

UPDATED: HPS Safety Protocols

Public Health Protocols

Protocols described in this staff framework are meant as a guide to each site in providing the safest and most healthy learning environment when students return to school. Guidelines are written to be the most practical, feasible, and appropriate for the students' developmental ages. Recommendations outlined in this section of this document have been derived from research from resources including but not limited to the American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Oklahoma State Department of Education Return to Learn Oklahoma: A Framework for Reopening Schools and the Oklahoma State Department of Health: Reopening Guidelines for Schools and Day Camps.

Masks for Staff

Masks or face shields will be optional; therefore, all staff are allowed to have a face shield or mask available at all times. All staff will be allowed to wear a face shield or mask when working within six feet of students or colleagues. Staff and students will be required to provide their own masks.

Masks for Students

Face masks will be optional for all students. If a student chooses to wear a mask, students will be encouraged to keep track of their own mask at all times. Masks, however, will not be provided by the school.

Temperature Checks

It will be the responsibility of parents to check their child's temperature daily through a self-screening process before they leave home each day. Faculty will only be checking temperatures if a situation occurs or is warranted.

Accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies

Accommodations and modifications will be provided regardless of the educational setting. General and special education teachers will continue to collaborate in determining the appropriateness and success of a student's unique accommodations and modifications. The IEP team (general education teachers, special education, administration, related service providers, and families) will work collaboratively to identify alternative solutions if accommodations or modifications are not appropriate or successful in a particular setting.

Illness at School

If a student or employee is identified with a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or if either a student or staff member begins exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (shortness of breath, fever or chills, muscle or body aches, loss of taste and smell, cough.) while at school, he or she will be isolated, sent home immediately, and encouraged to be tested.

POSITIVE COVID

Staff and students who have tested positive for COVID-19 should isolate for 5 days and if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are resolving (without fever for 24 hours), follow that by a recommendation of wearing a mask for 5 days when around others to minimize the risk of infecting people they encounter.

Exposure at School

Harrah Public Schools has moved from quarantines being required to quarantine notification. Parents will be notified when their child has been in close contact with a positive case of COVID and they will have the responsibility to determine if quarantine is warranted following exposure to Covid-19.

Vaccines

The district will continue to encourage employees and students to get vaccinated. The district will also seek opportunities to partner with the Oklahoma County Health Department to provide vaccination pods for this area.

Continuity of Services

The district is prepared to offer a continuity of services (academic, social/emotional, special services, and food) if a local COVID-19 outbreak were to occur.

Screening/COVID Testing

As long as the state provides COVID screening tests, the district will continue to test all students and employees that request a screening. Those results will be recorded through the Oklahoma State Department of Education portal.

Staff Attendance

If you have not been vaccinated and develop any COVID-19 symptoms or feel you have been directly exposed to COVID-19, please contact your supervisor immediately to seek guidance on appropriate leave to take.

Student Attendance

For the school year of 2021-2022, any COVID-19 related absences will be considered “a significant medical condition” and be exempted from the count attributed toward a child’s record under the chronic absenteeism classification. Medical documentation must be provided to substantiate the absence as COVID-related.

Good Hygiene Practices

Frequent and thorough handwashing practices have proven to be critical in the mitigation of any virus, especially COVID-19. Schools will plan and prepare for additional handwashing opportunities throughout the day. All students will wash their hands before eating breakfast or lunch. In addition to increased opportunities for handwashing, there will also be increased opportunities for students to use hand sanitizer in the classroom and at multiple hand sanitizing

stations throughout the school building.

Social Distancing

By maintaining social distancing in the various settings that students will occupy, schools will decrease the threat of transmission of the virus. Extra furniture and classroom displays that inhibit an appropriately distanced arrangement of student desks may be removed from the classrooms while the threat of COVID-19 remains in the community. ***When feasible,*** students will be separated by approximately six feet.

Guests

On the occasions that guests are deemed appropriate, they will be permitted to wear a mask while on campus and check-in through the school's office. As always, all guests must display their Driver's License prior to entering the school building.

Water Fountains and Restrooms

Students and staff are encouraged to bring filled water bottles or other non-breakable water containers to school with them. Student restrooms will be cleaned multiple times throughout the day by the site custodial staff, who will use portable disinfectant foggers to sanitize the areas. Staff restrooms will also be disinfected periodically throughout the school day.

School Breakfasts and Lunches

Typical cafeteria meal settings make it difficult to social distance, thus increasing the possibility of exposure and transmission of the virus. For this reason, schools ***may choose*** to create alternate dining areas to include outdoor spaces, common areas, hallways, classrooms, or any other area that will offer a clean, spacious dining experience.

Transportation

When possible, parents are encouraged to drive their children to school in order to reduce the number of students riding the school bus each day. This will allow for greater levels of social distancing among those who do ride the bus. When feasible, school bus windows will be down to increase ventilation and inhibit the virus contagion. In addition, students will be assigned seats on the bus to achieve optimal social distancing and to provide for contact tracing should a bus rider come down with COVID during the day or overnight. Parents of students riding the bus to school will be expected to check their child's temperature each day prior to them getting on the bus.

Teacher and Staff Personal Children

Before and After School Children of teachers and staff should be where their peers are following the same guidelines and procedures established for all students. Prior to and after teacher contract time, these children should remain in their parent's classroom or other designated areas as defined by the site administrator.

Elementary School Day

Face Masks/Shields for Elementary Students and Staff

Face masks for elementary students are optional. Student masks will not be provided by the school. To the extent possible, schools will allow the use of masks or face coverings for all students. Such practices regarding masks will be more feasible, the older the student is. Younger students may touch their faces more with a mask than without a mask.

Arrival & Dismissal

As students arrive at school in the morning, they will be directed to go to a general area. Students will not be gathered in large groups to congregate and wait for their school day to begin as they may have been in the past. Parents will not be escorting their children into the building. All parents will be asked to remain in their cars and drive through the line to ensure health and safety precautions are followed. Adults and those assisting with arrival procedures will be directing students into the building.

At the end of the school day, while awaiting dismissal, students will still follow guidelines by avoiding large groups, as much as possible. When their bus number or car tag number is called, they will walk down the hallway to exit through the designated doors. Students attending an on-site Before/After Care program will also remain in their classrooms until the designated time for them to go to Before/After Care.

Classroom Organization

As often as possible, while the threat of COVID-19 remains in the community, students will stay in designated areas. Teachers and staff will keep students in cohorts to reduce the mixing of students. Keeping students in a cohort helps to minimize exposure and mitigate the virus. For grades that are departmentalized such as 4th and 5th grades, if the threat of the virus reaches a heightened level, students will stay in their homeroom to assist with keeping a common cohort of students together. Rather than having students transition to different classrooms for different subjects, the teachers will rotate instead.

Media Center

Honoring the importance of reading for both pleasure and research, the school media centers will remain open for student use. While there may be some changes in routines and schedules, it is our intent to keep our media centers open and available to our students and staff. Students will be allowed to check out books from the Media Center. As books are returned they will be sanitized prior to being placed back on the shelves for checkout again.

Student Clubs

The traditional format of student clubs will be gradually incorporated back into the sites. However, any club that can operate in a virtual manner or in a small group, social distancing, being outdoors, etc, will continue.

Schoolwide Assemblies

School-Wide assemblies will occur through some in-person learning opportunities. There may be large gatherings experienced in a traditional format such as weekly “Rise & Shine” assemblies, programs, and fundraising events. Each site will develop procedures and protocols to carry on such events, when feasible.

Music and Performances

Depending on current COVID numbers, Music or PE programs or plays will gradually be incorporated back into each site’s learning environment.

Book Fairs

Depending on current COVID numbers, Book Fairs will gradually be incorporated back into each site’s learning environment.

Fundraisers

Depending on current COVID numbers, fundraisers will gradually be incorporated back into each site’s learning environment and follow all CDC guidelines.

Secondary School Day

Face Masks/Shields for Middle & High School Students and Staff

Face masks for secondary students are optional. Student masks will not be provided by the school. To the extent possible, schools will allow the use of masks or face coverings for all students. Such practices regarding masks will be more feasible, the older the student is. Younger students may touch their faces more with a mask than without a mask.

Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizer

Teachers are encouraged to wash their hands at every opportunity or to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when hand washing is not feasible. Practicing this prevention tactic as an often-repeated habit not only protects the teacher but also serves as a great reminder for students to do the same.

Arrival & Dismissal

Arrival routines will look different this year in an effort to allow students to maintain a safe physical distance from one another as they wait for the first-hour bell to begin class. Each site will work with the layout and options in their specific building to maximize opportunities for student distancing in the minutes before school begins.

At the end of the day as much as possible, students will be released in a staggered manner to avoid all of them traveling through the halls toward the same exit. Student supervision will be imperative during these gathering times as students come and go each day, requiring teachers to assist more than usual with a rotational system of unpaid duty assignments.

Classroom Organization

To the extent possible, classroom desks will be arranged to all face in the same direction. To facilitate the difficult challenge of social distancing in a classroom, it will be necessary to remove any extraneous furniture from the environment. Some classes may consider setting up a learning space outdoors or in a common area. High-touch surfaces like door handles and light switches should be cleaned frequently throughout the day. Student desktops should also be wiped with a sanitizer wipe between classes.

When feasible, middle schools may choose to have students remain in one classroom for all of their core classes while the teachers rotate. Otherwise, schools should consider the issue of class change to see if a plan can be implemented to reduce the number of students in the hallway simultaneously

Locker Use

For those students who choose to use their school lockers, daily visits to store and pick up materials will be limited in a manner that reduces the number of students in a hallway area at any one time. For instance, lockers with a number that ends in an even digit may be asked to visit lockers after even-numbered class periods and similarly, odd-numbered lockers. At every opportunity, we will be seeking ways to minimize unnecessary material and items being brought into the school.

Media Center

Honoring the importance of reading for both pleasure and research, the school media centers will remain open for student use. While there may be some changes in routines and scheduling, it is our intent to keep our media centers open and available to our students and staff. Students will be allowed to check out books from the Media Center. As books are returned they will be sanitized prior to being placed back on the shelves for checkout again.

School Activities

Extra and co-curricular activities and athletics of all descriptions are vital elements of a secondary student's experience. Responses to COVID-19 in these environments will vary, always with a keen eye to proven practices and research in prevention and protection. Various organizations will be consulted for guidance and insight into the challenges and recommendations for special interest organizations.

Vocal Music, Band, PE, Drama Classes

Because vocal music, band, drama, and PE are likely to involve high volumes of oral expectorant, there is a strong likelihood that aerosol distribution of COVID-19 will occur in these courses' classrooms. Mitigation techniques, such as cloth masks, distancing, and outdoor classrooms, are all opportunities that are presently being considered as we await the results of the study. Moving forward, Harrah teachers will be a strong voice in the conversation of curriculum and performance planning. At this point, there are no absolutes, and as has been

stated often, much can change in the weeks and months to come. Your patience is kindly appreciated!

Schoolwide Assemblies

Schoolwide assemblies will be limited at the beginning of the school year to avoid the likely possibility of exposure that would occur when hundreds of students gather to chant and cheer their teams on to victory. Outdoor gatherings may be a suitable and safer alternative. As the year wears on, such events may be reinstated if the virus takes a turn toward diminishing infections.

Fundraisers

Fundraising events will only be held in person when they can be limited to small groups of students, maintaining social distance, and following CDC guidelines. Otherwise, all fundraising efforts will need to be held virtually.

Breakfast & Lunch

Students will be reminded to access lavatories for hand washing prior to meal service. Accessible hand sanitizer dispensers will be available too. Because mealtime, by its very nature, presents many opportunities for the spread of germs, schools will be offering students a variety of seating options to provide safer situations than the typical cafeteria setting would allow. Students will be reminded that sharing food is not a safe practice.

Student Supplies

When students share supplies, such as pens, art materials, and calculators, they are also sharing their germs. For this reason, we are asking students to come to school fully prepared with the materials they will need and to avoid sharing the materials. If a student is unable to provide an item due to its expense, the school will make every effort to seek funds or materials to support the child. Expectations for individual student materials should always be assigned with the cost in mind.

PTO Events

Traditional PTO-sponsored events such as pizza days, donut days, and apparel sales will not be held during the time of a threat of the virus. Events that can be held virtually could be considered, but only if approved by the site administrator.

Mental Health Challenges

Most of the focus in recent months has been on the physical health of our students and staff, but just as fragile in these times is the mental health of everyone in our school community. If you or any of your colleagues experience a need for counseling, the district has established a contract with a local private counselor to provide a limited number of sessions to offer support in the area of mental health. Your site's principal or guidance counselor with those additional resources.