

# Navajo Public Schools

## Safe Return Plan

### 2023-2024



Covid-19 Response August 11, 2020

\*UPDATED October 12, 2021

\*UPDATED December 14, 2021

\*UPDATED June 22, 2022

\*REVIEWED Dec., 2022

\*REVIEWED June, 2023

#### **Mitigation Efforts**

Navajo is committed to creating an environment where the spread of COVID-19 is less likely to occur among students, faculty and staff by promoting recommended multilayered prevention strategies such as:

- \*Recommendation of consistent and correct use of masks when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

- \*Physical distancing and/or use of student/staff grouping (cohorting)

- \*Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

- \*Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities

- \*Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine as advised from the County Health Department.

- \*Recommend vaccination for all eligible staff and students

- \*Daily symptom monitoring

**Vaccination** is the leading prevention strategy to protect individuals from COVID-19 disease and end the COVID-19 pandemic. Current COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States are safe, proven effective and widely accessible in the U.S. at no cost. A person is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose of Pfizer and Moderna or single dose of Johnson and Johnson. People who are fully vaccinated are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection, and a growing body of evidence suggests that people who are fully vaccinated are less likely to have asymptomatic infection or transmit the virus that causes COVID-19 to others. Therefore, a fully vaccinated, person with no COVID-like symptoms is not expected to quarantine if exposed to a positive case.

Navajo encourages individuals who are not fully vaccinated to wear a mask to protect others as well as themselves. Consistent and correct mask use by people who are not fully vaccinated is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Although fully vaccinated persons do not generally need to wear masks, CDC recommends continued masking and physical distancing for people with weakened immune systems.

**Recent legislation, Senate Bill 658** prohibits Navajo from mandating mask, however mask may be and will be a recommendation.

SB658 States:

(With the exception of a State of Emergency and communication with the Local Health Department)

A. A board of education of a public school district or a technology school district, the board of regents of an institution within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, the governing board of a private postsecondary educational institution, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, the State Board of Education or the State Board of Career and Technology Education shall not:

1. Require a vaccination against Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) as a condition of admittance to or attendance of the school or institution;
  2. Require a vaccine passport as a condition of admittance to or attendance of the school or institution; or
  3. Implement a mask mandate for students who have not been vaccinated against COVID-19.
- B. As used in this section vaccine passport means documentation that an individual has been vaccinated against COVID-19.
- C. Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to any public or private healthcare setting.

**State Law empowers the State Health Department with the exclusive authority to issue an isolation or quarantine order. (State Health Officials have not issued explicit rules or guidelines for schools on quarantines and are not expected to routinely issue quarantine orders that will affect school operations)**

**\*Without a health department order, the district can encourage but not require students identified as close contacts to self-quarantine.**

**\*Schools can recommend/encourage quarantine based on close contact within the facility. (Outside the facility, the Health Department will recommend the quarantine)**

**\*A school can exclude a student from school and school activities who shows COVID-19 symptoms even if they haven't tested positive or been identified as a close contact through the state's administrative rules allowing a superintendent, teacher, or other official in charge of any school to exclude any child suffering from or exhibiting the following symptoms:**

- (1) fever alone, 100 degrees Fahrenheit;**
- (2) sore throat or tonsillitis;**
- (3) any eruption of the skin, or rash;**
- (4) any nasal discharge accompanied by fever;**
- (5) a severe cough, producing phlegm; or**
- (6) any inflammation of the eyes or lids.**

**Assessing Symptomatic Persons for Covid 19:**

People with Covid-19 have a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposed to the virus.

*People with these symptoms may have Covid 19:*

**Class A (Person has one or more symptom, recommended testing and possible recommendation for exclusion from school)**

- \*Fever greater than 100.4 F
- \*Sore throat
- \*Uncontrollable Cough
- \*Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- \*New loss of taste or smell
- \*Diarrhea or vomiting

**Class B (Person has three or more symptoms, recommended testing and possible recommendation for exclusion from school)**

- \*Stuffy OR runny nose
- \*Muscle/Body Aches
- \*Fatigue
- \*Chills
- \*Nausea
- \*Loss of Appetite
- \*Elevated temperature (Less than 100.4F)
- \*New onset of severe headache

School staff should use their best judgment to determine if symptoms can be explained by other causes (I.E. anxiety, missed meal, known medical condition, high stress activity). If all the symptoms Can be explained, the individual should be allowed to remain in school if feasible or sent home in accordance with existing school policy.

If the individual is exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19:

Per current Navajo School policy, students/staff exhibiting a fever of 100.0 or greater will be sent home and can return to school after being fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication.

If an individual is showing at least 1 Class A symptom or 2 or more Class B symptoms and the symptom cannot be explained by other causes, the individual will be sent home for 10 days of isolation beginning at symptom onset.

Individuals that are sent home to isolate may choose to follow-up with a medical provider. If individuals receive an alternative diagnosis ruling out Covid-19 (I.E. Strep, Flu, Bronchitis) or receive a negative Covid-19 test result, they may return to the site 24 hours after symptom resolution or in accordance with existing school procedures. If choosing to return after an alternative diagnosis or negative test result, documentation must be provided to the office prior to or on the morning of return. No documentation is required if completing the 10-day isolation.

Students/Staff are encouraged to take temperatures and evaluate their health every day prior to attending school at Navajo. Students/Staff may be asked to stay at home and not enter the buildings if they have any symptom defined in Class A or three or more symptoms of Class B.

Students will be considered excused absence if under isolation or quarantine with proper documentation.

Employees will utilize sick leave in isolation or quarantine cases with proper documentation of infection.

**Quarantine Guidelines (Contacts to a positive COVID case)**

We will contact parents and ask students to quarantine if identified as a close contact with someone who has COVID-19, unless you have been fully vaccinated. People who are fully vaccinated do NOT need to quarantine after contact with someone who had COVID-19 unless they have symptoms.

**Close Contact is defined by**

\*being within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more and both individuals did not consistently wear mask over their nose and mouth OR

\*within 3 feet of a person with COVID-19 for 15 minutes regardless of mask usage.

\*If mask were worn over the nose and mouth by the positive case and the contact, the contact (if not having symptoms) can attend class and continue to wear a mask but should quarantine from any other school activities.

**\*\*Quarantine Recommendations, based on CDC guidance.**

**\*\*Isolation Guidelines (COVID positive or close contact with symptoms) based on CDC guidelines.**

**\*\*\*Navajo will be following the recommended guidance of the Jackson County Health Department.**

**\*\*\*All or any information is subject to change due to extenuating circumstances.**

Custodians will be sanitizing/disinfecting all areas of the building on a regular basis.

Students/Staff will be encouraged to practice good hygiene with hand sanitation stations set up.

Self-Reporting for any individual should be directed to the building Principal.