

Union City Schools Safe Return and Continuity of Services Plan 2021-2022

Introduction

While our preferred model of instructional delivery is a traditional educational environment, we anticipate continued public health restrictions when school resumes in the fall. Our intent is to provide in-person learning to the greatest extent possible, while also taking steps to keep our students, staff, and community safe and adhering to any applicable public health orders.

This Return to Learn Plan is in response to the requirements of the American Rescue Plan (ARP), which was signed into law March 11, 2021 and appropriated coronavirus relief funds to schools. As recipients of these funds, Union City Schools must address requirements established in the ARP. Our plan also serves to communicate to students, staff, and families our objectives to further the health and wellness initiatives begun in the 2020-2021 school year.

The development of this plan follows two guiding principles:

1. Limit exposure where possible: We will social distance where possible. Masks are recommended but not mandatory. We will look at all avenues to space out when feasible. Some suggestions provided by other plans are not reasonable for our specific conditions due to space, human behaviors, or budget constraints.
2. Learning must remain constant: Union City Public Schools will continue to deliver instruction to students virtually or traditionally (face-to-face). We know disruption during a public health crisis like COVID-19 may occur. Although possible disruption occurs during the school year, consistent lesson delivery from teacher to student will remain strong through a more traditional face-to-face method. Google classroom will be the learning management system Pre-K through grade 12. Full time virtual instruction applications will be accepted for medical recommendations.

The SAFE RETURN AND CONTINUITY OF SERVICES PLAN is derived from the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) Ready Together Oklahoma. ([click here](#))

ARP ESSER III Safe Return Plan Requirement areas:

1. Universal and correct wearing of masks
2. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/pods)
3. Hand washing and respiratory etiquette
4. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation
5. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health department
6. Diagnostic and screening testing
7. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities
8. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies
9. Coordination with State and local health officials
10. Describe how the LEA will ensure a continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students as well as staff members' social, emotional, mental health and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

Within each area, protocols are discussed with the understanding that conditions for each area are subject to change depending on the uncertain circumstances related to COVID-19.

How the plan was developed

The Return to Learn Plan was developed through collaboration with students, teachers, parents, administrators, support staff, board members, community leaders, and public health officials. A Safe Return to School task force gathered on July 29th, 2021 to provide insight into planning recovery and response after a year with COVID-19. Emphasis was placed on a focus on students and their learning, as well as mental health and safety of students, teachers and support staff. The overall health and conditions of learning environments across the district were also addressed.

Communication with Parents and Community

All communication with parents and the community will be delivered through Wengage, school website messenger (email and text), and the district Facebook page. Direct communication with site principals and teachers through email will be used on a regular basis. All staff email addresses, and phone numbers can be accessed through our website at www.unioncity.k12.ok.us info as Union City is committed to strong communication and responsive action. If you need assistance and cannot reach your site, you may reach out to Dr. Becky Slothower, Superintendent at b.slothower@unioncity.k12.ok.us

School Operations

Because of the uncertain nature of COVID-19 and its variants, these guidelines may change due to the number of exposures in our school or community. Mandating masking is no longer allowed on our school campuses. However, we encourage students and staff to wear a mask if they have been exposed to the virus and are experiencing symptoms.

The district will continue to contact trace to determine individuals who have been exposed to the virus when a positive case is reported.

Protocol for Isolation and Quarantine is as follows

Individual who tests positive for COVID

- Will isolate for 10 days

Exposed individuals (14 or more days after COVID-19 vaccine completion)

- Does not need to quarantine

Exposed individuals **without symptoms present**

- Does not need to quarantine
- **Highly recommended** to wear a mask for 5 to 7 days after exposure and/or until a negative test result within the 5-to-7-day window

Exposed individuals **who are experiencing symptoms**

- Will be asked to quarantine according to Oklahoma State Department of Health guidelines
- May return to school after a negative test result between 5 to 7 days after symptoms began

Exposed individuals may choose to quarantine according to updated [Oklahoma State Department of Health guidelines](#).

Other recommendations from the Oklahoma State Department of Health include

- Keeping children and staff home who are having symptoms
- Testing when symptomatic
- Masking, especially when social distancing is difficult

Vaccines are available for anyone age 12 and older. For more information about vaccinations in Oklahoma go to <https://vaccinate.oklahoma.gov/en-US/>.

Please **do your part**. Prevention strategies like masking, social distancing, and hand washing work. Avoiding the spread of the virus is critical to a successful school year.

Cleaning Schedules and Protocols

Union City Schools uses EPA recommended cleaning products and CDC recommended disinfecting procedures. Increased cleaning and disinfecting measures will be implemented in the following areas:

- **Bathrooms**
 - Additional sanitization each day during the lunch period and end of day
- **Classrooms**
 - Sanitized on a regular basis
 - Each classroom will have disinfectant spray for teachers to disinfect as needed
 - Each classroom will have hand sanitizer for students and staff to sanitize hands in classrooms where soap and water are not available
 - Students and staff will limit the sharing of supplies, utensils, devices, toys, books and learning aids
- **Buses**
 - Each bus will be sanitized after the morning route
 - To help control numbers on the buses we are asking parents that are able to drop off and pick up their children
- **Cafeteria**
 - Students will use hand sanitizers located at the beginning of the serving line
 - Students will practice social distancing as much as space allows
 - Serving lines will be modified to minimize contamination of food being served

Handwashing, Hand Sanitizers, and Class Transitions

A consistent schedule of times and procedures will be established throughout the day for proper hand hygiene, hand washing, and limiting exposure to the virus during class transitions. Where possible the number of hand sanitizing stations has been increased in school sites.

- **Hand Hygiene**
 - Wall mounted hand sanitizer dispensers are mounted near each office for visitors to use before entering the building
 - Each classroom teacher will establish a set of classroom protocols for hand hygiene
 - Students will be encouraged to wash and/or sanitize their hands after sneezing/coughing
 - Students will be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow.
- **Water Fountains**
 - Drinking fountains will be turned off but we will have spaces for kids to fill water bottles.

- Students must bring their own bottles of water and will not share with others
- **Class Transitions**
 - Students will be guided and encouraged to keep moving through hallways without congregating in groups
 - Each site will create visual cues to encourage social distancing and speedy traffic flow

Transportation

Union City plans to provide traditional transportation. Students will be encouraged to social distance on buses when possible; however, parents should not expect 6 feet of space between riders on school buses.

To protect drivers and students while riding the bus we will:

- Increase ventilation on buses by lowering windows when possible
- Encourage students to wear masks
- Clean and disinfect buses after each route

Diagnostic and screening testing

In collaboration with our local health department, physicians, and clinics, Union City will provide employees and students with a list of providers that can diagnose and screen for COVID.

Vaccinations

Union City Public Schools will continue to work with local and state health officials to provide referrals for students and staff interested in receiving the vaccine.

Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health department

Principals at each site will conduct contact tracing for their students and staff and then upload the information into the Oklahoma State Department of Education's contact tracing computer system. That system then notifies the county health department for further communication with the state, local, territorial, and tribal health departments.

Coordination with State and local health officials

Union City currently is in communication with the Canadian County Health Department regarding all positive cases and subsequent quarantines that are school related. All positive a contacts and quarantines are funneled through the COVID portal at the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Facility Use by Outside Organizations

Facility use by outside organizations will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Consideration will be given for organizations which are able to commit to guidelines for limiting exposure to the virus. Additional cleaning fees may be required.

Campus Visitors

Campus visitors will be welcomed, but limited during the 2021-2022 school year. Essential business visitors will be required to follow the necessary precautions when entering buildings.

Academics & Growth

Achieving our core mission to educate children is a tremendous challenge during the COVID-19 public health crisis. Union City Schools is committed to keep learning constant throughout the school year although we know we are likely to experience disruption due to the ongoing health crisis.

Our goal is to provide learning pathways for families who may be impacted by health concerns either due to an immunocompromised system or due to a short period where family members are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

Learning Pathway

- **Traditional/Remote* - Grades PK-12**
 - Traditional academic school day
 - All courses/classes taken at regularly assigned school site
 - In-person instruction
 - *Remote Learning will be determined by the district, county, or state in the event of an outbreak
- Students requiring full time virtual instruction due to medical recommendations will contact the principal with the application and request.

Student with Special Needs

Individualized Education Plans (IEP), 504s, English Language Academic Plans will be followed with the assistance of site principals. District related services providers such as speech and OT/PT will be in contact with students and parents to arrange for continued services within the constraints of this public health crisis. IEP and 504 meetings will be held in person unless a request is made for a phone or video conference. All IEP/504 team members are required to participate.

Access to Technology

Devices will be provided for students who need them. Teachers and principals will help identify students who need technology assistance, a checkout system will be utilized and the parent and student will be required to sign a rental agreement. If a device is damaged, the student will be charged for the repair. Fees will be based upon the cost of repair. Please contact Mrs. Jan Swart j.swart@unioncity.k12.ok.us for technology device requests.

Grading and Attendance

Grades and attendance will be taken all year. The district policy for attendance may be found on our district website.

Social Emotional Support

Our mission is to ensure all students and their families feel welcome and safe at school. This mission is especially important during the COVID-19 public health crisis. We work to promote a feeling of community with all students and families.

In response to the increasing needs of families for the 2021-2022 school year, Union City Schools will provide the following:

- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum to assist students in building skills in self-awareness, self-regulation, and collaborative interaction
- Providing additional training for teachers in trauma-informed practices
- Providing health, wellness, and community resources for students and families on our website.

The mental and social emotional health of our employees is also critical to our success. For more information about resources available to assist employees in times of crisis or brain health, contact The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services or The Department of Mental Health Services at:

<https://www.okdrs.gov/guide/oklahoma-department-mental-health-and-substance-abuse-services> or The Oklahoma Employee Assistance Program at <https://oklahoma.gov/odmhsas/about/employee-assistance-program.htm>

School Personnel

The safety of our school staff is paramount to our success. Taking care of all employees during the COVID-19 crisis will require flexibility and understanding in the event of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis.

PPE and Cleaning Kits

Masks are encouraged by the CDC but not required. Each classroom will be provided with disinfectant spray and hand sanitizer. Additional training and support for staff will be provided throughout the school year as conditions change.

What happens if someone tests positive?

If a student or staff member tests positive, we will follow Oklahoma and County Health Department guidelines.

Conclusion

We thank you in advance for your flexibility and understanding as we navigate this crisis together. Union City is an amazing community and I have no doubt that we are all committed to keeping our kids safe and providing them our absolute best. It is going to be a great year!

If you have questions, [COMMENTS](#) (open until Monday evening, August 2nd) or need assistance with this plan contact Dr. Becky Slothower, Superintendent, b.slothower@unioncity.k12.ok.us