

## **Area 30 Career Center Re-entry Information**

Considerations outlined within this document are based on Indiana's Considerations for Learning and Safe Schools (IN-CLASS) document. This document was developed in coordination with other Putnam County Schools and the Putnam County Health Department. It is intended to provide stakeholders with information on how Area 30 Career Center plans to return to school in the Fall of 2020. The conditions, current medical landscape, and growing body of knowledge surrounding COVID-19 continue to evolve. This reality presents challenges to planning, preparing, and guiding school operations. Therefore, expect document revisions accordingly. Updates to this document will be posted on Area 30 Career Center's website [www.area30.k12.in.us](http://www.area30.k12.in.us)

## **Non Essential Personnel/Visitors**

Area 30 will not permit any non essential personnel or visitors into the building until future notice. This includes family members, guest speakers etc.

## **Health Protocols**

It is essential for the school community to work together to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in the school environment and in the community while still providing a quality education program.

State statute provides public school districts the authority to exclude students who have a contagious disease such as COVID-19 or are liable to transmit it after exposure (IC 20-34-3-9).

In addition, the local health department has the authority to exclude students from school and may order students and others to isolate or quarantine (IC 16-41-9-1.6). As such, school districts are encouraged to work closely with their local health departments.

### **Symptoms Impacting Consideration for Exclusion from School**

Students and employees will monitor symptoms to recognize the following COVID-19-related symptoms:

- A fever of 100.4 ° F or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea
- Congestion
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

## **Return to School After Exclusion**

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC.

Untested persons who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 but experience symptoms may return if the following three conditions are met:

- They have not had a fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers);
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); and
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

The state website has a list of over 200 testing facilities, their location, and hours of operation. This list is updated frequently.

## **Tested and Negative**

### **Symptomatic**

1. If no alternative explanation, isolate for at least 10 days from the first day symptoms appeared AND 24 hr fever free without fever reducing meds and improvement of symptoms
2. The person can return to school if tested negative AND with note from provider stating they believe the patient to have an alternate diagnosis and its appropriate for the patient to return to school

### **No Symptoms**

1. May proceed with attending school as long as the individual has no exposure to a positive case.
2. A known close contact (within 6 feet of a confirmed case for more than 15 minutes) must complete 14 day quarantine, even if test results are negative for COVID-19

## **Tested Positive- Symptomatic**

Persons who experienced symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 may return to school if the following conditions are met:

- The individual no longer has a fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers);
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath has improved);
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared; or
- The individual has received two negative tests at least 24 hours apart.

## **Tested Positive- Asymptomatic**

Persons who have not had symptoms but tested positive for COVID-19 may return when they have gone ten(10) calendar days past their test without symptoms and have been, preferably, released by a healthcare provider. Students may also return if they are approved to do so in writing by the student's health care provider.

## **Tested Positive- Impact on School Operations**

Predetermined thresholds for mitigation will be established by working with the local health department following CDC guidance.

## **Not Tested With Alternate Explanation- Symptomatic**

Any student or employee who has not been COVID tested, but has an alternate explanation (strep, influenza, etc. as determined by a provider) may return to school after 24 hours resolution of fever **AND** note (including email and fax) from the provider stating the individual has an alternate diagnosis and the provider believes it's appropriate for the patient to return to school.

## **Not Tested Without Alternate Explanation- Symptomatic**

Any student or employee who has not been COVID tested and does not have an alternate explanation (strep, influenza, etc. as determined by a provider) must remain at home for at least 10 days from the first day symptoms appeared **AND** be 72 hours fever-free without fever reducing medicine and with improvement of respiratory symptoms.

## **Medical Inquiries**

Federal law typically limits the type of medical inquiries that can be made, but given the nature of the pandemic more leeway has been given to districts/schools in this circumstance to make additional medical inquiries of staff and students than would otherwise be allowed.

- If a parent tells the district/school that a student is ill, the district/school may ask the parent whether the student is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19.
- If an employee calls in sick or appears ill, the district/school can inquire as to whether the employee is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.
- If a person is obviously ill, the district/school may make additional inquiries and may exclude the person from school property.

Even without symptoms, if a student or employee has recently had contact with a person with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19, has someone in their home being tested for COVID-19, or has recently traveled out of state, to or from somewhere considered to be a "hot spot" by the CDC, the district/school may exclude the student or employee from school attendance.

## **Wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) -**

### **Non-students**

Mask-wearing requirements or recommendations in schools should be consistent with state and local guidelines. The current CDC guidelines recommend that all employees wear cloth face coverings. If social distancing is not possible, masks will be required. This includes wearing masks in all common areas.

## **Wearing Masks and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Students**

Area 30 students and staff will be required to wear masks when social distancing is not possible. This includes wearing masks in all common areas. Because Area 30 brings together five different school corporations, it is important that we follow this protocol to reduce virus spread from one student or staff to another. Accommodations will be made for students based on their individual health plan.

## **Clinical Space COVID-19 Symptomatic**

Any student experiencing COVID-19 symptoms will be provided a mask and monitored until a parent can pick up the student. Only essential staff assigned to the room may enter. A record will be kept of all 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. If a student or staff member has a fever for any reason, the staff or student must be fever-free, without the use of fever-reducing medications, for 72 hours before returning to school. Additionally, all staff and students with fevers or symptoms associated with COVID-19 are encouraged to seek medical attention for further evaluation and instructions. Students and employees may return to school after 24 hours resolution of fever **AND** a note (including email and fax) from the provider stating the individual has an alternate diagnosis and the provider believes it's appropriate for the patient to return to school.

## **Confirmed Case of COVID-19 on School Property**

When there is confirmation that a person infected with COVID-19 was on school property, Area 30 Career Center will immediately contact the local health department and our five member school corporation superintendents. Unless extenuating circumstances exist, Area 30 Career Center will work with the Putnam County 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 building closure. **It is the responsibility of the local health department to contact the person confirmed with COVID-19, inform direct contacts of their possible exposure, and provide instructions to those involved with the confirmed case, including siblings and other household members regarding self-quarantine and exclusions.** *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 local health department.* If a closure is determined necessary, Area 30 Career Center will consult with the local health department to determine the status of school activities.

As soon as Area 30 Career Center becomes aware of a student or employee who has been exposed to or has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the custodial staff will be informed, so that impacted buildings or bus areas, furnishings, and equipment are thoroughly disinfected. If possible, based upon student and staff presence, the custodial staff will wait 6 hours or as long as possible prior to disinfecting. However, if that is not possible or school is in session, the cleaning will occur immediately.

## **Immunizations**

Immunization requirements must be met by the end of November. Assistance through local health departments and health systems will be provided.

## **Preventative Measures**

The priority for preventing the spread of disease in the school setting is to insist that sick employees and students stay home. Additionally, students and employees should remain home if someone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms or is being tested for COVID-19. It is possible for some people to be infected with COVID-19, but show no signs of illness even though they are contagious and can spread the disease to others. It is also unknown how contagious people are the day or two before they begin to exhibit illness symptoms. Thus, these employees or students may be present at school, will show no signs of illness, but be capable of transmitting the disease to others. In these situations, the *three most important mitigation strategies are social distancing, frequent handwashing, and appropriate PPE.*

Handwashing and avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth are also important steps a person can take to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others.

## **Social Distancing in the School Environment**

The following are measures that Area 30 Career Center will take to increase social distancing while still maintaining a level of in-person classroom instruction. These protocols may evolve as they are implemented, and more information is obtained about COVID-19.

- COVID-19 has required us to reorganize assemblies, field trips, registrations, orientations, and other large gatherings.
- Every effort has been made to increase space between students during in-person instruction.
- We will face desks in the same direction when possible.
- Students will be required to remain seated in assigned seats.
- Classes will also avoid or minimize the sharing of supplies and equipment when possible
  - If a student is unable to attend Area 30 as a result of COVID-19, all reasonable measures will be taken to ensure academic needs are met.
- There will be no use of attendance awards or perfect attendance incentives for students. We want to work collaboratively with parents and students in an effort to reduce spread of colds and virus related symptoms that may be symptoms of COVID-19. If your child is sick, please keep them home and notify the school of the absence. A doctor's note will not be necessary for each absence but may be requested if symptoms are COVID-19 related to return.

## **Nutrition service procedures to minimize exposure:**

Meals may be served in classrooms or in alternative areas in an effort to reduce cafeteria capacity if necessary. Prior to any meal service, all students will utilize hand washing or sanitizing to ensure safe eating practices. If your student brings their lunch please send bagged or boxed meals with all necessary utensils, condiments, napkins, etc.

We will implement the following precautions:

- No self-serve food line items.
- Disposable napkins and silverware will be provided.
- We will promote social distancing while waiting in line. Masks will be required if social distancing is not possible.
- Food-sharing is prohibited.
- Online deposits are encouraged, checks and cash will be taken in the office at scheduled times. We will limit cash transactions in the lunch line. Staff handling cash will not handle food.
- Hand sanitizer will be available upon entry to the cafeteria and at each line.

## **Health Department Mitigation Strategy Recommendations**

Area 30 Career Center is working with the Putnam County Health Departments to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 among students, staff and teachers. Although evidence shows that most children infected with COVID-19 have mild symptoms, some children will develop serious illness, especially those children at risk because of underlying health issues. We encourage families with children who have underlying health issues to discuss your child's attendance with the administration of their home high school, Area 30's administration and with your personal health care provider.

Area 30 Career Center is prepared to respond to COVID-19 cases if and when they occur in our facilities. Through our action plan and working with our local health officials, it is our mission to provide your child with the best educational opportunities possible in any circumstance. This will require each school to develop a mandatory reporting system for all teachers, administrators, staff and students (parents/guardians) to report any documented positive cases of COVID-19 in their school. Please help us by contacting your school and our local health department in the event you or a family member has tested positive in your home.

Any student, teacher, administrator or staff who is symptomatic for infection should stay home and consult their primary care provider or seek testing.

If an individual in one's home has COVID-19 or is isolated because of COVID-19, those in the household should also stay home for a minimum of two weeks. This could be longer if the student becomes symptomatic.