

Whitewater School District COVID 19 School Reopening Health & Safety Plan August 2021

Whitewater Public School is proactively looking at the return to school plans for the fall of 2021-2022 school year. We recognize that we do not know yet what impacts COVID19 will have on plans for returning students to our buildings this upcoming school year. We also understand that the situation will be fluid and our plans may need to be adjusted often. Changes may occur based on changing recommendations from federal, state, and local officials.

Whitewater School District Board of Trustees and administration has created this Health and Safety plan in consultation with the Phillips County Health Department, the Office of Public Instruction, Montana School Boards Association, and the Governor's office. This plan will have three phases of implementation in accordance with the Governor's Plan for Reopening Schools.

Stay-at-Home Order/Shelter in Place Order

- All students will be instructed remotely
- Classes will meet via technology when available and appropriate
- School meals will be delivered if requested
- Learning materials will be delivered electronically, by mail, or by in-person delivery
- Communication between teachers, students, and parents will be electronic
- IEP and Section 504 accommodations will be implemented for each applicable student
- School campus will be closed to onsite learning and all student activities

Phase One

- School may reopen for in-person instruction (limited to 10 people in a group setting)
- Accommodations will be made for students, teachers, and staff who are at-risk or caring for someone in an at-risk group
- Distance learning will be provided for those students who choose not to return to school. This choice must be made for the duration of the semester and cannot be changed within that time frame.
- IEP and Section 504 accommodations will be implemented for each applicable student.
- Occupancy limits will follow state and local guidelines and allow for social distancing
- Traffic flow will be controlled in congregational spaces (bathrooms, lunchroom, hallways, playground, etc.).
- Temperatures of staff and students will be taken daily. Bus drivers will take students' temperatures before they board the bus. Office staff will take temperatures of students entering the building through the front door. Persons with a temperature of 100.4 or more will be sent home.

Phase Two

- School districts will provide in-person instruction (limited to 50 people in a group setting)
- Accommodations will be made for students, teachers, and staff who are at-risk or caring for someone in an at-risk group

- Distance learning will be provided for those students who choose not to return to school. This choice must be made for the duration of the semester and cannot be changed within that time frame.
- IEP and Section 504 accommodations will be implemented for each applicable student
- Occupancy limits will follow state and local guidelines and allow for social distancing
- Traffic flow will be controlled in congregational spaces (bathrooms, lunchroom, hallways, etc)

Phase Three

- School will return to “normal”. It will reflect what school looked like prior to March 16, 2020
- Students will be required to return to in-person schooling only

All phases will include

- Identification of a pandemic coordinator and pandemic team
- Cleaning procedures that comply with PC Health Department and CDC guidelines
- Processes for monitoring students and staff for symptoms and history of exposure.
- Protocols for collaborating with PC Health Department for reporting symptoms, tracking, and contact tracing for staff and students.
- Protocols for both short-term and long-term school closure in the event of a positive COVID case within the school or community
- An isolation room for anyone who becomes ill while at school
- Guidelines for when quarantined staff and students may return to school
- Limitations on visitors to the school
- Procedures for offering mental health services and counseling for students and staff. Ensure staff are trained to identify students struggling with trauma
- Protocols for appropriate use and cleaning of common areas: lunchroom, library, gym, and playground
- Protocols for cleaning and sanitizing facilities daily in accordance with CDC guidelines.
- Protocols for transporting students safely
- Protocols for handwashing and sanitizing often throughout the day
- Optional mask wearing by students and staff while on campus
- Protocols for limiting the touching of common surfaces such as door handles, soap dispensers, paper towel dispensers, stair railings, copy machines, etc.
- Signage will be posted in each bathroom, in the hallways, and on the exterior doors giving COVID19 related information

Classroom considerations

- Student seating should maximize social distancing
- Use seating charts with all classes to help with potential contact tracing
- Desks should all face the same direction; have students sit on only one side of tables
- Sharing of materials/equipment should be limited
- Increase ventilation by opening windows whenever possible
- Utilize outdoor spaces for learning whenever possible
- Water fountains will be used for filling water bottles only
- Keep each student’s belongings separated from others
- Monitor students for COVID19 symptoms
- Disinfect desktops and table tops daily
- Disinfect laptops or Chromebooks daily

- Ensure students wash their hands after recess, before and after lunch, before they leave the classroom to enter a different classroom or area, and after they return to their classroom
- Lockers for JH/HS students will be assigned so that social distancing can occur

Lunchroom considerations

- All food, condiments, drinks, etc will be served by the kitchen staff. No self-serve stations or salad bar will be available
- Utilize all available tables to maximize social distancing during lunchtime
- Utilize the “sneeze shield” when serving food
- Disinfect the tables between elementary lunch and JH/HS lunch
- JH/HS may utilize the outdoor tables to alleviate overcrowding (weather permitting).

Pre-School

- Pre-School students will be picked up at front doors at 11:30 A.M. as we will be limiting people into the building.
- Students will eat lunch in their classroom so that the cafeteria can utilize social distancing guidelines.

Transportation considerations

- Students will have assigned seats on the bus. Siblings may sit together
- Buses will be sanitized in accordance with CDC guidelines
- Monitor students for COVID19 symptoms when loading

Janitorial considerations

- HVAC filters will be changed in accordance with CDC guidelines
- Restrooms will be sanitized frequently throughout the day
- Commonly touched surfaces will be sanitized frequently throughout the day
- Facilities will be cleaned and disinfected daily
- Deep cleaning with the misting machine will take place once a week

Extra-curricular considerations

- Comply with MHSAA rules and guidelines for each sport
- Review each event that may be held at the school facility to develop protocols and guidelines for ensuring the safety of all
- Make every attempt to accommodate at-risk individuals who may not be able to attend events on school grounds
- Frequently disinfect all equipment in accordance with CDC guidelines
- Encourage online/virtual events or outdoor venues whenever possible

Teacher considerations

- JH/HS teachers will utilize Google Classroom. At least one assignment each week will be online in an effort to prepare students for a possible sudden transition to distance learning
- Elementary teachers will utilize an online platform if appropriate for their grade level
- Students will be taught the procedures necessary for accessing Google Classroom and their school email

- Lesson plans will be left on the teacher's desk and must be detailed enough so that a substitute teacher or another staff member could take over in the event of an emergency (the full week worth of copies need to be completed)

Parental considerations

- Daily monitoring of your child for COVID symptoms prior to sending your child to school
- Plans for where your child will go if they become sick or exhibit symptoms while at school
- Maintain communication with the school concerning your child's health and academics

Student considerations

- Be prepared for a quick shift to distance learning at any time throughout the school year
- Access Google Classroom and your school email often
- Monitor and report any COVID19 symptoms immediately
- Adhere to social distancing guidelines
- Adhere to handwashing guidelines

Plans for when a staff, child, or visitor becomes sick

- Work with school staff, nurses, or other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room to separate anyone who exhibits COVID19 symptoms
- Establish procedures with parents for the prompt pickup of ill students
- Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Advise sick staff members not to return until they have met CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation
- Follow all PC Health Department guidelines for reporting of symptoms, contact tracing, and testing
- If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID19, it is likely we may need to close school for a temporary period of time. PC Health Department will recommend the length of closure of the school based on the current status of the outbreak

Whitewater School District has adopted the MTSBA COVID19 1900 series policy to ensure that we are in compliance with all pandemic mandates and school regulations. We will adhere to these policies and continue to reevaluate and revise these policies to fit the needs of our school district.

As COVID19 impacts are fluid, we anticipate that multiple changes may occur throughout this school year. Whitewater School will continue to be in constant contact with the PC Health Department, OPI, MTSBA, and the Governor's Office for continued updates. Working in collaboration with our local health department will help determine any level of transmission in the community. If a confirmed case has entered the school, all decisions will be made in accordance with the PC Health Department recommendations. COVID19 may come in "waves" throughout the year, so please be prepared for school cancellations on short notice.

Request for Off Site Instruction

The Whitewater School Board of Trustees authorizes the district to provide distance education to families requesting to opt-out of onsite instruction at the school facility due to COVID19 related health issues for the duration of the declared public health emergency.

Students of families opting out of onsite instruction at the school facility shall receive offsite, online, and/or proficiency based instruction at the discretion of the school district in accordance with District Policy 1906. Whitewater School staff shall arrange for any combination of physical instructional packets, virtual or electronic based course meetings and assignments, self-directed or parent/guardian-assisted learning opportunities, and other education efforts available to staff and students that can be relied upon for grade or credit in order to satisfy the minimum aggregate number of hours or determination of proficiency for the requesting student. Students receiving off site delivery shall be treated the same as students instructed at the school facility for the purposes of grading, discipline, and other educational rights and responsibilities. In other words, students choosing offsite instruction will be expected to complete the same workload and same amount of hours as onsite instruction students. Students granted the offsite instruction option are doing so because of COVID-related health concerns and therefore may be ineligible for all extracurricular activities associated with Whitewater School. By signing this document, parents acknowledge and accept the guidelines as stated.

I, _____, Parent or Guardian of, _____, a student enrolled at Whitewater School, request my student receive educational services and instruction at an offsite location for the duration of the declared public health emergency. This request is for the _____ semester of the 2021-2022 school year.

I understand that this instruction will be in a manner consistent with the methods identified by the Whitewater School. I understand that my child is expected to complete all assigned work and return it to the teacher in order to receive credit toward a grade to be considered for promotion or credit and in accordance with Policy 1902. I further understand that failure to complete work assigned may result in a determination that my student will be retained or otherwise not earn credit.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Administrator Signature _____ Date _____