

# Flora CUSD #35

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

### Introduction

This plan is aligned with guidance provided by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and addresses adjustments needed in response to evolving COVID-19 pandemic circumstances. Opportunity for the public to provide input on the plan was provided at the July 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, August 12<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, and August 30<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. Discussion about the specifics and implementation of this plan will be ongoing with staff, students, and parents as well as through the Curriculum Advisory Committee. This plan will be made publicly available on the district's website. School strategies in this plan may be removed based upon local conditions, levels of community transmission (i.e., low, moderate, substantial, or high), local vaccine coverage, use of screening testing to detect cases in K-12 schools, and consultation with local public health officials to determine the prevention strategies needed. School officials will communicate any changes in plans to staff members, students, and parents through the district's regular communication platforms.

### Maintaining the Health and Safety of Students, Educators, and Other Staff

In accordance with the Illinois State Superintendent of Schools July 9, 2021 declaration, all Flora CUSD #35 schools will be open fully for in-person learning for all student attendance days for the 2021-22 school year and will resume a regular school day schedule. Absent an order from the Illinois State Board of Education and/or the Illinois Governor's Office, Flora CUSD #35 schools will be in operation in accordance with the CDC's updated (July 9, 2021) *Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Kindergarten (K)-12 Schools*, also adopted by the IDPH on July 9, 2021. These guidelines include the following:

#### 1. Mask Use

- **Indoors:** In accordance with the executive order and ISBE regulations, universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, will be required regardless of vaccination status.
- **Outdoors:** In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. However, particularly in areas of [substantial to high transmission](#), CDC recommends that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated.
- Unless exempt by CDC Order, passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses.

#### 2. Physical Distancing

- To the extent possible within school and classroom structures so that it does not exclude students from full day in-person learning, school staff are to help students commit to physical distancing as much as possible by:
  - arranging furniture, play spaces, etc. to model and reinforce physical distancing of at least 3 feet and movement;
  - providing assigned seating for students and encourage students to remain in these seats to the greatest extent possible; and
  - developing marked paths of travel in school buildings.
- School staff will maximize physical distance as much as possible when moving through food service lines and while eating indoors as well as in other congregate gathering areas. Cohort seating will be used in congregate gathering areas and while eating to the greatest extent possible.

### **3. Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette**

- School staff will monitor and reinforce frequent handwashing and respiratory etiquette by
  - continuing to teach handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
  - assisting young children with handwashing;
  - reminding everyone in the facility to wash hands frequently;
  - using hand sanitizer (for teachers, staff, and older students who can safely use hand sanitizer) when handwashing is not possible;
  - continuing to teach respiratory etiquette (e.g., covering coughs and sneezes); and
  - providing adequate handwashing and hand sanitizer supplies

### **4. Facility and Transportation Cleaning, Disinfection and Ventilation**

- School staff, custodial staff, and transportation staff will continue to clean surfaces daily.
- Maintenance staff will continue to regularly replace and maintain school ventilation system filters
- When possible, staff will have activities, classes, etc. outdoors when circumstances allow.
- When it does not pose a safety risk, transportation staff will keep vehicle windows open at least a few inches to improve air circulation.
- Covid killing ion generators will be installed that are equipped for the coordination and monitoring of the generators for each classroom in the elementary, junior high, and high school.
- Water bottle filling stations will be available for students. Students are encouraged to bring their own bottle of water.

### **5. Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine**

- Students, teachers, and staff should stay home when they have signs of any infectious illness and be referred to their healthcare providers for testing and care. Clay County Health Department (CCHD) will continue to provide testing.
- Contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation will be completed by the Clay County Health Department (CCHD) with cooperation with Flora Schools.
- Continuous monitoring of community transmission, vaccine coverage, screening testing, and occurrences of outbreak will be used to guide decisions on the layered prevention strategies.
- Student absences related to a COVID-19 isolation or quarantine will be recorded as excused. To ensure continuity of services, school work missed during such an absence can be requested and made up in accordance with the school's policy (refer to student handbook); social, emotional, mental health, or other needs will be provided in accordance with a student's IEP or 504 Plan.
- The school's health care professional/administration will inform the school community of outbreaks while maintaining student and staff confidentiality rights.

### **6. Disabilities or Other Health Care Needs**

- Parents of students who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, or weakened immune systems should contact their student's case manager to discuss the need(s).
- Staff members who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, weakened immune systems, or a sincerely held religious belief or practice (covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) should contact their school's principal to discuss the need(s). Staff members with weakened immune systems are advised to contact their healthcare professional about the need for continued personal protective measures after vaccination.

## **7. Academics**

- Remote learning will not be an option unless required by ISBE.
- Benchmarking will continue on a regular basis to identify any learning loss.
- Learning loss will continue to be addressed through interventions within the classrooms as well as through small group instruction through the Title program.
- Field trips will resume as approved by the administration.

## **8. Athletics/Extracurricular Activities**

- All extracurricular activities will resume.
- IHSA, SIJHSAA, IDPH, and ISBE guidelines will be followed.
- Any attendance regulations from IHSA, SIJHSAA, IDPH, and ISBE will be followed.
- Locker room use by teams will resume under IHSA, SIJHSAA, IDPH, and ISBE guidelines.

## **9. Food Service**

- Food service will resume normal serving procedures. Individual trays and silverware will be used and washed after each use.
- Students will be social distanced during lunch to the greatest extent possible.
- Meals will continue to be free to all students for as long as the USDA allows.

## **10. Collaboration with Public Health Officials**

- District officials will continue to collaborate and consult with Clay County Health Department officials throughout a pandemic on various logistics and decision-making.

## **11. Plan Review**

- Through September 30, 2023, this plan will be reviewed no less frequently than every six months and revised as appropriate after seeking and considering public input. Revisions will address the most recently updated safety recommendations by the CDC and made publicly available on the district's website.