

# Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Plan 2021-22

## JEFFERSON SCHOOL DISTRICT 14J

Updated: August 10, 2021

Updated: March 8, 2022

While the Covid-19 virus and the variants of the virus are still present in our community, JSD is encouraged by the rising number of vaccinated individuals and the decrease in the spread of the virus in Marion County and throughout the state of Oregon. In preparing for school in the fall of 2021, JSD is planning to strike the right balance between maintaining the health and safety of students and staff, and operating as normally as possible. We take the guidance from ODE's Ready School, Safe Learners Resiliency Framework, which is mostly advisory, to heart, and continue to develop systems that are focused on maintaining our great record of the health and safety, while also supporting the transition back to school with supports for social-emotional well-being as well as academic support.

The following is a summary of JSD 14J's plan for operating beginning in September, 2021. Please note that while we seek to give direction so everyone knows what to expect and how to engage with work and school, factors are constantly changing which requires us to reevaluate our plans and make adjustments.

### MONITORING LOCAL DATA

On February 24, 2022, the CDC released COVID-19 Community Levels - a measure of the impact of COVID-19 on counties. These data are updated weekly and recommendations for individual prevention behaviors (e.g., masking) and community prevention strategies (e.g., vaccine distribution and testing access) are presented for low, medium and high COVID-19 community levels. If not, CDC now recommends universal masking in K-12 during high community levels. At all levels, individuals may also choose to mask based on their individual risk assessment (e.g., increased risk for severe disease of family or community members at increased risk for severe disease). **JSD will continue to monitor Marion County Community Data to make informed decisions regarding layers of mitigation.**

**RETURNING TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION** - All students will return to full-time, in-person instruction 4.5 days a week (Wednesday is a half day). In addition to the district's academic achievement goals, JSD will place a high emphasis on the needs of the whole child, including mental wellness. These efforts will include:

- Prioritizing student and staff health and well-being.

- Devoting time and space at the beginning of the school year, and ample opportunities throughout the year for students and staff to connect and build relationships in and out of the classroom.
- Providing ample class time at the beginning of the school year, as well as ongoing time, space, and creative opportunities and outlets (art, music, movement/dance, creative writing, clubs and interest groups etc.) for students and staff to make sense of their experiences, and to process personal and professional stresses, emotions, trauma, and grief.

**FACE COVERINGS** - As of July 29, 2021, Governor Kate Brown has mandated that all students, staff, and visitors in K-12 schools be required to wear COVID-19 face masks for the 2021-22 school year. Oregon is placing a priority on ensuring that every student is able to attend school in-person for the entire school year. Students are required to attend school, which is a group setting where COVID-19 can spread easily if precautions are not taken. The rule requires all individuals over two years of age to wear a face covering while indoors in a K-12 school, during school hours. Certain accommodations for medical needs or disability may be necessary. OHA will review this rule monthly to determine the need for it to continue. Other COVID-19 mitigation protocols (physical distancing, airflow/ventilation, etc.) remain local decisions at this time.

Group mask breaks or full classroom mask breaks are best done outdoors where ventilation and physical distancing are maximized. Schools will be making plans for giving students mask break(s) during the day.

Effective February 24, 2022, CDC does not require wearing masks on buses or vans operated by public or private school systems, including early care and education/child care programs. The requirement to mask on K-12 transport in Oregon will end when Oregon's indoor masking mandate is lifted at 11:59 PM on March 11, 2022. **Jefferson School District will not require face coverings on buses or at school beginning March 12, 2022. This could change if we have a local COVID-19 outbreak, or if Marion County moves into the high category.** Masks are still strongly encouraged, and should be worn by people with compromised immune systems. Schools will take steps to ensure the school environment is safe and welcoming to every student and staff member and honors their individual decisions around COVID-19 safety, including the use of masks.

**PHYSICAL DISTANCING** - JSD Schools will continue to support physical distancing in all daily activities and instruction, and maintain at least three (3) feet between students to the extent possible, especially when indoors and around people from different households. Distancing will also include the following:

- Physical distancing requirements will be considered when setting up learning environments and other spaces to allow for and encourage at least 3 feet of physical distance.
- Standing in lines will be minimized and steps will be taken to ensure that required

distance between students is maintained, including marking spacing on floors, and designating one-way traffic flows in constrained spaces, etc.

- At this time, lockers will not be assigned, however students will be allowed to carry backpacks to class.

**Effective March 12, 2022, the schools within the Jefferson School District will continue to support physical distancing in all daily activities and instruction, striving for at least 3 feet between students, to the extent possible.**

### **CHECKING FOR COVID19 SYMPTOMS -**

Daily student screening upon entry checks will not be done, however teachers at the secondary level will post health screening questions for students to self-evaluate at the beginning of each class period. All staff will monitor students throughout the day. Students feeling unwell, or appearing unwell, will be sent to the office for evaluation (see Isolation and Quarantine below).

In order to minimize the spread of the virus, and allow school to remain in operation, it is imperative to keep your student home if they are not feeling well.

**JSD encourages students and staff members to stay home if they are ill, regardless of their symptoms.** However, when feasible, ill students and staff with ANY primary COVID-19 symptoms will be encouraged to seek testing. If a student or staff member has non-primary symptoms that persist for more than one day, they should check with their healthcare provider who can determine if testing is advised.

### **PRIMARY SYMPTOMS**

- Cough
- Temperature of 100.4 or higher
- Chills
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- New loss of taste or smell

### **NON-PRIMARY SYMPTOMS**

- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion or runny nose
- Diarrhea

## **COVID19 TESTING -**

Each school will have COVID19 tests available to administer should a student be exhibiting symptoms. These tests are voluntary and parent permission must first be obtained (or it can be kept on file), prior to test administration.

Diagnostic testing is the testing of students or staff who develop symptoms at school or are exposed to COVID-19 at school. This testing program was rolled out in January 2021 and more than 90% of K-12 schools have registered to have these tests available on site. For some students, this COVID-19 testing in K-12 schools may represent their only access to a COVID-19 test, and the importance of this access cannot be overstated. This testing may be used to shorten the length of quarantine for exposed individuals who test negative if this is recommended by the local public health authority.

Screening Testing: Oregon Health Authority is launching a free COVID-19 testing project for K-12 staff in order to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in schools. This project offers free weekly screening testing by mail to any unvaccinated public or private K-12 staff. Testing is not recommended for vaccinated K-12 staff because the risk of COVID-19 in vaccinated individuals is very low.

Participation is voluntary, and K-12 staff can opt-out at any time. All testing will be mailed directly to the homes of K-12 staff and will be confidential. The COVID-19 test will be performed at home by gently swabbing just inside the nose. The swab is then returned to the laboratory by mail and results are returned to participants within days. Screening testing is the testing of students or staff who do not have symptoms of, or exposure to, COVID-19. Anyone who expresses interest in screening needs to complete the form attached to the Ready Schools, Safe Learners Resiliency Framework, under the OHA Sponsored COVID19 Testing In Schools, section.

**JSD will continue to offer on-site testing to students and staff members as needed.**

**ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE** - Students or staff who are showing signs of infection for Covid-19 at school will go immediately to the designated room in the school for further evaluation.

Students will be provided with a COVID-19 rapid test (unless parental approval is not obtained), to determine if he/she tests positive for the virus.

Students exhibiting signs of illness will be isolated from their peers in a designated space in the school, until they can be picked up by their parent/guardian.

Unvaccinated students exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 - even with a negative test result - will have to be quarantined for 10-14 days, per Marion County Health guidelines.

With every situation, JSD will be working with Marion County Health Department and following their guidance on mitigating the spread of the virus. Schools have well established systems in place for identifying symptoms, checking temperatures, and isolating infected persons.

On February 28, 2022, the CDC updated their guidance regarding case investigation and contact tracing. Universal case investigation and contact tracing are no longer recommended outside of high risk settings. Effective March 12, 2022, Oregon will pause contact tracing and quarantine for the general population, including K-12 settings.

The decision to pause contact tracing and quarantine is based in science and acknowledges that these practices now have very limited if any impact on the transmission of COVID-19 in our communities. SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, has evolved to become one of the most transmissible viruses known. By the time an exposure is identified and contact tracing is performed, transmission has already occurred.

Following the Omicron surge, and for the first time during the COVID-19 pandemic, Oregon will have very high levels of vaccine- and infection-induced immunity. The duration of this immunity is unknown, but is believed to provide protection from reinfection for at least 90 days.

In lieu of contact tracing, schools are strongly encouraged to provide cohort notifications when exposures occur. These notifications allow individuals and families to take additional precautions according to their individual needs.

**JSD will send parent email notifications of direct exposures to the extent possible, however contact tracing is no longer required. We will continue to provide on-site or drive-through testing to students, with parent permission, and staff members who request testing.**

OHA and ODE strongly advise that isolation protocols include the following:

- Individuals who had COVID-19 and had symptoms, should isolate for at least 5 days.
  - To calculate the 5-day isolation period, day 0 is the first day of symptoms or a positive test result. Day 1 is the first full day after symptoms developed or a positive test result.
  - Isolation may end after 5 full days if the individual is fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved.
  - Individuals should wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public for 5 additional days (day 6 through day 10) after the end of the 5-day isolation period).

**JSD will advise students and staff members of these isolation measures as needed.**

## **VENTILATION AND AIRFLOW**

The district will continue to ensure effective ventilation and improved indoor air quality. Our focus has been and will continue to be:

1. Increasing the amount of fresh outside air that is introduced into the system;
2. Exhausting air from indoors to the outdoors; and
3. Cleaning the air that is recirculated indoors with effective filtration methods (e.g., HEPA filters) to remove virus-containing particles from the air.
4. Opening windows and doors unless doing so creates a health or safety risk.
5. Consider conducting some activities, meals, and classes outside when reasonable.
6. Using fans to help move indoor air out open windows.
7. Aiming for fewer people in larger rooms if feasible. This will allow more distance between people and more space for air movement and dilution.
8. Using air purifiers to Improve Indoor Air Quality
9. Using portable HEPA filtering devices to supplement HVAC systems or in places where there is no HVAC system.

## **HANDWASHING**

Regular hand washing is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of germs to others. Washing hands can keep you healthy and prevent the spread of respiratory and diarrheal infections from one person to the next. OHA and ODE strongly advise that schools create protocols and systems to ensure access to soap, water and alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol at key times and that schools prioritize handwashing with soap and water after students or staff use the restroom.

JSD is committed to containing the spread of germs by providing plentiful access to soap, water, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60-90% alcohol, throughout the day.

## **COHORTING**

Jefferson Middle and High School will not put students into cohorts for the 2021-22 school year. Placing students in cohorts becomes impossible when all students are back for full days and students have different electives and leveled classes. With that said, leaders will seek to limit large gatherings of students in assemblies and for other all school activities until the virus and the variants of the virus decrease to safe levels.

While Jefferson Elementary will not cohort students either, having all students in one classroom for the entire day is considered a cohort. Leaders will look to limit exposure to students in other classes when possible. Exceptions will be lunch and recess, but there too, staff will take all distancing precautions available.

*Note About What Constitutes Exposure: An exposure is defined as an individual who has close*

contact (less than 6 feet) for longer than 15 cumulative minutes in a day with a person who has COVID-19 case. If a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, then Marion County Health Department will be consulted to review the situation. If a school cannot confirm that 6 feet of distancing was consistently maintained during the school day, then each person the confirmed case was in contact with will need to quarantine – this could include all members of a stable cohort. **The clear documentation of the cohort members will allow for the LPHA to rapidly initiate contact tracing. Students who have been vaccinated do not need to be quarantined at this time.**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING AND DISINFECTING**

JSD will continue to routinely wipe down and fog high touch surfaces. Principals will work with their custodial teams on schedules for cleaning and disinfecting.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND PREPAREDNESS**

- JSD is acquiring enough chromebooks for each student. In the event that we have to shut down a class or a school, JSD will be prepared to operate remotely. JSD has maintained the appropriate software licenses to ensure we can operate remotely as a district if necessary.
- JSD is purchasing 30 pivot cameras to allow core classrooms the ability to teach in person and online in synchronous fashion.
- JSD teachers will maintain an online presence to allow students who are ill or not able to attend, access to asynchronous learning.

**VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS:** Visitors and volunteers to the school will not be allowed entry at this time. When the Delta variant subsides significantly, JSD will re-evaluate this procedure.

**SPECIALISTS** - All education specialists visiting schools will be signed or logged into the building for contact tracing.

*Excerpts from RSSL Resiliency Framework:*

*“The vast majority of health and safety measures in this Resiliency Framework are advisory, and are offered to schools to support successful full-time, in-person instruction for the 2021-22 school year. Where this framework does not require a specific action by a school district, a district may choose whether to consider or implement advisory information or recommendations.”*

*“Local Decision Making This Resiliency Framework was developed jointly by the Oregon*

*Department of Education (ODE) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and is informed by U.S. Department of Education and CDC guidance along with information from many other sources. Except where compliance is mandated by existing state law, this Resiliency Framework is advisory. Requirements are followed by the rule reference for ease of identification.”*

*“Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, state law and rules included several components related to managing communicable disease in schools, including required isolation, quarantine and school exclusion for certain diseases. These requirements continue to exist in state law and rule.”*