



Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

Pursuant to the ARPA, Section 2001(i)-ESSERS III

August 14, 2023

Please note this plan will be reviewed multiple times throughout the school year and may be adjusted as new information/guidance becomes available.

Purpose

The purpose of this Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan is to provide a framework for the return of students to Ralston Public Schools' facilities in a manner that maximizes student safety and learning.

This plan will be able to be adapted and updated throughout the school year, based on COVID-19 incidences within our community, and guidance from federal, state, and local government and health departments.

Layered Prevention

The CDC recommends implementing prevention strategies to the largest extent practical to provide a level of protection for the overall health and wellness of its students and staff.

Prevention Strategy - Mask Guidance

To start the 2023-2024 school year, all Ralston Public Schools buildings and schools will be mask optional areas. This includes during the school day, before and after school activities, transportation, and the Lil' Rams before and after school program.

This pertains to all students, administrators, educators, support staff, and every guest who visits our schools or District buildings, regardless of vaccination status.

Students and their families still have the ability to choose to wear a mask while at school and at school events (outside of normal school hours). It is the responsibility of the family to provide their own mask for themselves and their student(s) to use as the District will no longer be providing masks. There will be a supply of masks available at each school in the nurse's office to be accessed on an as needed basis.

District Administrators will review the health and safety protocols throughout the year to determine any changes that may need to be made in the continued management of COVID-19 within our learning environments. Ralston Public Schools will continue to monitor the health status of our community and work closely with the Douglas County Health Department.

These changes may be revised at any given time should there be an outbreak of infections within Ralston Public Schools. Face masks may be required temporarily for staff and students within a specific building if COVID-19 cases rise and the administration and local health department believes that this safety precaution is necessary to prevent further spread and a possible school closure.

Prevention Strategy - Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

Proper handwashing, cough, and sneeze etiquette will be taught, reinforced, and monitored

Hand sanitizer will be readily available to students and staff throughout the school day. (Hand sanitizer will be made up of at least 60% alcohol)

Prevention Strategy - Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities

Our District custodial staff will continue to clean all buildings up to our EPA standard thoroughly and frequently during the day and in the evening.

Prevention Strategy - Screening

Students, parents, and staff will be asked to conduct a daily symptom check before coming to school.

Students and staff members are asked to not report to school if symptomatic or with a temperature above 100° F.

Students and staff who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms will be encouraged to call the school and stay home.

COVID-19 Pre-Screening Guide:

Please ask these questions to your student(s) daily before sending them to school.

If you answer YES to two (2) of these questions, you should stay home from school.

- a sore or scratchy throat
- muscle aches and pains
- headache
- congestion or runny nose
- nausea or vomiting
- diarrhea
- fatigue

If you answered YES to one (1) of these questions, you should stay home from school.

- Individuals with fever (temperature above 100° F)
- a new intense, persistent cough
- an intense tightening in the chest and shortness of breath
- difficulty breathing
- loss of taste and smell

Please consult your student's health care provider to ask about your child's symptoms and if testing is necessary. Children's Hospital and Medical Center offers a Health Help Line for families at 402-955-3200.

[Prevention Strategy - Vaccinations](#)

Vaccinations are the decision of each individual family. Ralston Public Schools will continue to monitor information regarding vaccinations and provide updates to staff, students, and parents when necessary. A mandatory requirement of vaccination will not be enforced by the school district.

[Prevention Strategy - Coordination with State & Local Health Officials](#)

Ralston Public Schools will continue to collaborate with the Douglas County Health Department, Nebraska Department of Education, and other government agencies on a regular basis while monitoring case levels and remaining in compliance with any and all Directed Health Measures.

[Prevention Strategy - Positive Individual](#)

Positive Individual: What to do if you have a positive COVID-19 individual in your house and how it affects your students **(updated August, 2023):**

1. Should a student test positive for COVID-19, please contact your student's school nurses office or the **District's Health Hotline (402-898-3474)** so we can ensure it as an excused absence and provide a date the student may return to school.
2. We are asking families and staff to please treat COVID-19 as you would any other infectious condition or virus: **stay home**, take time to heal, and follow good hygiene practices to prevent infecting others. You can find the latest medical advice from Douglas County Health here: <https://www.douglascountyhealth.com/>
3. The positive COVID-19 case needs to be isolated for five (5) days from the date of the positive test.

4. The positive individual may return to school after Day 5, and the District strongly recommends (but does not require) the individual wear a mask through Day 10.
5. Your child's school building will be able to assist you with navigating return dates and completing school work during these times.
6. Household individuals of the positive case are allowed to come to school (if they are symptom free), masking is recommended, please monitor for symptoms.

School Protocols: School Health Team members will submit the positive cases to the District Health Services Supervisor to keep an internal running list of cases. RPS will no longer be conducting contact tracing or provide weekly information on positive cases through a COVID-19 dashboard. The District will share positive cases with the Douglas County Health Department.

Proactive Measures: Individuals of all ages have the opportunity to receive the COVID-19 vaccination and/or booster. Families and staff are asked to please reach out to their healthcare provider for more information.

Public Comment

Ralston Public Schools received guidance from the Douglas County Health Department, Nebraska Department of Education, and the Center for Disease Control in developing our return to school protocol.

Ralston Public Schools provides public comment at all our Board of Education meetings. Public comment can be provided via letters, in-person, and online through a submission form on the District website.