symptoms of COVID-19 include: fever or feeling feverish (chills, sweating), new cough that causes shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, sore throat, muscle aches or body aches, vomiting or diarrhea and new loss of taste or smell.
- A detailed updated COVID Decision Tree will be provided to all schools and families.

Custodial

Routine cleaning, deep cleaning and disinfecting strategies will continue to be followed in all school buildings and on buses.

Again, all our efforts are intended to provide a safe environment so that our students and staff can remain healthy and so we can keep our schools open to in-person learning. If additional mitigation strategies are necessary or mandated, we will notify our families. We appreciate the community's support of these efforts, and we thank you in advance for collaborating with us to establish a firm foundation for a successful school year.