



Cardinal Community School District

Parents & Guardians

Frequently Asked Questions

July 23, 2020

*The purpose of this document is to provide our community with answers to their questions about what school might look like in the fall. **Please understand that we have to provide the answers to questions based on guidance from the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Department of Public Health, and the Governor's proclamations. This guidance is being updated and changed frequently so know that some answers may change based on updated guidelines, and because of this, you may want to look at this document often.** Here is the link to the [Iowa Department of Education's COVID-19 page](#) if you'd like to see their current guidance documents.*

The Cardinal Community School District Return to Learn plan is to attend on site with all students, 5 days a week starting on August 26th, 2020. We have several mitigation strategies that are outlined in this document. If you have further questions for this document you may submit it via email it to: questions@cardinalcomet.com

What can we do to minimize the risk at school?

Based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and the Wapello County Public Health Department, the district has developed a proactive plan that places student and employee safety at the forefront of returning to school. Classroom teachers and support staff will play an increasingly important role in the health and wellness of students. Additional safety measures beyond the daily and hourly classroom checklist include:

- Staff will be highly encouraged to wear a cloth mask during most of the school day, especially when physical distancing is difficult.
- To the extent possible, students will be spaced throughout the classroom to promote physical distancing.
- We will limit the use of community supplies (pencils, calculators, lab equipment, machinery, P.E. equipment, etc.) that are difficult to disinfect in the classroom or at recess.

On the first day of school and throughout the first week, these new safety procedures will be taught and practiced in all of our classrooms. Parental support and reinforcement of these new measures will be critical in providing the safest possible environment for students.

We ask that if your child has symptoms or is not feeling well, you keep them home from school. This year's attendance requirements will be lenient related to COVID-19. People with COVID-19 have reported having a wide range of symptoms – from mild symptoms to severe illness. Children have similar symptoms to adults and generally have mild illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

This list is not all inclusive. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea (CDC, 2020).

School Day:

Will my child and school staff be required to wear a mask?

We will not require students to wear masks, but we **highly encourage all students to wear masks. All staff members will be highly encouraged to wear masks or shields. Please note that this guidance may change prior to our school start date.**

What will my student(s) school week look like?

The district is planning three options for our Return to Learn plans for the upcoming school year; a Continuous Learning Plan where all students PK-12 will be learning in a virtual learning environment; an On-site Plan where all students will be learning back in the school buildings, and a Hybrid Model that is some version of both of these plans. In all of these scenarios, we still plan on the **first day of school being August 26, 2020**; there are currently no plans to change the first day of school.

At this time we are planning to have face to face on site instruction beginning August 26th, 2020. We are hoping that students will return to school every day with minor adjustments to our schedules; but this will all depend on state guidelines. Families will be notified of any changes through our Student Messenger platforms and via social media and other local media outlets

What will breakfast and lunch look like?

Based on guidance from the CDC , students will eat breakfast and lunch in the classroom. This allows us to limit large gatherings in situations in which physical distancing and the wearing of a mask is difficult.

Middle School students can pick up a grab and go lunch by the Middle School gym and return to 1st hour. High School students can pick up a grab and go lunch in the lounge and return to 1st hour. Additional safety measures in all buildings include:

- Each classroom will go through the food service line socially distanced and eat in the classroom. The younger grades may have their food delivered to the classroom.
- Desks will be disinfected between student usage
- Students will wash or sanitize their hands prior to eating
- Self- service is not allowed during this time.
- All students will be offered a meal in the classroom.
- In addition to normal sanitizing procedures, the kitchen will be disinfected at the beginning and end of all food preparation shifts.

Will there be recess and field trips for elementary students?

Students will have recess outside. Classroom cohorts will be sent to various locations outside on the field and playground. No field trips have been scheduled at this time.

Will school start early, and when is school registration?

No, we will start school on our regularly scheduled first day, August 26th, 2020. Online Registration will be available late July or early August. If you wish to register at the school, there will be a registration August 6th (More details to come).

What do secondary band and choir courses look like in the fall?

We are still waiting on guidance before we can describe how these classes may be adapted. Please look for more details to come regarding fine arts.

Iowa High School Music Association Guidance: <https://ihsma.org/guidance/>

What will specials look like?

Art and Music classes at the elementary level will be held in the classrooms. Limited shared supplies will be used.

PE classes will be held with no equipment and focus on agility and aerobic activity.

Music classes will be held in the classroom, with a focus on music education.

Art classes will use student's personal art supplies and not share materials. Items that have to be shared will be disinfected after use.

What is the arrival/dismissal process?

Buses will arrive at 8:00 at the Middle School/ High School and 8:05 at the Elementary. Students will enter the building in different entrances by grade level and go directly to their classrooms. Parents and visitors will not be allowed in the building. We will have staff outside to help escort students to their rooms.

If possible, drive your child to and from school each day to reduce the number of students riding the bus. Upon dropping your child off, please remind them that their first responsibility as they enter the building is to either wash their hands or use the hand sanitizer located in the entrance of buildings or in their classroom. Students will be expected to wash their hands frequently throughout the day.

Please be patient with district employees as they work to implement new protocols. Arrival and dismissal procedures may initially take more time than in previous years. Your understanding is appreciated.

How will my child make up the lost learning from the 19-20 school closure?

At the beginning of the year, all staff will access a document that shares the major content and skills that were not covered in the 2019-2020 school year. This document provides teachers with insight regarding the gaps in learning that occurred during the closure and the content will be embedded in their instruction throughout the 20-21 school year.

How will my student's social emotional health be addressed?

The district's social emotional health team has developed a plan to meet the needs for all students. If you have questions regarding your child's social emotional health, please contact your child's administrator and we will connect you with a counselor or a member of our social work team. Our district staff will also do the following:

- Create professional development for building staff regarding typical childhood reactions to stress and trauma.
- Collaborate with teachers on classroom activities to address student mental health upon return to school.
- Collaborate with community agencies on best practices.
- 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.

Will families have the option to keep their students home for this school year?

Yes, a virtual option will be available for families who have concerns about sending their child back to school. This option will look different from last spring and if you choose this option, attendance and grades will be taken each day. The required online learning will include recorded instruction, classroom discussions, opportunities for online assessments, and more. An online platform at each building will house the lessons and student assignments. Families who have indicated a preference for the online learning model will be contacted with more details regarding the expectations. If you choose the online option for this school year, please register your child below using this link:

Virtual Online Learning Sign Up:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfVlWUfwYAyt5jOZXV4LBTULrb2q_GgD3psER7blRdsul7HJw/viewform?usp=sf_link

If your child is taking part in an alternative option to on-site learning and wishes to return to school for learning, can they do so?

Families may decide to return to school in the building at the end of a quarter only. They will not be allowed to go back and forth from on site to virtual learning mid quarter.

Illness:

What if my child is exposed to Covid-19?

If your child has been exposed to COVID-19, they will need to stay home and quarantine for 14 days. COVID related absences will not count towards the attendance policy.

If my child tests positive for COVID-19, when can they return to school?

Your child will be able to return to school 10 days after symptoms started with symptoms improving and fever free for 1 day without the use of medication. Asymptomatic children are isolated from the day of the test.

How will the school handle COVID-19 closure?

A school closure would need to be approved by the Department of Education and Department of Public Health. We have 3 different plans which will allow us to deploy the plan that fits the situation the best. If closure becomes necessary, we can deploy our 100% virtual plan or 50% on campus, 50% virtual plan. Students will be given a device if closure is required. This learning will NOT be optional, work will be graded and attendance will be monitored.

How will illness be handled in the building?

If a student has a temperature of 100.4 or higher, the student will be isolated and a contact will be required to pick up the student within 45 minutes. Once a contact arrives, we will walk your student out to the car. Students with COVID symptoms will be housed in a separate space away from the nurse's office.

Will students have temperature checks before entering the school building?

Temperature screenings will not be done each day upon entering the building. This decision was made after consulting Wapello County Health Department, school legal counsel and the logistics of this practice. Instead of this, we ask that all families partner with the school and do a temperature check before your child enters the bus or buildings. **Please keep your student home if they are experiencing symptoms related to Covid 19.**

What protocols are in place if someone in the building tests positive for COVID-19?

Our district will work closely with Wapello County Health officials and communicate to involved parties. Wapello County Health Department will conduct contact tracing.

Cleaning:

How often will the school be sanitized?

Our custodial staff will sanitize high contact areas throughout the day as well as deep cleaning every evening when students leave the building. All classrooms will have disinfectant spray and/or wipes to clean classroom items regularly.

Visitors:

Will there be assemblies and family school events?

Elementary assemblies will be held virtually each month. Large attended events such as concerts or open house events have not been scheduled. If family events are held on campus, mitigation strategies will be put in place. Our August Back to School Night will be done through virtual tours and introductions.

Will visitors be allowed in the building?

Our building is closed to visitors. Please contact our Elementary office at 652-3591 and MS/HS office at 641-652-7531. If you are needing to pick up your child early, we will send your child out to you. We look forward to returning to our normal procedures once we are through this pandemic.

Can I attend school parties or have lunch with my child?

Unfortunately, to limit the number of adults in the building/classroom, we will temporarily discontinue allowing parent volunteers at school parties. Also, since meals will be served in classrooms with limited space, we will also temporarily discontinue parents eating lunch with their children during the school day. We look forward to returning to our normal procedures once we are through this pandemic.

I have an IEP/504/parent meeting, can I come to the building to attend?

IEP meetings will be held virtually unless parents are unable to participate online due to lack of technology. In this case, we will hold a conference call with the IEP team.

TRANSPORTATION: If possible, drive your child to and from school each day to reduce the number of students riding the bus.

What will school bus transportation look like?

Students will be assigned seating. **It will be required that all students wear a mask while using school transportation.** Students should bring their own mask. Buses will be cleaned using electrostatic cleaning each day. If students fail to comply with our bus policy, they will not be able to ride our buses and parents will need to arrange other transportation.

What can I do to help minimize the risk for my children on the bus? Every student should wash their hands before getting to the bus stop in the morning and afternoon. Please ensure your child has a face mask and remind your child not to touch other students nor share toys or common items like cell phones. Students will sit one to a seat, when possible, but no more than two to a seat, when required.

What steps will be taken to minimize the risk for my children on the bus?

Throughout the pandemic, drivers and aides will wear face masks. Students will also be required to wear a mask. Buses will be cleaned and disinfected at regular intervals.