

Benton Community School Corporation has been diligently working through the summer on a plan for how we can best serve our students in a safe and responsible manner. New information and guidance has been provided almost daily which defines, advises, or readjusts how every step of this process will occur. We started our process by conducting a survey of our parents/ guardians and staff to get parameters for what our school community feels are important and also obtain a list of concerns. We know that the plan will not be 100% perfect, nor will it meet everyone's views, but the overriding principles of this plan are to provide the best and safest educational opportunities that are available at this time.

A large percentage, 75% of elementary parents and 84% of BC parents, responded in the survey that an in-school option was best for their student. The leading concern was parents/guardians did not want the students to wear a mask at all times. At this point, the Benton County Health Department has directed that students and staff wear masks when social distance of 6 feet cannot be maintained. There has been a great deal of recommendations indicating that face coverings are useful to decrease exposure and provide a safer environment. We see masks as a need within the school and our plan addresses the need to have and use them when social distancing cannot be maintained. All students and staff retain the right to wear the mask at other times, as well.

In the coming days, please look for building specific information from your child's school that outline the modifications happening to enhance and provide for social distancing to protect the students and staff while not impeding the education process. As the year progresses and new information becomes available, we will continue to make modifications in the best interest of our students and staff.

We recognize that there are students and families with medical and overall concerns for their students' exposure at school. Plans have been put in place to offer a distance/online learning option for those with these concerns. There are updated guidelines and requirements that need to be followed if requesting this option. The curriculum will be as rigorous and will correlate directly with the in-class student cohort.

The back to school plan includes information concerning the health aspects of re-entry and closely aligns with the IN-Class document provided through the State Department of Education, who worked directly with the State Health Department for guidance.

In summary:

- Please read the entire school re-entry document prior to making decisions for your child(ren).
- Students will be highly encouraged to wear masks at all times. The Benton County Health Department will require students to wear a mask when social distancing is not possible.
- Parents will be able to choose either in-person or distance/online learning for their child(ren).
- Each school building will have specific modifications to meet social distancing guidelines.

# **Benton Community School Corporation**

## **COVID-19 Back to School Guidelines**

It is essential for Benton Community School Corporation to work in unison with our staff, parents, students, and community to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19. Our goal in introducing these new rules and regulations is to create a safe and effective environment for students and staff while still providing a quality education program. All guidance within this document comes directly from the CDC, Indiana Department of Education, and Benton County Health Department.

Please review this document in its entirety to ensure you know exactly what to expect. Please understand that this re-entry plan may and most likely will change as directives and guidance are given to schools throughout the year. We will continue to evaluate and make adjustments as needed. As always, we will communicate any changes that are made as they occur.

At this time we plan for our schools to open at the regularly scheduled start date with our students returning on Wednesday, August 12, 2020.

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## Health Protocols

Employees will be trained to recognize the following COVID-19-related symptoms:

Major Symptoms:

- A fever of 100.4° F or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Minor Symptoms:

- Congestion/Runny Nose
- Diarrhea
- Chills
- Muscle Pain/Fatigue
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea/Vomiting

State statute gives 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).

Students and staff members will be excluded from school if they test positive for COVID-19, exhibit symptoms of COVID-19, or were in close contact (within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) with anyone confirmed with COVID-19 within the last two weeks.

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

Persons who are experiencing symptoms but have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19, may return if the following conditions are met:

- They have received a doctor's note releasing them to return to school.
- 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.
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

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

- They have received a doctor's note releasing them to return to school.
- 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.
- At least 10 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

\* Benton County Health Department will determine when a threshold of positive COVID-19 cases or absence percentages are reached to trigger school closures.

**Tested Positive - Asymptomatic** Persons who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID-19 may return when they have gone 10 calendar days from the day the test was taken and have been released by a healthcare provider. If the person develops symptoms, then isolation time starts on day one of symptoms. All individuals (student, staff, or parent/guardian) are required to contact the corporation nurse (765-884-3020 or jrichey@benton.k12.in.us.) immediately if they or a family member has tested positive for COVID-19.

**Tested Positive - Impact on School Operations** All individuals (student, staff, or parent/guardian) are required to contact the corporation nurse (765-884-3020 or jrichey@benton.k12.in.us.) immediately if they or a family member has tested positive for COVID-19. When there is confirmation that a person infected with COVID-19 was on school property, Benton Community's corporation nurse will contact the Benton County Health Department immediately. Unless extenuating circumstances exist, the school will work with the 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 Benton County Health Department to contact the person confirmed with COVID-19, inform direct contacts of their possible exposure, and give 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 health department. If a closure is determined necessary, the school will consult with the Benton County Health Department to determine the status of school activities including extracurricular activities, co-curricular activities, and before and after-school programs. As soon as the school 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 building or bus areas, furnishings, and equipment are thoroughly disinfected. If possible, based upon student and staff presence, the custodial staff will wait 24 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.

**Screening** Benton Community School Corporation has provided and will continue to provide information to parents, students, and staff about the symptoms of COVID-19. All individuals are required to self-screen before coming to school.

Major Symptoms:

- A fever of 100.4° F or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Minor Symptoms:

- Congestion/Runny Nose
- Diarrhea
- Chills
- Muscle Pain/Fatigue
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea/Vomiting

Students and employees exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 without being otherwise explained, are prohibited from coming to school, and if they do come to school, they will be sent home immediately.

**COVID-19: When a student, faculty or staff member can return to school**

Individual	Symptomatic	No Symptoms
<b>Not tested WITH Alternative Explanation (strep, influenza etc. as determined by provider)</b>	May return to school after 24 hours fever free AND note (including email or fax) from the provider stating the individual has an alternate diagnosis and the provider believes it's appropriate for the student to return to school.	Not Applicable
<b>Not tested WITHOUT Alternate Explanation</b>	Must remain home for at least 10 calendar days from the first day symptoms appeared AND 72 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medication and with improvement of respiratory symptoms. Have a negative Covid -19 test.	Not Applicable
<b>Tested and Negative</b>	If no alternative explanation, isolate for at least 10 calendar days from the first day symptoms appeared AND 72 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medications and with improvement of respiratory symptoms. The test may have been a false negative. The individual can return to school if tested negative AND with a note from the provider stating they believe the patient to have alternate diagnosis and it's appropriate for the patient to return to school.	May proceed with attending school. EXCEPTION: A known close contact (within 6 feet of a confirmed case for more than 15 minutes) must complete a 14-day quarentive even if test results are negative for COVID-19.
<b>Tested and Positive</b>	Must remain home in isolation for at least 10 calendar days from the date symptoms began AND 72 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medications and improvement of respiratory symptoms.	Isolate at home for 10 calendar days from the day the test was taken. ***If the individual develops symptoms, then isolation time starts on day 1 of symptoms.
<b>Close Contact</b>	If an individual becomes symptomatic, refer to the symptomatic scenarios. The individual must quarantine for 14 calendar days after contact with the COVID-19 positive person even if the student has an alternate diagnosis for symptoms.	Quarantine for 14 calendar days before returning to school. Must remain symptom-free. If an individual develops symptoms, then refer to the symptomatic scenarios.

\*This document is provided by the Indiana State Department of Health.

Note: QUARANTINE keeps someone who was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 away from others. ISOLATION keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home.

**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.

**Clinical Space COVID-19 Symptomatic** Benton Central Jr/Sr High School, Otterbein Elementary, Boswell Elementary, and Prairie Crossing Elementary will each have a room or space separate from the nurse's clinic where students and employees who are feeling ill will be evaluated for Covid 19 symptoms. This clinical space will be ventilated if possible. Any individual proven to be symptomatic will be allowed to wait in this same area for pick up. Essential personnel entering this area are required to wear proper personal protective equipment in the form of a gown, gloves and an N96 mask. Patients will be given a surgical mask to be worn at all times until they leave the building. 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 in this room. Students who are awaiting pick up due to Covid 19 symptoms will be walked out of the building to their parents.

**Proper Hygiene** Hand Washing and avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth are important steps that must be taken to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others. Employees and students must wash their hands often. If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizing stations will be distributed throughout each of our buildings as an alternative. There will be key times built into the school day when all persons will have the opportunity to wash their hands. Each building will have their own specific schedule, please contact your building principal for questions regarding those times.

Students and staff should familiarize themselves with the following key times necessary for handwashing:

- Start of the school day
- Before eating
- After using the restroom
- After blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using shared equipment
- Before and after recess

**Use of Face Coverings** Social Distancing Guidelines state that a person should not be within 6 feet of another person (outside of the home) for more than 15 minutes. As directed by the Benton County Health Department, face coverings will be required by both students and staff if social distancing guidelines cannot be followed. Students and staff are required to carry a face covering at all times.

Outside face coverings will be allowed, but must be school appropriate. If a face covering is determined to be inappropriate, the individual will be provided a mask from the school. Reusable masks must be sanitized daily. Masks will be available for any individual that would like to utilize one, but does not have a mask of their own. This recommendation will be changed to required if that order is communicated to us by any of our local or state officials.

If a student provides a doctor's note deeming a face covering to be a health hazard for said student, an alternative to the face covering would be allowed in the form of a face shield which does not lay against the mouth and nose. If the doctor finds that this option is also a health hazard, the parent can bring in a doctor's note excusing them from wearing it.

**Access to Water** All water fountains will be closed in each school building until further notice. Water filling stations, if available, may be used with proper procedures. Students and staff are recommended to bring in their own water bottles.

**Attendance Policy** Attendance bonuses and reward programs will be suspended to avoid encouraging employees and students to come to school when they are sick. Students who are out of school for an extended period of time due to COVID-19 (individuals who have tested positive, individuals who have been in direct contact with a person who has tested positive, or individuals who are symptomatic) will be required to utilize distance learning to meet attendance requirements. Distance learning guidelines can be adjusted based on the needs of each student.

**Exchange of Resources to and From School** In an effort to reduce the amount of materials that are being transported between school and home each day, students using a bookbag at PCE, Boswell and Otterbein should transport minimal materials, such as; assignments, water bottles, lunchboxes and a Chromebook or Ipad, if they are being sent home. All other personal items should be left at home.

Students attending Benton Jr/Sr High School will be allowed to bring a backpack to and from school. Lockers will not be used. All required materials will be kept in the students backpack, and that backpack should remain on their person or under their individual desk/seat throughout the entire day. Further guidance for athletic bags and lunch boxes will come from Benton Central.

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

In order to maintain social distancing to the best of our ability, our corporation will put in to place the following practices:

- Families will be offered in-person instruction. Distance Learning may be available based on individual student needs and parent/guardian concerns.
- Alternate recess to minimize the number of students on the playground, and allow time to disinfect equipment.
- Space between students will be increased as much as possible during in-person instruction.
- At times classes may be held outdoors.
- Desks/tables will be rearranged to increase space between students.
- Students will be asked to remain seated in the classroom as much as possible, and seats will be assigned.
- All large group activities that combine classes or grade levels will be avoided.
- Whole staff gatherings/meetings will be minimized.
- Minimize students traveling to different buildings to receive services.
- Each building will keep records of any persons other than students and staff entering the building, their reason for entering, and the locations in the building to which they travel.
- Vendor access to the buildings will be restricted to times when students are not present.
- Visitors/parents must report to the office and will not be allowed further access in the building without permission and screening.
- There will be no visitors in classrooms.
- Materials that must be shared will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.

Additionally, we will implement measures to decrease students congregating in one location by doing the following:

- Students must be dropped off at specific times and locations determined by each individual building.
- Buses will release students as they arrive rather than all at once.
- Restroom breaks will be scheduled in certain buildings to avoid overcrowding.
- Rearrange and remove furniture to avoid clustering in common areas.
- Encourage virtual meetings when possible.
- Rearrange workstations to encourage social distancing.
- Use assigned seating when possible.
- Use sign-in sheets for in-person meetings to document attendees.

**Breakfast and Lunch Procedures** Students at all levels will continue to have group lunches. Each building will attempt to follow social distancing guidelines if possible. Some buildings may utilize additional spaces outside of the cafeteria to allow students more room to space out. Additional steps that will be taken to help control the spread of germs will be as follows:

- Napkins and silverware will be provided and will be disposable.
- Food-sharing is not allowed.
- Cash transactions will be accepted, but are not encouraged.
- PPE will be provided to all food service staff.

## **Cleaning Guidance**

Students will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer, wash their hands multiple times a day, and participate in all classroom sanitizing procedures.

Janitorial staff will work to continually sanitize common areas. Even deeper cleaning procedures will be used when students are out of the building.

## **Special Education Overview**

**Case Conferences and Annual Case Reviews** Benton Community Schools will continue to conduct annual case reviews within the one year timeline, regardless of school closure status. Case conference meetings with parents will be scheduled to review the provision of services and the educational progress of each student. These discussions will determine whether or not there is a need to adjust the frequency or duration of services for each individual student.

Educational needs will be measured by considering:

- Whether the student participated in continuous learning opportunities provided by the school and district during the COVID-19 school building closure.
- Parent observations of the student's learning during the continuous learning opportunities provided by the school.
- Teacher observations of the student's learning in the continuous learning opportunities provided by the school.
- Whether there were services identified in the student's IEP prior to the school closure that the school or district was unable to provide during the building closure due to restrictions of in-person services.
- Whether the student continued making progress toward meeting his/her IEP goals.
- Whether the student experienced any additional or new social-emotional health issues during building closure.
- Whether the student experienced any regression during the period of school building closure.

**Future Services/Compensatory Services** Benton Community School Corporation will be required to make an individualized determination as to whether compensatory services are needed under applicable standards and requirements. This does not mean that the school must immediately offer compensatory services to all students with IEPs; rather, it requires the case conference committee to lead a discussion on the educational needs of the student, including the potential loss of skills. Based on these individual needs, the CCC may consider the appropriateness of collecting data for an agreed-upon time following the student's return to school and subsequently reconvening to discuss the need for future services at that time.

**Transition IEPs** Transition assessments will continue to be updated annually. When updating transition assessments, teachers of record (TORs) may conduct assessments virtually or in person. Assessments may be administered prior to or during the meeting. In all cases, assessment information will be documented within the Summary of Findings utilizing the SPIN method - Strengths, Preferences, Interests, and Needs. Ways to provide transition assessments virtually are available as a part of the eLearning Resources for Secondary Transition document.

DiTransition services will be created with both in-person and remote ways to accomplish objectives and goals to accommodate for the fluidity of the COVID-19 situation.

**Evaluations** Requirements for evaluations remain unchanged. Evaluations may be conducted virtually.

**Medically Fragile Students** Medically fragile students will have an option to be provided with educational services remotely. The determination of the services to be provided must be made by the CCC (Case Conference Committee) based upon the individual student's medical and educational needs. Special education and related services determined by the CCC could be provided online or in a virtual instructional format, through instructional telephone calls, or through other curriculum-based instructional activities (511 IAC 7-42-10). If the services are to be delivered through online or virtual instruction, technological competency and the need for additional assistive technology will be considered.

**Homebound Services** Students who were receiving services in a homebound placement pursuant to their IEP will remain in that placement until the CCC determines that a different placement is appropriate. Whether the location of the homebound services identified in the student's IEP is in the student's home or an out-of-school location other than the student's home, school personnel will follow appropriate health guidelines to assess and reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

**Homebound Timelines** The CCC will continue to reconvene at least every 60 instructional days (this instructional day count includes remote learning days used pursuant to our Continuous Learning Plan) when a student is receiving services in a homebound setting. Changes to the IEP related to a safer service delivery method during school closures and re-entry may be considered by the CCC at these 60 day reconvenes.

**Special Transportation** If a student is being provided in-person services and requires transportation, then the IEP will reflect this service. Administrator will collaborate with the school transportation director to implement a bussing plan that meets social distancing recommendations (including pick-up, in-transit, and drop off).

**Therapy** By following the provision of IEP-required therapies in accordance with the CDC community-level guidance for schools, our corporation will implement the following:

- Intensified cleaning and disinfecting of equipment and surfaces between therapy sessions.
- Class and therapy group size reductions, staggered (alternate days/rotation) scheduling and/or spaced seating to facilitate physical distancing, restricted sharing of equipment/learning aids.
- Instruction about and observance of frequent handwashing and face covering recommendations.
- Remote therapy needs, including assistive technology, as necessary, for special student populations who cannot yet safely return to congregate settings.
- Contingency planning to continue services if COVID-19 transmission requires intermittent or extended school building closures.
- Technology training and access for therapists to serve medically fragile students, such as those who are ventilator-dependent and have tracheostomies.
- Flexible and adaptive scheduling to maximize therapy service provision despite personnel shortages, staff illness/isolation, and limited access to students.

## **Student Transportation**

**Transportation Preparation and Cleaning** Staff will inspect all buses and transport vehicles for cleanliness and safety before and after routes. Both students and drivers will be required to wear a face covering if social distancing rules cannot be followed. Face coverings will be available on buses for students who do not have their own. Whenever possible, bus windows will remain partially rolled down, family members will sit together, and students will have assigned seats on every bus. It will be required that we wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting a bus/transportation vehicle that transported a passenger or had a driver who tested positive for COVID-19. Affected buses can be used immediately after cleaning and disinfection. Additionally, the following protocols will be made starting August 3rd, 2020: Drivers will be assigned to a single bus and/or a specific route to establish consistent driver assignments for extracurricular activities. Students will be assigned to a single bus and to a specific seat. Students will be limited to one route and one stop. Students will not be allowed to eat on the bus. The requirements for face coverings are subject to change by circumstances and directives from governing bodies.

### **Modifications for Extra-Curricular and Athletic Transportation Services**

- Encourage custodial-arranged, reimbursable transportation for McKinney-Veto, foster, and medically fragile students.
- Assign drivers to single bus and/ or a specific route and establish consistent driver assignments for extracurricular trips.
- Assign students to a single bus and to a specific seat.
- Reinforce social distancing whenever possible.

### **Modifications for Academic Field Trips**

- Limit the number of field trips.
- Assign drivers to single bus and/ or a specific route and establish consistent driver assignments for field trips.
- Assign students to a single bus and to a specific seat.
- Reinforce social distancing whenever possible.

### **Transportation Training**

All drivers and maintenance/cleaning staff will be properly trained on the following:

- Correct information about COVID-19, how it spreads, symptoms, and risk of exposure.
- Who to contact if a student or the driver exhibits symptoms of COVID-19.
- The appropriate methods, tools, and products for cleaning buses, including opening doors and windows for effective circulation and to avoid extensive exposure to cleaning fumes.
- The hygiene expectations of staff.
- Using gloves when handling and disposing of trash.
- Avoiding touching surfaces often touched by passengers.
- Universal precautions when handling bodily fluids.

## **Communications Guidance**

**Reporting Positive COVID-19 Cases** All teachers, administrators, staff and students (parents/guardians) are required to report any documented positive cases of COVID-19 in their school. All reports should be made to the building principal to share with the corporation nurse. The corporation nurse will give all reported positive COVID-19 case findings to the Benton County Health Department.

## **Benton Community Distance Learning**

### **Benton Central Jr. Sr. High School Distance Learning Plan**

Students choosing the distance learning option must commit to this option for the nine weeks.

Parents/guardians wishing to select this option for the first nine weeks will do so at online registration.

Parents/guardians must communicate their learning choice for the following nine weeks to Mr. Robb no later than one week prior to the start of the following nine weeks grading period. Students will complete a Google form indicating their attendance by 8:30 a.m. each morning. Follow-up phone calls will be made to parents if a student indicates they are ill. Students will attend each class on their assigned time schedule each day.

- For safety reasons, students choosing the distance learning option will not be eligible to participate in or attend extra-curricular or co-curricular activities.

Distance learning will primarily be provided by the classroom teacher via an online learning platform. In some cases, students may be utilizing our APEX online learning program. All students choosing the distance learning option will be working online. Paper packets will not be provided. The Benton Community School Corporation will attempt to assist students/families that are without reliable internet access but wish to choose this option. Contact Richard Parker, Technology Director, for assistance with internet access.

All distance learning assignments/work must be submitted no later than 24 hours after the assigned date. Larger assignments and project due dates will be determined by each teacher.

### **Elementary School Distance Learning Plan**

Students choosing the distance learning option must commit to this option for the nine weeks.

Parents/guardians wishing to select this option for the first nine weeks will do so at online registration.

Parents/guardians must communicate their learning choice for the following nine weeks to the principal, classroom teacher, and front office staff no later than one week prior to the start of the following nine weeks grading period. Students will complete a Google form indicating their attendance by 8:30 a.m. each morning. Follow-up phone calls will be made to parents if a student indicates they are ill. Students will attend each class on their assigned time schedule each day.

- For safety reasons, students choosing the distance learning option will not be eligible to participate in or attend extra-curricular or co-curricular activities.

Distance learning will primarily be provided by the classroom teacher via an online learning platform. All students choosing the distance learning option will be working online. Paper packets will not be provided. The Benton Community School Corporation will attempt to assist students/families without reliable internet access but wish to choose this option. Contact Richard Parker, Technology Director, for assistance with internet access. Your child's school will help provide additional information should you need it.

All distance learning assignments/work must be submitted no later than 24 hours after the assigned date. Larger assignments and project due dates will be determined by each teacher.

# **Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Re-Entry**

## **Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Activities**

- All State and local guidelines for group limitations will be followed.
- Any student who prefers to wear a face covering for activities will be allowed, so long as doing so will not cause a health risk.
- Athletes are required to wear face coverings only if the opposing school requires it.
- Non-students, including coaches, medical-related staff, directors, security staff, supervisors, etc. must wear face coverings at all times unless under rigorous activity or pose a health risk.
- Consideration will be given to vulnerable individuals and it is encouraged for those individuals to seek medical guidance regarding his/her individual level of participation.
- An alternate command structure for coaching staff will be established in case of illness.
- Prior to participation, all first-time student athletes are required to have an IHSAA pre-participation physical for the upcoming school year. Returning student athletes are not required to obtain a new IHSAA pre-participation physical, but should provide a 2020-21 IHSAA Health History Update Questionnaire and Consent & Release Certificate prior to participation.
- All students and staff will be required to self screen for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to participating in workouts, rehearsals, or practices. See Health Protocols section.
  - Any person with COVID-19-related symptoms will not be allowed to take part in workouts, rehearsals, or practices and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate healthcare professional.
  - Any person with a positive COVID-19 test must reference page 3, "When a confirmed case has entered a school, regardless of community transmission."
  - Coaches must track COVID-19 impacted attendance and report to district/school administration.
  - Follow specific return to school protocol in reference to participation for student athletes or staff members who no longer test positive and/or no longer display symptoms of COVID-19. See Health Protocols section.
- Individuals must wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with warm water and soap before touching any surfaces or participating. If this is not possible, hand sanitizer will be available to individuals as they transfer from place to place.
- Locker rooms and meeting rooms will operate at 50 percent capacity. \*If the restriction to 50 percent capacity at competitive events creates hardship and impacts the hygiene or safety of students, a 50 percent or greater capacity is allowed.
- The athletic directors will create scheduling adjustments to reduce the number of events, duration, and/or participants present.
- Workouts will be conducted in defined, smaller groups of students with the same students always together.
- Hospitality rooms for officials will no longer include shared food service and will allow space for social distancing. Individual waters and pre-packaged snacks may be made available.
- Cleaning schedules will be created and implemented for all facilities and equipment to mitigate any communicable diseases.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes must be worn at all times to minimize transmission.
- No sharing of clothing, shoes, towels, or water bottles.
- Contact will be limited to only contact necessary to compete as defined by IHSAA. Modified sportsmanship practices will be observed.
- If equipment must be shared, including sports balls, weight room facilities, non-wind instruments, etc., this equipment must be cleaned prior to use and immediately following usage.

- Any equipment such as weight benches, athletic pads, etc. having holes with exposed foam will be covered or discarded.
- Students are expected to shower at school or at home and wash workout clothing immediately upon returning to their home. If a student does not have a laundered uniform, he/she may not be allowed to participate in practice or competition.
- Water fountains will be closed. Individuals should bring their own drink from home. Water bottles will be available to those who need one.
- Spectators, media, and vendors can be present but must implement social distancing and follow established mass gathering guidelines.
- Concessions will be open, and all food handlers and cashiers will utilize appropriate PPE and only prepared, prepackaged food is available.

## **Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

**Q: How can parents work with their students at home to understand how and when to wear a mask? Is wearing a mask just as easy as coughing into your elbow?**

A: Benton Community will release back to school guidelines that will identify when students must wear a mask. Additionally, the school will be releasing step-by-step instructions that will educate all students and parents on how to properly wear a mask. Wearing a mask is much more protective than coughing or sneezing into your elbow or hand as it creates a barrier that helps contain the spread of germs. The following website is an excellent resource to review the purpose of masks and how they can be used properly.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

**Q: There are many concerns about students wearing masks on buses without air conditioning in the hot weather. How will the school address this?**

A: Our buses have air conditioning, however we may have windows down to create fresh air flow. According to the CDC, breathing clean outdoor air can reduce the spread of coronaviruses. "Changing the room air is a widely used measure for infection prevention and control," says Stephen Morse, an infectious disease researcher and professor of epidemiology at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. "It replaces any virus-contaminated air with clean air. Opening windows is one of the easiest and cheapest ways to encourage this type of air turnover."

**Q: Can parents/guardians change their education choice mid-term? (remote versus on-site)**

A: If a student enrolls in remote learning but after participating decides it might not be the best avenue for them, they are allowed to switch to in-class learning at any time during the 9 week period. Students will not be allowed to switch between distance learning and in-class learning more than once per nine weeks (this rule does not pertain to students who are utilizing distance learning because of illness or required time out of school).

**Q: Who can we talk to if our student is immune-compromised?**

A: If your student is immune-compromised it is important for you to first discuss best practices with your family doctor. If the doctor says it is ok for your student to return to in-class learning, be sure to find out if there are any requirements or adjustments that need to be made. Please provide your building principal with any pertinent information provided by the doctor.

**Q: How will choir and band change in order to adhere to CDC guidance?**

A: In buildings that have access to bigger practice areas, band, choir, and music classes will utilize these larger areas to allow students to spread out and follow social distancing guidelines. Each building's plan will vary slightly, so please reach out to your building principal for more specific information.

**Q: How will absences be handled so that parents are not sending their student to school sick to prevent them from receiving too many absences?**

A: Students who are out of school for an extended period of time due to COVID-19 (individuals who have tested positive, individuals who have been in direct contact with a person who has tested positive, or individuals who are symptomatic) will be required to utilize distance learning to meet attendance requirements. Distance learning guidelines can be adjusted based on the needs of each student.

**Q: Can you please clarify the difference between Distance Learning and Remote Learning?**

A: Distance Learning is the online option for those students that are not attending our schools in person. Remote Learning is what we have called eLearning where all students are being educated outside of the classroom by online learning methods.

**Q: Will students still have social interaction through school (i.e. play sports, go to games, have choir concerts, theater, band, dances, group projects)?**

A: We will work to provide as many of these opportunities as allowed by our local health agencies guidelines.

**Q: Will the school be accepting doctors notes for masks?**

A: If a student provides a doctor's note deeming a face covering to be a health hazard for said student, an alternative to the face covering will be available in the form of a face shield which does not lay against the mouth and nose. If the doctor finds that this option is also a health hazard, the parent can bring in a doctor's note excusing them from wearing it as well.

## **Document Change Log**

Any changes made to this document will be noted below in order to allow easier identification for readers.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Page Number</b>	<b>Original Language</b>	<b>Updated Language</b>