

**UNION SPRINGS CSD 2020-2021**

# **SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN**



**UPDATES AND EDITS**

**APRIL 19, 2021**

Jarett S. Powers, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

As we plan for the final quarter of the 2020-2021 academic year, the CDC along with state and local health departments, has issued guidance for schools to promote the return to in-person instruction to greater number of our community's children. We are excited to welcome our students back to school, and we are eager to use this time to build on the academic pursuits undertaken this year. By and large, our efforts to return students to school will not result in significant changes, except around classroom distancing, predominately at the secondary level. This document summarizes our operational changes effective April 19, 2021.

**Face Masks:** All students, staff, and visitors, will continue to wear face masks upon entry to our buildings and busses. Masks will be allowed to be removed during mealtime. This district has an ample supply of masks for students, staff, and visitors, should one be needed.

**Physical Distancing:** The K-5 set up of classrooms will remain largely the same. The changes from 6ft to 3ft of spacing between students will take place in those classrooms that upon the return of students from remote instruction, will require the reduction in spacing to fit students in each classroom. We anticipate well exceeding the 3ft distancing marker in nearly every situation at the elementary level. In Pre-Kindergarten, we are looking forward to our students returning in person. Additional staff has been secured to promote student supports, and while we will no longer have 8 students in a classroom, our staff has worked to design the classrooms to accommodate the additional students with at least 3ft between each student.

At the secondary level (6-12), students will be at least 3ft apart, and depending on the number of students at each grade level, perhaps even more in the classroom settings.

**Cohorts:** To the extent practical, students will remain podded. The pods they had up until this point at the secondary level may be reconfigured to adjust for all students being present every day. Additionally, to support the podding of students teacher and student class schedules may shift to accommodate cleaning, teacher class loads, and social distancing. The middle school and high school will provide students with updated schedules as necessary.

**In-Person/Remote Instruction:** We are eager to welcome our students back to in-person instruction on April 19, 2021. It will be a big step for us. However, we understand that on-going health concerns, and the inability of young people to become vaccinated, means that some of our students will need to finish the year with remote instruction. Middle School/High School exclusively remote students who wish to come back to school full-time in-person may have to wait until the marking period ends and a new marking period begins due to grading and course content considerations. We may also have to adjust some teacher schedules to accommodate the return to in-person instruction. The individual principals will be in touch with those who may be impacted by these considerations.

**Screening:** Screenings will continue. Students will be screened each morning with temperature checks. Further, we will continue to use our screening questionnaires as appropriate. All staff affirm each morning by utilizing their key fobs that they comply with the requirements for attendance to school.

**Transportation:** Our elementary runs will largely remain unchanged. Our students fit on our run as designed last summer, and the additional students returning, when diffused out over the existing runs does not present a significant change. Dismissal times at AJ and for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, may shift by just a few minutes to accommodate the secondary bus for the remainder of the year, and individual principals have already sent out those times under separate cover.

For the secondary level, our busses will be a bit more crowded than they have been as the number of students coming to school each day increases with every day in-person instruction. Students will be seated with family members if possible, and then with regard to how long they will actually be in the bus, to allow for additional spacing on the bus. The transportation department will open windows and roof hatches to increase ventilation, students will continue to wear masks when entering, exiting, and while seated on the bus, and our drivers will work to reduce wait times at drop off at the MS/HS in the AM to limit student time on the bus.

Transportation is probably our most challenging situation in ensuring social distancing, but the busses will run at 2/3 capacity (44 students), with ventilation, students seated with family members, and then by duration times on the bus, and

with all parties masked. *If you have the ability and prefer to pick-up and drop-off your student, please notify transportation (315-889-5036) of your needs/requests.*

**Food Services:** We will continue to provide our food runs to our remote students for the duration of the school year. Tables and seating arrangements will continue to promote social distancing for those students in person. This may require some creativity to ensure that all students are eating 6ft apart, again more so at the secondary level (as the rules now are 3ft for instruction but 6ft for eating), but we believe that through alternate settings, staggered meal periods, and proper cleaning, we will be able to meet this mandate.

**Ventilation and Filtration:** Our entire district-wide HVAC system has been updated over the past year. Fresh air intake is ample, and we have also serviced our windows and repaired broken sashes, to ensure fresh air is present in our learning spaces.

**Hygiene, Cleaning, and Disinfection:** We will continue to spray, wipe-down, and clean our classrooms as we have since the start of the school year. Further, the schedule at the secondary level has been reorganized to facilitate cleanings based on pod rotations to the greatest extent possible during the school day. Staff has been redeployed from the evening shift to the day shift to accommodate this demand.

**Contact Tracing:** Contact tracing and notifications will continue as they have when a student or staff member tests positive for the coronavirus. Students will have dedicated seats in each classroom that will assist in the mapping of who needs to be potentially quarantined in each period setting.

We will continue to follow all public health guidelines and mandates as it relates to isolation and student quarantines. Further, should the number of COVID cases in our school community necessitate a need to shift to remote instruction for a period of time, or cause us to have to reduce our student capacities in our buildings, we will not hesitate to make the appropriate shifts to protect student safety.

**Testing:** We will continue to provide testing to those students whose family has approved us to do so. If you'd like your child tested for the coronavirus, please contact your child's school nurse for consent forms. To date, we have conducted over 550 tests at the school district.

**Athletics:** We look forward to Spring sports starting on 4/19 and will continue all public health guidelines as necessary to promote student safety for athletic competition.

**Mental Health and Emotional Support:** So much change in such a challenging time might be overwhelming for some of our students. As always, our school counseling team is available to support our students as situations arise. Please reach out if we can be of service. The district employs 4 school counselors, 2 school psychologists, a behavioral intervention specialist, a drug and alcohol counselor, and partners with multiple community agencies to support our students.

We know that the next 10 weeks will present opportunities for us to continue to work through the challenges this virus presents. We have done much together this year because of your encouragement and support and we are prepared to take the next steps with you to get our students back in school in-person 5 days a week. Thank you for your continued cooperation.