

RE-ENTRY PLAN

IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

John H. Castle Elementary School

2021-2022 RETURN-TO-SCHOOL PLAN

**PRECAUTIONS AND PROCEDURES IN
RESPONSE TO THE CONTINUED THREAT OF
COVID-19 AND ITS VARIANT STRAIN(S)**

INTRODUCTION

This plan is designed to aid parents, students, and school employees in continuing to maintain a school where employees, students, and families feel safe, while continuing practices which reduce the impact of the transmission and community spread of COVID-19 during the 2021-2022 school year.

The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and state and local health agencies--specifically, ISDH and WCHD.

John H. Castle Elementary faculty and staff will do their best to maintain the following safety protocols, with the intent to keep our students--and themselves--safe and healthy during the 2021-2022 School Year. (NOTE: This plan is secondary to the WCSC Plan for the entire district. The “color Levels” in the WCSC Plan will dictate when students are “in-person” at school, versus other scenarios.)

Monitoring factors, community [Warrick County, IN] progress toward changing transmission rates and positivity rates, as well as close contact occurrences and other factors can--and will--contribute to the **enhancement / tightening** or the **relaxation / removal** of restrictions put in place to minimize COVID transmission within WCSC schools.

It is the intent of WCSC and JHC to keep our students in an “in-person” mode of instruction for the 2021-2022 school year, while also offering extracurricular activities to our students, hosted in a safe and healthy manner. This may mean modifying the terms of this Plan at times during the school year, with a focus on continually maintaining a safe and healthy environment for the JHC students, faculty, and staff.

General Safety Protocols at JHC

- ✓ The use of hand sanitizer and washing hands will be encouraged frequently throughout the day.
- ✓ Field trips and “extra” school programs will be on a case-by-case decision / timeline with strong consideration of current “status” of COVID-19 impact in Warrick County (county trends, metrics, transmission rates, and hospitalization)
- ✓ If parents/guardians pick up their child during the school day, the parent will buzz the office from the main entrance. Students will be called to the office and released to the parent/guardian at that time.
- ✓ No parents/visitors will be allowed into the school unless they are volunteering with PTO or having a teacher conference. At this time all volunteers must wear a mask.

- ✓ Parents will be allowed at **after school** events in the gymnasium. Masks will be required for all individuals for at least the first several weeks of school when “under the roof” of JHC.
- ✓ Staff and custodians will work diligently during both the school day and each evening to wipe down door knobs, desktops, chairs, tables, cabinet handles, restroom sinks, cafeteria tables/serving counters, and other high traffic areas.
- ✓ Custodians will sanitize every room in the evening on a daily basis.
- ✓ All classrooms will be equipped with disinfectant spray and hand sanitizer.
- ✓ The buses will have a set protocol for cleaning. **Bus riders are required to wear masks**, putting on their masks as the bus arrives for morning pickup.
- ✓ All staff members (teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, office staff, custodians, cafeteria workers, and nurse’s office staff) will be trained on how to recognize signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- ✓ When parents call in student absences, office staff or nurse/health aide will inquire about the presence of COVID-19 symptoms and will advise parents of return-to-school guidelines if such symptoms exist with that student.
- ✓ No perfect attendance awards will be given in the 2021-22 School Year--ill children need to stay home.

Handwashing and Hygiene:

Staff will wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and will remind children to do the same.

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available.
- Posters describing hand washing steps are near all sinks.

All children and staff will be instructed to engage in hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival and after breaks
- Before and after preparing food or drinks
- Before and after eating, handling food, or feeding children
- Before and after administering medication or medical ointment
- After using the toilet
- After coming in contact with bodily fluid
- After playing outdoors
- After handling garbage

John H. Castle Elementary School will:

- Teach and reinforce washing hands among students and staff.
- Practice frequent handwashing and advise students and staff to avoid touching their face.
- Have adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, tissues, and no-touch trash cans.
- Install alcohol based hand sanitizing stations at entrances, common areas in the school, and in classrooms.

Face Masks, Cloth Face Coverings, and Face Shields:

- The use of face coverings will be mandatory for students and adults for the month of August. WCSC superintendent and directors will maintain constant review of the county's "status" described in "**General Safety Protocols**" above.
- We understand that face coverings may be challenging for students (especially younger students) to wear in all-day settings such as school. When masks are mandated, we will take appropriate "mask-free" breaks outside or at locations where students can maintain standard social-distance without wearing a mask.
- Students are encouraged to have a mask with them in their backpacks, if possible. On rare occasions where a student mask breaks or if they forget to bring a mask from home one day, a mask will be provided for them.
- Individuals will be frequently reminded not to touch their face--and will be reminded to wash their hands frequently.

Cleaning, Disinfecting, and Sanitizing, Defined:

- Cleaning is "physically removing dirt, debris, and sticky film by washing, wiping, and rinsing."
- Disinfecting is the "use of an approved chemical to kill nearly all microscopic bacteria and virus germs on a hard, non-porous surface." Prior to disinfecting, cleaning must be completed.
- Note: "Disinfecting" is different from "sanitizing." Sanitizing is the reduction of food-borne bacteria to safe levels as set by public health standards. This procedure is required for any surface that comes in contact with food as per establishments permitted to maintain food service.

The following will be disinfected at least once daily:

- Door and cabinet handles
- Sink handles
- Shared objects (e.g., toys, games, art supplies) should be cleaned in between uses.
- Objects that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.
- Staff will not share toys and manipulatives with other classrooms, unless they are washed and sanitized before being moved to another classroom.
- Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfecting procedures.

Arrival:

- Students will be permitted to enter the building at 7:45 a.m.
- All students riding a bus will be allowed to enter the building upon the arrival of the bus to our school. Students will be asked to social distance upon entering the school building through Entrance #1.
- Students who are car riders will enter the school building through Entrance #11.
- Students will be asked to sanitize their hands.

Breakfast:

- After students report to their homeroom, those who are eating breakfast will then report to the cafeteria.
- A staff member on duty will make every effort to have students social distance while entering the cafeteria and eating breakfast.
- Breakfast tables will be marked for students to see where to sit (seating will be pre-designated).
- After students finish eating, students should report back to their classroom.
- Students will be asked to sanitize their hands.

Classrooms:

- Teachers will be ready to start the day at 7:45 a.m. as students arrive.
- Upon entering the classroom, hand sanitizer will be available for student use.
- Students will use their individual school supplies (kept in bag or box).
- All classrooms will have built in time for additional cleaning and sanitizing.
- All classrooms will be equipped with disinfectant and hand sanitizer.

Hallway:

- All staff members will make every effort to have all students social distance when passing through the hallways.
- All staff members will make every effort to have all students social distance while line up during a passing period/transitions.
- All staff members will make every effort to alternate passing periods with other grade level classes. Should students be in the hallway at the same point in time, they should practice social distancing.
- One line of students may be necessary when moving up and down the hallway.

Restrooms:

- Students are expected to practice social distancing while in the restrooms.
- When possible, the number of students entering the restroom at one time will be limited.
- Hand washing and sanitizing will be expected.

Drinking Fountains:

Drinking fountains should not be used at this time. Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles labeled with their name from home, or the school will provide cups that are disposable or labeled with student's names.

Lunch

- Additional tables in the gymnasium will be utilized to help with social distancing.
- Students will social distance while waiting for their food.
- Students will sit with their homeroom and be spaced across pre-marked areas on the tables in the cafeteria. Students sitting in the gym will sit in the spaced folding chairs.
- All staff members will make every effort to have all students social distance while eating lunch.
- Students will give their name to purchase their lunch instead of entering their number on a keypad.

Recess:

- Students will wash or sanitize their hands immediately when they come in.
- No lunch box pile on the playground. Take lunch boxes back to the room/locker, or separate along the edge of the assigned zone on the playground.
- Students will play by grade level on the playground.

Indoor Recess:

- Students will report to their homeroom classrooms for indoor recess.
- Activities will be available that promote social distancing.
- All staff members will make every effort to have all students social distance during indoor recess.

Dismissal:

- All students riding a bus will place their mask on their face before leaving their homeroom classroom.
- Students will be dismissed to load the buses from Exit #1 and Exit #2.
- A staff member will ask all students to social distance while walking out and getting onto the bus.
- Students who are car riders will be dismissed from Exit #11.
- All staff members will make every effort to have all students social distance while in the hallway.

Riding the Bus:

- Students are strongly encouraged to social distance.
- ALL students will be REQUIRED to wear a mask before entering onto a bus, while riding a bus, and exiting the bus.
- ALL bus drivers will be REQUIRED to wear a mask and/or face shield.
- Students will be assigned a seat according to their pick-up order.
- Students who do not adhere to wearing a mask will be asked to not ride the bus.
- Buses will have set protocol for cleaning and using a machine mister for proper sanitation.

Attendance:

If you know that your student is going to be absent from school, we ask that you notify the office as soon as possible. Students will be allowed to enter the building at 7:45 a.m. and will be marked tardy if they are not in their classrooms by 8:20 a.m.

Nurse's Office:

The state has required us to have a separate holding area for sending students with a temperature of 100.4 or greater. In this situation, the nurse/office staff member will call parents to pick up the student. The nurse will monitor the student and ensure the student is picked up by the parent. The parent will sign off on a provided form. *Please note that typical protocol will be followed for all other fevers.

- School nurses will be available for consultation to assist in guiding classroom staff with appropriate decision making.
- If a teacher or school-based staff member notes a concern, the teacher will call the nurse. The school nurse will come to the classroom to assess and escort back to the clinic, if needed.
- All temperatures will be taken using a no-contact thermometer.
- If a student is found to be unwell, parents/guardians will be called and expected to pick up their child as soon as possible. Students who are not well will not be transported home on the bus nor sent back to class.
- Students must stay home for **24 hours** before returning to school.
- JHC will provide an isolated space for the ill student to rest while waiting for the arrival of parent/guardian.
- Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Sick children and staff will not return to school until they have met the criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- Those with fever cannot return to school for 24 hours or proof of wellness.

Library: (Following the Indiana Library Federation Recommendations)

- Staff members will make every effort to have all students social distance while in the library.
- Hand sanitizer will be used upon entering and exiting the library.
- A contactless book drop will be available for students to return books.
- When books are returned, the books will be quarantined for 24 hours. Books with plastic coverings may be wiped down and re-circulated immediately.

Computer lab:

- Students will sanitize their hands as they enter the room.
- Students will have assigned seating.
- Staff or students will wipe down mice, headphones, and keyboards before exiting the computer lab.
- Students will sanitize as they exit the room.

Communication Methods: (To provide updates as the situation warrants)

- School and WCSC website
- Auto-call system
- Mass parent email
- Social Media
- Teacher email
- JHC's PTO Facebook Page
- Call the school office at 812-853-8878