

Cassville R-IV School District



Return to Learn Plan Guidelines and Information January 2022

This plan may continue to be modified as more data and information is learned.

Version: January 20, 2022



LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Wildcat Families,

We continue to closely monitor conditions around the pandemic, review information from our public health authorities, elicit input from the community, and collaborate together with our local educational partners. With the most recent [letter](#) from the Missouri Attorney General on December 7, 2021, the school district has developed updates to the Return to Learn Plan for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year.

At this time, we will shift into [Engagement Level 1](#) which includes traditional seated in-person instruction with health precautions.

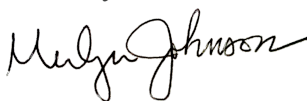
Based on current pandemic conditions and guidance from the Barry County Health Department, we are asking our school community to:

- Continue in-person learning, including regularly scheduled extracurricular programs.
- Per the [CDC Order](#), face coverings are required on all public transportation including school buses.
- The CDC and the Barry County Health Department recommend being vaccinated, if eligible and so advised.
- Respond to the “mask” optional choices of others in a professional and respectful manner.
- Stay home if you have signs of any infectious illness and see a doctor as soon as possible.
- Follow all other important layers of prevention that Cassville R-IV will recommend, such as hand washing and respiratory etiquette, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection procedures.

We must stay vigilant as we keep our learning community safe, healthy, and prepared for another successful school year. Our administrative team will be available for questions or concerns that may arise. Thank you for your continued partnership in helping us keep our schools and children safe and healthy.

On behalf of our Board of Education, teachers, staff, and administration, please allow us your continued understanding, patience, and grace. Our commitment is to provide the safest environment to protect every staff member, student, and family.

Sincerely,



Merlyn Johnson
Cassville R-IV Superintendent



Cassville R-IV School District Return to Learn Plan

This plan was created in collaboration with other area school districts incorporating input from medical professionals, the CDC, and the Barry County Health Department. This plan may continue to be modified as more data and information is learned.

It is important to note that while the District will make every effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for our students and staff, there are inherent risks with participation in group activities. Therefore, the District is unable to guarantee that students will be free from exposure to various forms of illness, including COVID-19. Despite these risks, school safety for staff and students will continue to be a top priority of the District. The COVID-19 guidelines developed in this plan follow all applicable local, state, and federal guidelines and incorporate many best practices advocated by school associations and groups. The Cassville R-IV School District is committed to providing a quality education to all students, while ensuring their safety and well-being. Parents/guardians with questions or concerns are asked to contact their building administrator.

CDC and Barry County Health Department Guidance

- According to the CDC, vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Per the [CDC Order](#), face coverings are required on all public transportation including school buses.
- The CDC and the Barry County Health Department recommend individuals 5 years and older to consider being vaccinated, if eligible and so advised.
- Stay home if you have signs of any infectious illness and see a doctor as soon as possible.

Cassville R-IV Guidelines and Protocols

- The District will shift to [Engagement Level 1](#) which includes seated in-person instruction with health precautions. This plan also includes regularly scheduled extracurricular programs.
- Student masking will be the choice of the parent/student.
- Respond to the “mask” optional choices of others in a professional and respectful manner.
- Follow all other important layers of prevention that Cassville R-IV will recommend, such as social distancing, hand washing and respiratory etiquette, and enhanced cleaning and disinfection procedures.

Masking / Personal Protective Equipment

- The District will have a limited supply of masks that will be offered to anyone who wishes to wear one.



- All mask/face coverings must comply with the District dress code requirements. They must be free of any wording or advertisements that could cause a substantial disruption to the educational environment.

Transportation

- Per the [CDC Order](#), face coverings are required on all public transportation including school buses.
- Students will be separated on the bus where feasible, but social distancing cannot be guaranteed.
- Bus drivers have been properly trained in COVID safety measures.
- Seating charts will be utilized to help mitigate the spread of contagious disease.

Classrooms

- Appropriate hygiene practices will be reinforced by all staff.
- Personal water bottles will be encouraged. The District has installed water bottle filling stations to help reduce the use of water fountains.
- There will be time during the day for frequent hand washing and sanitizing.
- Students and staff will be observed for illness prior to starting class or the school day. Those experiencing symptoms will be referred to the nurse.
- Seating charts will be utilized to help mitigate the spread of contagious disease.

Cleaning/Hygiene Handwashing

- Regular disinfecting will occur with COVID-19 and EPA-approved products.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed throughout the buildings and at exterior doors.
- School water fountains will be turned off, however, bottle filling stations will be provided.
- Hand washing will be frequently promoted as well as hand sanitizing usage.
- Additional equipment and cleaning procedures will be used across the District.

Health Services (Nurse's Office)

- School nurses will keep students and staff informed of COVID-19 safety best practices.
- If you have medication for your child, please schedule a time with the school nurse to drop it off.
- Parents and students are expected to self-screen at home prior to students entering the building.
- Students or staff demonstrating symptoms will be referred for physician evaluation. Prior to returning to school, consult a school nurse or provide documentation from a physician.



Accommodations & Special Services

- Special education teachers and therapists will continue to provide services for students with IEPs at their building sites. Safety protocols will be followed and put into place for staff and students. If screenings and diagnostic testing cannot be accomplished in-person, virtual options will be reviewed.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to communicate with their child's special education case manager before school begins to discuss specific student needs/concerns along with safety protocols put in place for all students.
- Parents/guardians of students in grades 1-12 who indicate via the District registration that they are considering an online option will be contacted by special services personnel to discuss specific programming to address their child's unique needs.
- All services will continue to be provided to students either in-person or virtually when possible as outlined on Form G in the IEP.
- Cassville R-IV School District will provide all necessary accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies outlined in this plan. Counseling and mental health services are available for students and staff. You may contact your child's building counselor for more information.

Continuity of Services

- If the Cassville R-IV School District is required to move into Engagement Level 3 (Remote Learning), the District will pivot into an online learning environment. Devices will be sent home with students in grades 1-12. All daily learning will be teacher-driven to prevent learning regression. Learning will move forward with normal grading practices in place during this time. The Cassville R-IV School District will provide support for students without internet connectivity.

Virtual Learning

- Both virtual and in-person learning will be available during the 2021-2022 school year. Parents/Guardians are asked to make a decision on what will be best for their families by the 5th academic day of each semester.
- An application process is required. After the application is submitted, your child's building principal/counselor will make contact with you to discuss your virtual choice and determine best educational interest.
- Any student who is unable to achieve success in their virtual coursework will be required to return to in-person instruction.

Symptomatic Students and Employees

The following information is based on current guidance from national, state, and local health officials.



- Symptomatic students who become ill while at school will be treated in a triage area that is isolated from others. Employees with symptoms from the list below will be sent home. Students and employees will follow the Return to Learn guidelines as outlined in this plan. The following symptoms indicate a possible illness that may decrease a person's ability to function productively, but also may put them at risk for spreading illness to others. Please visit the CDC website for a complete-list of expected symptoms.
- Temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.
- New, uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing or speaking (For those with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their normal cough).
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain.
- New onset of severe headaches (especially with fever).
- Loss of taste or smell.

Confirmed COVID Case Action Plan

- Confirmed student/staff positive COVID-19 notifications will result in exclusion from the school setting.
- A positive COVID-19 test will exclude all students/staff until cleared:
 - 5 days from the onset of symptoms (return on the 6th day) and symptom free
 - Students/Staff with COVID-19 should undergo isolation for at least 5 full days. Day 0 is the day symptoms began or the day of the positive viral test (for students/staff with no COVID-19 symptoms).
 - Students/Staff who test positive for COVID-19 and never develop symptoms should isolate for at least 5 days. Day 0 is the day of the positive viral test (based on the date of testing) and day 1 is the first full day after the specimen was collected for the positive test.
 - If students/staff continue to have no symptoms, they can end isolation after at least 5 days.
 - Students/Staff should continue to wear a [well-fitting mask](#) until day 10 (day 6 through day 10). If they are unable to wear a mask when around others, they should continue to isolate for 10 days.
 - If students/staff develop [symptoms](#) after testing positive, the 5-day isolation period should start over. Day 0 is the first day of symptoms. Follow the recommendations above for [ending isolation for people who had COVID-19 and had symptoms](#).
- Students/Staff have the opportunity to utilize the district provided testing kits in an effort to return to school.

Direct Exposures

- The District will not order or enforce students/staff to quarantine or isolate from the public.



- The District will partner with parents/guardians to exclude students from the school setting who have or who are liable to transmit any known illness.
- District related contact tracing information will be shared with the Barry County Health Department upon request.
- The District will notify all students/staff who are determined to be close contacts.
- Close contacts will be asked to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Students and staff deemed to be close contacts may choose to self-quarantine, but not required.

School Closures

- The District will consider school closures based upon the **recommendation** of the Barry County Health Department and/or state guidelines.
- The District will consider school closures based on the exclusion/positivity rates of the student/staff population.
- It is important to note that should a closure, change of school schedule, and/or exposure to COVID-19 take place, the District will use various methods of communication to contact families.

Communication

- Regular updates to the Board of Education, community members, and parents/guardians will be provided as determined by school administration.
- It is imperative that schools have up-to-date contact information. Teachers will share valuable information as well as provide feedback to students when necessary. **Please make sure all of your contact information is up-to-date with your child's respective office.**
- Families and community members may access the following for district updates regarding COVID-19 and its effects on:
 - District website link: [District Updates Regarding COVID-19](#)
 - District text alerts: https://cassville.k12.mo.us/vnews/display.v?page=vlist_signup
 - Download district app: Search Cassville R-IV in your app store
 - Follow the district social media pages on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter
 - School Messenger (Automated phone message system)

Return to Learn Updates

- Please note: The information in this document is subject to change based on further guidance received by the district. The district will consistently review the following factors in determining the current Engagement Level.
- Current District/County positivity rates.
- Guidance from the local health department, DESE, as well as other appropriate government agencies.



- Please contact Cassville R-IV School District Central Office if a translation of this document is needed.
- This plan will be updated as new information is learned.
- This plan is required to be reviewed once every six months by stakeholders. Stakeholders may include students, parents, administrators, teachers, nurses, and board members. This plan will be reviewed during monthly meetings held by the Board of Education.
- The Return to Learn Plan was last updated on December 16, 2021.
- The District encourages vaccinations for all eligible educators, other staff, and students. Information about local vaccination clinics are constantly provided by the head nurse. For more information, you may contact Bobbi Blankenship at bblankenship@cassville.k12.mo.us
- The District will consider all DHSS and DESE updates to the [Missouri School COVID-19 Operating Guidance document](#). The section regarding guidance includes the following key updates/additions:
 - Option 4 – Test to Stay
 - The District is able to provide tests for students of willing parents and staff as long as the DESE provided testing kits are available.



Engagement Level Indicators

Cassville R-IV School District will use Engagement Level Indicators to define health and safety restrictions to provide guidelines for students, staff, parents, and community stakeholders. With guidance from the Barry County Health Department, Cassville School District will adjust Engagement Level restrictions to promote wellness or respond to wide-spread transmission of COVID-19. Staff, parents, students, and community are asked to assist with wellness efforts.

Normal Operations

TRADITIONAL SCHOOL

All classes will take place in school buildings. Staff and students will maintain normal routines and school safety/security procedures. Parents, visitors, and guests follow all normal school security protocols.

ENGAGEMENT LEVEL 1

No Community Spread--Seated School with Health Precautions

All classes will take place in school buildings. Extra cleaning and safety protocols for staff and students will be followed. Staff and students will be encouraged to follow physical and personal responsibility wellness expectations. Restrictions on parents and visitors in the building.

ENGAGEMENT LEVEL 2

Minimal to Moderate Community Spread--Seated School Instruction with Technology Support

Staff and students will access buildings and classrooms. Learning will be provided with a technology integration model. Options for seated and remote learning courses will align and be taught in the building with teachers. Current wellness protocols for staff and students will be followed. Visitors will be allowed in buildings under special circumstances.

ENGAGEMENT LEVEL 3

Substantial Community Spread--Remote Learning

Students will receive instruction by teachers using remote learning from home and complete assignments by accessing virtual class platforms. All buildings will be closed to students and public.

SAFETY PRIORITIES

Increased Cleaning

Sanitation

Wellness Screening

Personal Responsibility

Physical Distancing

Personal Protective

Equipment

Limited Visitor Access

Remote Learning Options

Procedures for Exposure

Movement from Level 1 up to Level 2:

Spread of COVID-19

COVID-19 within school

Guidance from health

department

Movement from Level 2 up to Level 3:

Increasing spread of

COVID-19

Multiple cases in school

Guidance from health

department

Insufficient staff to support

learning



Social-Emotional & Mental Health

The importance of good mental health cannot be understated at this time. The COVID-19 pandemic is an evolving situation that is causing stress and uncertainty for many of us.

There are steps school leaders and staff can take to foster health and well-being in themselves and their school communities. Keep in mind that recovery from a crisis takes time and may not happen in a linear fashion-especially during a pandemic that does not have a defined, known end.



- Awareness, balance, and connection can help;
- Set and celebrate achievable goals;
- Celebrate the resilience of the great people around you who go above and beyond as they support and help others in times of crises.

Questions & Answers

We understand that during this unusual time, many of our students are faced with additional stress and/or anxiety. As always, Cassville R-IV wants to partner with families to support students in the best way possible. Counselors are available and can help with local resources.

How will the social/emotional health of my child be addressed when classroom instruction resumes?

- Professional development will be provided for building staff regarding typical childhood reactions to stress and trauma.
- Counselors and social workers will collaborate with teachers on classroom activities to address student mental health upon return to school.
- Cassville R-IV will collaborate with mental health partners on best practices.
- Teachers will provide classroom lessons on school expectations and structure around health, safety and physical distancing practices to help students re-adjust to a full school schedule.

What type of services are available for my students through the school?

- As always, our school counselors are wonderful outlets for kids when they are feeling stressed or overwhelmed with school or life in general.
- Out of district health services provider information is available when students or families are in need of resources which may otherwise be unavailable to them. This includes, but is not limited to school and hygiene supplies, clothes, food, and mental health services.
- Cassville R-IV partners with the Clark Center to promote mental health.



Student Transportation



Cassville R-IV School District will communicate to parents and students not to attend school or take the bus if sick.

Hand sanitizer will be available to students for loading and unloading from the bus.



Bus Procedures:

- Bus Drivers and students will be required to wear facemasks/facial coverings.
- Students are highly encouraged to practice physical distancing while waiting for the bus at their designated bus stop.
- Bus drivers will watch for continued coughing and may request a student sit in a designated area on the bus and offer the student a mask.
- The bus driver will immediately alert the school administration

upon arrival.

- Drivers will sanitize the rail frequently with an EPA approved disinfectant
- Drivers will sanitize seats between use with an EPA approved disinfectant.
- The front row seats will be used at the discretion of the driver and/or Administration.
- Bus drivers will not work if they are sick.
- Students within the same household (or students who are considered in each other's stable group) may be assigned seats together or in seats across from, in front of, or behind each other.
- If a child refuses to wear a mask, the driver will not force the child to wear a mask.



Questions and Answers Regarding Activities and Athletics

Cassville R-IV plans to provide students the opportunity to participate in most extracurricular activities. While offering these opportunities, the district will prioritize the health and safety of students and staff.

When competitions/games begin, will spectators be allowed?

- Yes

What is the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) and the Big 8 Conference planning?

- MSHSAA and the Big 8 Conference Executive Committee may further outline guidelines on how athletics and activities will be offered at district high schools and middle schools. As a district, we understand the importance of offering these opportunities to our students and will continue to make every effort to do so. However, we know there may be decisions made by local, state, or national organizations that may prohibit some if not all extracurricular activities from taking place.

What can parents/guardians do to help?

- Moving forward, this will be a collaborative effort and safety is our priority. All coaches and students must, prior to reporting to any district site, self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure. Should they have any current symptoms of COVID-19, they must stay at home and contact the BCHD for guidance. They should also report this situation to their assigned coach or sponsor.



Instructional and Learning Overview

Protocols for all buildings

- Schools will make reasonable best efforts to minimize risk
- In classrooms, every best effort will be made to maintain cohort groups.
- Large gatherings will be closely monitored.

Elementary-Primary and Intermediate

Early Childhood & Pre-K

- Students will be selected to attend our half-day program.
 - Class sizes will not exceed 18 students in a classroom.
 - A waiting list will be maintained and adjustments made to class sizes based on health department guidelines and recommendations.
 - Student attendance will be closely monitored. Students failing to maintain consistent attendance will be contacted.

Kindergarten (K) - Fifth (5th) Grade

- In the event of a “Wellness Break” students' education will continue online through the use of Google Classroom and/or Seesaw. Students who do not have access to wifi will be eligible to access lessons through the use of an “offline” component.
- It is imperative the school has up-to-date contact information. Teachers will share valuable information as well as provide feedback to students during this virtual learning experience.
- K-5 grading practices will follow the same format as previous years.
- Students will continue having recess.
- K-5 students will have access to PE, Art, Music, Media, Special Education, EL, Title, and intervention.

ELL (English Learner) Services

- Elementary ELL students will receive direct support for English language development from their ELL teacher.
- If Cassville R-IV School District closes due to health concerns, students will continue to receive ELL support remote from their ELL teacher.



High School and Middle School

- In-person classes will mirror the teacher’s remote platform. In the event of school closure (OR any student/teacher absence), instruction will transition to remote learning immediately.
- For the 2021-22 school year, it is possible teacher assignments could be changed based on enrollment.
- In order to maintain adequate transportation records, emergency requests to ride an alternate bus must be submitted to the office no later than 2:00 p.m.
- 6-12 students will retain a “normal” schedule, but interactions outside the classroom may be limited.

VoTech/CTE (Career and Technical Education) Classes will be available for students.

- Some CTE courses require an in-person lab, and those labs will be made available to students.
- Transportation to Scott Regional Technology Center in Monett will be provided

Performing Arts (Band, Choir, Speech, Debate, and Drama)

- Classes may be reorganized to emphasize social/physical distancing. This will potentially include alterations to traditional class expectations.
- Students will use their own equipment to avoid sharing. When this is not possible, appropriate cleaning and sanitizing will take place.
- If Cassville R-IV has to close a school or the district closes due to health concerns, students may be allowed limited access to instruments or practice spaces that cannot be achieved at home.

Visual Arts

- Visual art classes within the Fine Arts Department will continue with enrolled students. Appropriate accommodations will be implemented.
- Classes may be reorganized to emphasize social distancing.
- We will utilize all available digital tools and classroom resources to maximize student learning.
- Students will use their own equipment to avoid sharing. When this is not possible appropriate cleaning and sanitizing will take place. Teachers will demonstrate proper hand washing and cleaning of tools, equipment, and media so students can properly clean shared items when appropriate. Students will follow teacher demonstrations and expectations.

Library Media Services

- All students will have access to print and digital materials available through the Cassville R-IV Library Media program.
- All students will be instructionally supported by Middle School/High School media specialists both online and in-person.



Temporary Remote and School to Home Learning Option

In the event one or more students or teachers are unable to attend in person

- Students will be expected to complete all coursework through the designated remote learning platform.
- Courses are most-often developed by Cassville R-IV teachers and taught by Cassville R-IV teachers. In some situations, self-paced options might provide alternative curricula.
- 6-12 students will be given feedback through the A-F (traditional) grading system.
- Students accessing remote learning should have adequate internet access. Alternative options for students that do not have adequate internet access will be provided.
- When a student is able or released to return to in-person learning, the student is expected to return to the physical classroom setting

FULL-TIME REMOTE LEARNING

- Students have the option to enroll in a full-time virtual/online learning environment. If a student chooses to enroll in a virtual learning platform, the student must make this request prior to the fifth academic day of the semester. The building level principal will determine if this is in the best educational interest of the student.
- Students would commit to this mode through the end of the first semester. They will have the opportunity to transition back to in-person learning for the start of the second semester in January or elect to continue.
- If students select full-time virtual learning, they are still eligible for MSHSAA Sports and Activities, if they meet the enrollment and credit requirements (MSHSAA By-Law 2.3.4.b)



Special Education and Section 504

PK-12th Grade

Level 1: Traditional School/Seated School with Health Precautions: Students identified in need of special education services or accommodations (Section 504) will be provided accommodations and services according to their current plan.

Level 2: In-School Instruction with Technology Support: Students will be provided services and accommodations according to their plan with appropriate safety measures in place. Social distancing will be managed by grade level and area of service.

Level 3: Online with Alternative Methods of Instruction: Learning through remote learning programming or distance services not located on campus. Services and accommodations will be provided in accordance with the students IEP or Section 504. Special Education Teachers and/or Case Managers will be the contact person for provision of services. Related service providers will work in conjunction with teachers and parents to provide appropriate services.



Pandemic Period/Response Activities (School Closed)

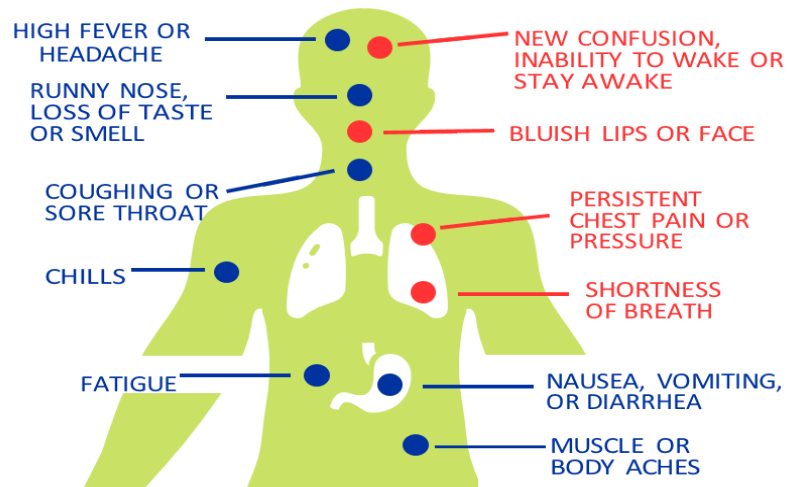
The decision to close Cassville R-IV Schools may be made as a means to prevent further spread of an epidemic, or in response to high student and/or staff absenteeism. The Superintendent will make school closure decisions in consultation with the Barry County Health Department and neighboring school district superintendents. Current CDC recommendations will help guide closure decisions.

Possible School Closure Trigger Points:

- Student absenteeism
 - When it is not economically prudent to keep the school open.
- Teacher/Staff absenteeism
 - When the number of staff available to supervise and instruct students drops below what is necessary to maintain a safe learning environment.
- Confirmed case(s) of COVID-19.
- To protect public health and safety
 - When advised to close by the Governor or state.
- The Superintendent may cancel all activities on district property by outside groups, even if some schools in the district remain open. When a school is closed, activities scheduled at that school, including use by community groups, may be canceled. Activities held at another location that involve students and staff from a closed school may cancel at the discretion of the building principal, in consultation with local health authorities and the school district's director of nursing.
- Schools may be closed to all staff and students, or just students. If schools are closed only to students, staff members are expected to work regular schedules or use appropriate leave (unless otherwise directed by Administration).



STAFF & STUDENT SCREENING MEASURES



BLUE DOT SYMPTOMS
 Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19.

RED DOT SYMPTOMS
 Emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If you or someone you know is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



Resources

[DHSS & DESE School Reopening Guidance](#)

[Barry County Health Department](#)

[Helping Children with Traumatic Separation or Traumatic Grief Related to Covid-19](#)

[Trauma Sensitive Schools Online Professional Development](#)

National Traumatic Event Hotline
1-800-273-8255 press “1”



Please contact Cassville R-IV School District Central Office if a translation of this document is needed.



Mitigation Strategies	Current Response
Mask wearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Masks encouraged
Social Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent with CDC ● Cohorts when possible ● Distanced when possible
Handwashing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent with CDC ● Taught and reinforced ● Signage promoting
Cleaning and maintaining facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent with CDC ● Increase cleaning with high-touched surfaces
Contact tracing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consistent with CDC
Screening and testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Onsite testing available
Effort to provide vaccination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage staff and students to get vaccinated
Appropriate Accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety safety policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All accommodations mandated by Individual Education Plans are followed

