

**St. Joseph Elementary  
COVID19 Return to School Plan  
Updated Aug. 5, 2020**

# Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the return to school learning plan for students at St. Joseph Elementary. While this document includes much information, it is not possible to plan specific contingency plans for all emergency and non-emergency scenarios. The school will work to adjust the daily operations for our school to meet the needs of the students based on the events which may impede normal school operations.

# COVID-19 Thresholds

St. Joseph plans to operate under a Green, Yellow, Orange, Red color scale that will help indicate the level of risk that is present for our students, staff and patrons. Green is the least risk for the community and Red will be the most risk on the scale.

\*\*\*Information based on NCDHD four risk levels.

- **Green: Low Risk**

- o Low/Stable risk does not mean “no risk.” Precautions are still implemented as a means of remaining in an uninterrupted, in-person learning environment status. These precautions would likely continue as standard operating procedures until widespread availability of a vaccine.

- **Yellow: Moderate Risk**

- o Increasing disease spread or lack of resources warrants enhanced precautions to provide uninterrupted, in-person learning.

- **Orange: Elevated Risk**

- o Further disease spread or lack of resources warrants enhanced precautions for in-person or hybrid learning.

- **Red: Pandemic**

- o Active disease spread warrants major changes to the traditional educational delivery model to protect the health of the students and staff.

If/When thresholds change throughout the year, the district, in cooperation with the local health department, Nebraska Department of Education, and the Archdiocese of Omaha will adjust the practices in the school building with students and staff to keep all safe while continuing to educate. All solutions listed are suggestions and are not set in stone. All implementations of safeguards by the district will be in collaboration with NCDHD, NDE and the Archdiocese of Omaha.

# Communication

Communication between students and staff should occur face-to-face during times when school is in session. Teachers are encouraged to communicate with students using school email when they are unable to communicate face-to-face. Students are continually advised to access and check their school email daily during the school week to assure they are receiving and responding to correspondence from school staff. The school may also utilize other (non-email) tools/programs to effectively and appropriately communicate with students. These tools/programs may

include the use of messaging platforms including Remind, Google Classroom, SeeSaw, school managed social media, and also online video conferencing programs.

Communication between school staff and parents/guardians is essential for student educational success both during times of normal school operations and when teaching and learning has to be modified. School staff may utilize phone calls, text or other forms of messaging, email, and online video conferencing programs. The school will also use its mass notification system through Remind texts, text/phone messages, email, or a combination of the four. Also, following St. Joseph on Facebook is a great way to stay informed.

**\*\*NOTE - It is imperative that all family and emergency contact information be kept up to date at all times. Please fill out a form in the back to school packet with your current contact information.**

## **Contingency Plans**

The main focus of this plan is to keep in the forefront the health and safety of our students and staff, while also continuing to consider the best ways to educate our students. The district will continue to be vigilant in operating within the directed health measures as required by local and state health officials. School calendars, class schedules, activity participation and other key operational variables are subject to change due to circumstances outside the control of St. Joseph School. While the district will try to maintain as much normalcy as possible during this time, it is critical that parents maintain an open mind and understanding of the circumstances at hand. Parents may need a plan for alternate day schedules as well as for both short and long-term school closure. In the event that the district would limit the number of students and staff allowed in school buildings, all students would likely engage in a remote learning scenario where students would participate in online learning. If any student does not have Internet access at home, they will need to contact the school for assistance in securing access.

## **Personal Protective Equipment Requirements for Students and Staff**

Students and staff will not be required to wear masks, but it is encouraged. Students and staff can bring their own masks to school and will be responsible for them on their own. If the risk level increases to higher levels of risk, students and staff may be required to wear masks in school. If masks are required, the school will provide the masks for students and staff.

## **Absenteeism**

The district attendance policy will remain in effect. The district will expect students to attend school as scheduled. If the risk level increases, students will still be expected to be in regular attendance. However, the district will not count student absences towards the 20-day (state law) absenteeism limit as long as the school receives communication from a parent/guardian in a timely manner, and the reasons for absence are directly a result of COVID-19 or the reason is deemed appropriate and acceptable by the child's teacher facilitator.

# School Operation Hours, Beginning and End of Day Entrance/Exit

School doors will open at 7:45 a.m. each school day. Students will not be permitted into the school facilities until 7:45 a.m. unless they have administrative or teacher approval, or school activity/practice that is monitored by a teacher. Preschool students will enter through the east elementary door. All elementary students will enter the school through main entrances as assigned. Jr. high student students will enter through the north door of the jr. high building.

## Gathering areas before school will be as follows:

- Elementary students will gather outdoors as the weather permits and will distance appropriately by cohort in assigned areas. Students will then come into the building as instructed by a staff member. As the weather turns inclement, adjustments will be made and communicated by administration to teachers and students.
- Jr. High Students will gather outdoors as weather permits and will be distanced socially. Students will be allowed in the building as instructed by a staff member. As the weather turns inclement, adjustments will be made and communicated by administration to teachers and students.

EVERY STUDENT AND STAFF MEMBER WILL HAVE THEIR TEMPERATURE TAKEN AND BE ASSESSED FOR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE BUILDINGS. ANYONE WITH A 100.4 DEGREE OR ABOVE TEMPERATURE WILL BE SENT HOME. THOSE STUDENTS OR STAFF SHOWING ANY OTHER SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 WILL BE ASSESSED AND REFERRED TO THEIR LICENSED PHYSICIAN.

## Upon leaving the school each day:

- Students will be expected to leave campus immediately.
- Students will not be permitted to gather in the halls, commons areas, in front of church, or parking lots.
- Students waiting for parents following the school day or practice will be expected to be outside as the weather permits.

## General Class Operations

Students will adhere to social distancing expectations for classrooms as required by directed health measures for schools.

- Students will use hand sanitizer upon entering each classroom.
- Frequent hand washing will be encouraged.
- All desks will face the same direction and students will be seated in a manner providing appropriate space.
- Staff will be required to wipe down tables, desks and chairs and other classroom equipment regularly and during planning periods each day.
- Students and staff may be required to wear face covering during class if the risk threshold increases. Both students and staff may wear appropriate face masks if they so choose.

## **Lunch**

- Meals provided by West Holt will be served in the lunchroom. No open salad bar will be available.
- Lunch may be transitioned to be eaten in the classrooms if the risk threshold increases or social distancing is not possible.
- Students will eat with their homeroom at tables with an alternating schedule for lunch room.
- Lunch times may be staggered to accommodate capacities and social distancing.
- Students will be dismissed individually to assure social distancing.
- Custodians, students and staff will sanitize tables and chairs immediately after lunch periods have ended.

## **Recess**

Students will attend recess as normal as possible. Certain organized games that encourage touching and extremely close contact among students may be limited until appropriate. If the risk level increases, students will only be allowed recess with their homeroom or may be restricted to particular areas of the playground.

Balls and sporting equipment will be sanitized after recesses and the play areas will be sanitized.

## **Handwashing and Hygiene**

Students will be expected to wash their hands multiple times each day. This will include prior to snack and lunch. Students should not share items or other classroom materials to reduce the spread of germs.

For students and staff who choose to wear face coverings, it is important to ensure that non-disposable masks are washed daily. Students and staff should plan to properly clean masks at home so they can arrive at school with a clean mask each day.

## **Passing Periods**

Students and/or staff shall move quickly and efficiently during passing times. If the risk threshold increases, passing periods may be staggered to reduce traffic in the hallways. If using restrooms between periods, students and staff should work to adhere to social distancing as best as they can.

## **Locker Rooms @ West Holt (jr. high athletes)**

Students preparing for athletic practice in a locker room shall change and shower as efficiently as possible. All clothing, toiletries and athletic equipment must be kept separated as much as possible.

## **Class Time**

- Teachers and administration will work to organize the physical layout of the classroom to assure adherence to directed health measures.
- Larger classes may be required to move to larger areas/classrooms to accommodate space requirements.

- Desks will not be clustered together and will face the same direction.
- Elementary special classes will be on a rotation that allows for students to receive their regular amount of Music, PE, Library, Art, and Technology.
- Elementary students will move from classroom to classroom for special classes. If the risk threshold increases, elementary students may be required to stay in their classrooms for specials while the teacher will travel to them.

## **Transportation for athletes (jr. high athletics)**

Guidelines for transportation using school owned transportation are as follows:

- Buses and vans will be loaded from back to front and unloaded from front to back.
- Students will be expected to remain in the same seat for the entire trip on the vehicle.
- All transportation vehicles will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized after each trip.
- If the risk threshold increases, students and staff may be required to wear face covering when traveling and students riding on a bus may be required to sit in individual seats facing front only.

## **Visitors and Parent Drop off**

It is very possible that parents, guardians, and visitors may not be allowed in school buildings during the school day during the 2020-2021 school year. Parents dropping students off should not enter the school building unless absolutely necessary. Walking students to the front door is completely appropriate.

Parents, guardians and visitors who need to address business at the school shall try to call first. All parents and visitors shall use the east entrance of the elementary building. The staff member in the office will greet the visitor and assist them at the time of arrival. All visitors will be assessed for symptoms prior to entering the school building. Visitors will be allowed in the school building with approval, but a mask will be expected to be worn.

## **Water Fountains and Water Bottles**

All water fountains will be off limits for students. Students will be required to bring a water bottle to school.

## **School Assemblies**

School assemblies and/or larger gatherings of people including parties, back to school meetings, fundraisers etc. will be evaluated by school administration throughout the school year. The directed health measures that are in place at the time of events throughout the 2020-2021 school year will guide administrative decisions.

## **Facility Use by Individuals and Outside Organizations**

The district may restrict facility use by individuals and outside organizations throughout the 2020-2021 school year. No non-school sponsored groups will be allowed to use district facilities during the 2020-2021 school year unless otherwise approved by administration.

## Field Trips

School field trips will be evaluated by school administration. The directed health measures that are in place at the time of events throughout the 2020-2021 school year will guide administrative decisions.

## Library

Trips to the Atkinson Library will be evaluated prior to each visit.

## Professional Development

St. Joseph faculty and staff members may be allowed to attend in-person professional development workshops outside the district upon approval by the administration. Professional development attended by school staff may also be done via online video conferencing or on site with school staff from St. Joseph School.

## Facilities Care

The following essential actions will be taken to ensure that school facilities are safe for students and staff to inhabit. The district will:

- Change air filters regularly.
- Distribute wastebaskets, tissues, soaps and sanitizers to appropriate classrooms and restroom facilities so that these materials can be used safely.
- Post signage reminding students and staff of frequent hand washing, cold and cough etiquette.
- Follow guidance from local and state health officials when performing all cleaning related duties.

## Students with Underlying Medical Conditions

If a student has an underlying health condition, the parent(s)/guardian(s) can contact the teacher facilitator or school nurse to plan for an appropriate learning plan for the 2020-2021 school year.

Underlying medical conditions include but are not limited to:

- Chronic lung disease or moderate/severe asthma
- Serious heart conditions
- Immunocompromised conditions. There are many conditions that can cause a person to be immunocompromised.
  - \* Cancer Treatment
  - \* Smoking
  - \* Bone Marrow or Organ Transplantation
  - \* Immune Deficiencies
  - \* HIV/AIDS
  - \* Immune Weakening Medications
- Obesity (body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher)
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease (undergoing dialysis)
- Liver disease

## District Management of COVID-19 Cases and Symptoms

An isolation room or area will be required to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-19 like symptoms from the rest of the population. We will use standard precautions when caring for a sick student or staff member. A parent or guardian will be contacted to come and transport the student home or to a healthcare facility. An emergency contact will be utilized to transport staff members.

- During a pandemic, the school will work to adhere to recommendations and directives from local and state officials when making decisions about student and staff safety and welfare.
- At any time, school personnel can require those entering the building to wear PPE (Personal Protective Equipment), wash/sanitize hands, and participate in building check-in procedures. Failure to comply may lead to non-admittance.
- Parent/Guardian and Emergency Contact information must be kept up to date with the school so families are kept informed.
- Students and staff shall understand the importance of using face coverings appropriately.
- Students should not come to school if they are ill or have a fever. ANYONE WITH A 100.4 OR GREATER TEMPERATURE OR SHOWING ANY SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 WILL BE SENT HOME.
- Parents/Guardians will be expected to immediately notify the school if students display symptoms associated with COVID-19.
- The school will report cases of COVID-19 to the North Central Health Department following required guidelines as determined by the State of Nebraska.

## Resources

<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjosephatkinson.org">www.stjosephatkinson.org</a>
<b>Remind groups</b>	set up by individual teachers and administration
<b>Facebook</b>	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/stjosephatkinson/">https://www.facebook.com/stjosephatkinson/</a>
<b>KBRX Radio Website</b>	<a href="http://www.kbrx.com/">http://www.kbrx.com/</a>
<b>North Central District Health Department</b>	<a href="https://ncdhdne.wordpress.com/">https://ncdhdne.wordpress.com/</a>