

Fall 2023 Safe Return to School Plan



**BIG STONE CITY
LIONS**

The Big Stone City School District will return to normal operations while keeping up-to-date with CDC and/or South Dakota Department of Health (SDDOH) guidelines. We know that we will not completely prevent COVID in our school this year but will do our best, if the case arises, to limit COVID's spread/impact in our school population. The health and safety of our students and staff are one of our highest priorities all while providing an in-person learning experience throughout the school year.

We do not currently have parents or students who speak an alternative language than English and/or individuals with disabilities for the sake of understanding our school plan. If the situation should arise, we will accommodate those parents, students or patrons. We will work with our ESL families to ensure they understand any messages needed.

Flexibility, once again, is key to responding to COVID, but we must maintain a practical risk mitigation approach that responds to the cases in our school.

Some key areas that our school will focus on is:

Classrooms

- The school has been modified to allow for physical distancing at this time. There are assigned seating in classrooms and social distancing is encouraged when able.

Cleaning

- Keeping our more frequent custodial sanitization schedule.
- Use of current sanitation solution on desks and frequently touched surfaces.
- Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes will be used when handwashing is not accessible.

Maintaining Health and Hygiene

- Universal and correct wearing of masks are encouraged.
- Encouraging best personal hygiene practices
 - Hand washing for 20 seconds while reciting the alphabet
 - Coughing/sneezing into your elbow and avoiding touching your face
- Maintaining a health facility, including the plan upgrade our existing elementary wing furnace system with a new air conditioning unit.
- The school is encouraging parents to properly screen their child(ren) in the morning by use of a symptoms checklist that was given at the beginning of the school year. The symptoms checklist is available anytime if you contact the school.
- Information regarding vaccinations will be made available to families and staff members.

Food Services

- The school's food service program will operate using "normal" protocols.
- Salad Bar will be available with staff members distributing available food and/or condiments.

Transportation

- School bus – seats and high touch areas will be sanitized before and after routes.

Students/Academics

- Maximizing in person learning this year is paramount.
- Classroom teaching will address students' academic needs, including learning loss. With utilizing the our school's best practice in years past (MTSS), benchmark testing three times per year will measure learning loss, which will help the school to put academic supports in place to help those students.
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety procedures will continue to be available. Some mitigations strategies used are providing services outside when weather is nice and using plexiglass shields that were set between the student and the teacher while direct instruction is provided.

Staff

- Staff's social, emotional, and mental health needs will be addressed through "the buddy system", cluster meetings, and all-staff meetings so they may share their concerns and triumphs throughout the school year. The school also attended a mental health professional development via Zoom in January 2021, Mental Health First Aid USA.

Protocols for positive case

From Fall 2023 Safe Return Plan – Last updated by School Board 2/23/2022

The entire plan can be found on the school website under the Covid Info tab

	Positive Individual has a positive COVID test
Staff	-Follow Isolation Guidelines -Option to teach virtually
Student	-Follow Isolation Guidelines -May receive homework for these days -Parents to pick up homework

Isolation Guidelines

Positive for COVID-19 and **do not have symptoms:**

- Isolate for 5 days and then wear a mask until day 10.
- If they develop symptoms after testing positive, the 5-day isolation period would **start over**. Day 0 is the first day of symptoms.

Positive for COVID-19 and **have or had symptoms:**

- Isolate for 5 days. Day 0 is the first day of symptoms (test date is no longer used).
- Mask worn until day 10.
- If they continue to have fever or other symptoms have not improved after 5 days of isolation, they should wait to end isolation until they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and their other symptoms have improved.

Levels of learning in response to COVID

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
“Normal” In-person Learning	Modified In-person Learning	Distance Learning
Few to no cases of COVID in the school. 1-9% of the school population (staff and students)	Increased level of COVID spread in the school. 10-15% of the school population (staff and students)	High levels of COVID in school. 20% and above, of the school population (staff and students)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal safety protocols in place Disinfecting regularly Encouraging and teach good hygiene practices Assigned seats in classrooms Avoid sharing of electronic devices, books, toys, and other games when possible Provide symptom check list and recommend daily monitoring of symptoms School bus - seats and high touch surfaces will be sanitized before and after routes. Recommend all students have a water bottle and water fountains used for filling stations 	<p>Options that may be implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 protocols plus; Recommended masks Limit unnecessary visitors in the school Limit or discontinue Fieldtrips Temperature checks on students of concern Arrange seating to provide increase spacing, as feasible Distancing procedures in lunchroom/gym/music Individual plated meals may be served in the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual learning at home

*Positive/Close contacts count for only those who are required to quarantine at home, not those who quarantine at school

Remote/Distance Learning

- The “START WELL FALL 2023 PLAN” acts as the primary contingency plan should an outbreak occur requiring a move to distance learning.
- Students engaging in distance learning will have access to appropriate educational materials and receive daily interaction with their teacher(s). All instructional staff employed by BSCSD must maintain educational continuity and regular, accessible communication and learning opportunities for their students, based on guidance provided by the school district during a unique time of crisis. In doing so, the district will uphold the mandate that every learner is entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), understanding that this may include modifications to typical instructional strategies, expectations for completion of coursework, and modification of time required to complete a lesson, unit, or course. Above all, staff will ensure equitable opportunities to learn for ALL students.
- While engaging in distance learning students will have scheduled time for social, emotional, and mental health needs. This may be at the end of their lesson with their teacher or part of a scheduled distance learning session with the Tier II Behavioral Teacher.
- Staff’s social, emotional, and mental health needs will be addressed through “the buddy system”, cluster meetings, and all-staff meetings so they may share their concerns and triumphs throughout the school year. The school also attended a mental health professional development via Zoom in January 2021, Mental Health First Aid USA.
- If remote/distance learning would need to be implemented, the food service program would then have the flexibility to change its application so that our students who are remote/distance learning would have the option to have a breakfast or lunch each day by parent pickup and/or delivery, if applicable.

Review Process

Districts must seek public input on whether to revise Safe Return plans a minimum of every six months. If, after public comment, the district determines no revision is necessary, including in response to revised CDC guidance and/or local conditions, the district must note the date of review separate from the date of school board plan approval. Safe Return plans must be posted no later than Aug. 20, 2021, and reviewed no less frequently than the schedule below.

District Assurance of Regular Review: The South Dakota Department of Education will collect assurances from superintendents that Safe Return plans have been reviewed at these points during the school year:

- December 2021 (in conjunction with December Child Count)
- June 2022 (in conjunction with Year-End Sign-off)
- December 2022 (in conjunction with December Child Count)
- June 2023 (in conjunction with Year-End Sign-off)
- December 2023 (in conjunction with December Child Count) –added due to extension of one year
- June 2024 (in conjunction with Year-End Sign-off) added due to extension of one year

First school board approval: 8/16/2021

Last review: 12/18/2023

School board approval of amendment to the plan: 10/18/2021; 1/17/2022; 2/23/2022; 9/19/2022; 12/19/2022; 12/18/2023

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