



***Return to In-Person  
Instruction Plan***  
*IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19*

Updated 7-27-21

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## Introduction

Eastern Hancock is subject to all rules, regulations, and mandates of the State of Indiana, the Department of Education, State and local health departments, and any Executive Orders signed by the Governor. In addition, all stakeholders within the Corporation are subject to such rules and procedures as may be promulgated by the Eastern Hancock Board of School Trustees and the corporation's administrative staff.

With that in mind, Eastern Hancock administration understands that some measures that prevent COVID have adverse effects on students' learning and overall well-being. The Eastern Hancock administration **will follow all mandates, but** desires to begin to shift from a COVID-prevention and mitigation focus to prioritizing practices that maximize student learning.

This plan will serve as a living document that we will adjust as our circumstances change. We will continuously monitor local and regional COVID data, collaborate with other area schools and our local health department, and will adjust our plan accordingly.

# Masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Beginning in July, local schools will be able to determine whether or not masks are required while attending class and/or school functions. We will continue to seek the guidance of the state and local health departments and other officials regarding PPE, and we will follow all requirements.

Eastern Hancock currently plans to begin the school year allowing students' families, individual staff members, and visitors to the buildings to determine whether or not they will wear a mask at school.

Current state and federal regulations require masks to be worn on the school bus.

EH Staff will not be able to require students to wear masks in their class if we are not mandating mask-wearing as a corporation.

The corporation may make exceptions to mask wearing protocols and expectations throughout the year based on individualized circumstances.

We will work with the Hancock County Health Department throughout the year to monitor our circumstances and determine if changes will need to be made.

## Vaccinations

At Eastern Hancock, we believe that the decision to receive a COVID vaccination should be made by individuals and their families. We will not request vaccination information. Because of this, we **will only** differentiate between vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals when **we are directed to do so**.

## Social Distancing

### Classroom

**At Eastern Hancock, we will do our best to limit the number of students who might be potentially identified as a close contact during the school day.**

As is the case with all parts of this plan, we will work with the Hancock County Health Department throughout the year to monitor our circumstances and determine if changes will need to be made.

A hygiene station will be provided for students in each classroom that includes hand sanitizer.

## **Breakfast and Lunch**

All students will eat in the cafeteria when school resumes (except in individual situations as determined by the administration). Tables will be cleaned following every group as they were before COVID-19.

Schedules will be adjusted and additional eating space will be utilized if social distancing is required throughout the year.

In elementary grades, students will sit with members of their class in an assigned seat.

## **Recess and Outdoor Activities**

Recess is a valuable time for students to exercise and socialize. Grouping students and cleaning equipment will take place as needed throughout the year.

## **Restroom, Hygiene, and Hydration Facilities**

All drinking fountains within the Corporation will be turned back on and restrooms will be utilized as normal. Filling stations can be used as needed. Students are encouraged to bring their water bottles.

# **Screening and Reporting of COVID-19 Cases**

## **Reporting Requirements for COVID-19 Cases**

If a confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs at Eastern Hancock, district personnel will report the case to the Hancock County Health Department and the Indiana Department of Education.

## **COVID-19 Testing Policy**

The Corporation will not be providing COVID-19 tests for individuals. Individuals are responsible to schedule and pay for such testing if deemed necessary.

## **Daily Screening Before Entry**

Individuals (staff and students) are strongly encouraged to complete a COVID-19 self-screen each day before entering the buildings. This includes a temperature check and determination if you have any of the common COVID-19 symptoms by answering the questions below. Training is available through the IDOE training portal.

1. Have you had new coughing during the past day?
2. Have you had a sore throat during the past day?
3. Have you had new shortness of breath during the past day?
4. Have you been around someone during the past day you know has COVID-19?
5. Has anyone in your household had the virus in the last two weeks?

## Referral Screening During Day

Any individuals who have a temperature of 100.5 degrees or higher, or answer “Yes” to the standard questions below will be immediately moved to an isolation area for further safety procedures.

Standard questions shall include:

1. Have you had new coughing during the past day?
2. Have you had a sore throat during the past day?
3. Have you had new shortness of breath during the past day?
4. Have you been around someone during the past day you know has COVID-19?
5. Has anyone in your household had the virus in the last two weeks?

## Random Screening

The Corporation may take the temperature of students, staff, and visitors on school property on a random basis or in situations where there is reason to believe that the person may be ill. Touch-free thermometers will be used for this screening.

## Exclusion from School Due to COVID-19 Diagnosis/Symptoms

Students and staff will be excluded from in-person instruction and activities if they test positive for COVID-19 and may be excluded if they exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19. Indiana statute gives public school districts the authority to exclude students with contagious diseases such as COVID-19 or who are liable to transmit it after exposure (IC 20-34-3-9).

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the requirements of the CDC, the local health department, and school guidelines. School personnel will notify families of the appropriate return-to-school date.

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 shall isolate, including exclusion from schools, preschools, daycare settings, employment, and public places, until:

At least 10 days following the onset of symptoms or, if asymptomatic, at least 10 days from the date of collection of the positive test and must be at least 24 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medications and symptom improvement.

All COVID-related absences will be excused and students will be able to make up all missed work.

## Quarantine and Close Contact Identification

If we learn that someone in one of our buildings has tested positive, we will notify all individuals who are identified as close contacts. Current health official recommendations allow vaccinated individuals to remain at school if they are identified as a close contact, **as long as they are asymptomatic.** **Current directives from the Indiana State Health Department mandate quarantine for close contacts who are not vaccinated.**

Asymptomatic individuals, unless fully vaccinated or recovered from a COVID-19 infection within the past 90 days (with positive test on file), who are identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 case shall quarantine, including exclusion from schools, preschools, daycare settings, employment, and public places for 14 days after the date of last exposure.

If a staff member or student is identified as a close contact, and they are symptomatic, they will remain home for a time determined appropriate by local health officials and school district officials.

If our circumstances change, we may adjust this practice. We will continue to collaborate with the Hancock County Health Department (HCHD) regarding quarantine, as well as potential school closure.

Guidance from the HCHD and IHSAA will be used to determine athletic participation.

For this section “on campus” shall mean any student, staff member, or individual who is on the grounds or in the buildings of the Corporation for an extended period (longer than 30 minutes). Should delivery personnel or other persons who are not on campus for an extended time be diagnosed with COVID-19, the Principal in coordination with the Superintendent and the Hancock County Health Department will determine the response to such a diagnosis.

Students will be expected to make up any work missed due to quarantine.

## **Guests and Visitors**

As school begins, we plan to continue to limit visitors to the building for non-essential purposes; this will include limiting visitors for lunch and to the classrooms.

Individuals, including parents and guardians, will need to receive permission before entering the main learning area of the buildings. Anyone entering the building must check in at the main entrance area of each building. This area will have a health station including disposable masks and a hand sanitizer dispenser for individuals to use if they choose.

The Corporation has the right to limit visitors to the buildings. If you plan to visit the buildings, please contact the building before your visit. We will monitor the local situation and adapt as needed.

Case conference meetings and parent-teacher conferences may be conducted virtually or in-person.

## **Calendars and Schedules**

### **Proposed Amended Calendar**

The 2021-2022 Corporation Calendar can be found on the corporation’s website. It may be adjusted if needed to ensure that all Federal, State, DOE, and CDC guidelines are followed.

## In-Person and Virtual Learning

Eastern Hancock plans to only offer in-person learning options. Throughout the year, there is a possibility that the classroom, building, or corporation will be forced to go online. Only then will online instruction be an option for students.

## Student Attendance

Attendance during a time of considerable change can be a challenge. To help relieve the pressure placed on students regarding attendance all attendance rewards will be suspended. Perfect attendance, improved attendance, and other such awards will not be given.

## Activities and Events

The goal is for activities to resume as normal. However, some may be limited or curtailed as needed, and virtual alternatives may also be utilized.

## Athletics

The athletic protocol will follow guidance from the IHSAA and the Hancock County Health Department.

## High-Risk Individuals

Both students and staff who are in a high-risk category will have the right to ask for accommodations that will decrease the risk of contracting the illness.

If students or staff have a medical plan overseen by a medical provider that will prevent them from returning to school, the corporation will work with the families to set up a 504 or medical intervention plan that addresses the needs of the students.

## Transportation

Eastern Hancock understands the importance of school transportation for many families. With the limited space on school buses, we understand that social distancing will not be possible. Students will be assigned seats and will be spread out as much as physically possible.

***It is currently required by federal public transportation mandate for masks to be worn on public transportation, including school buses.***



Physical barriers between the driver and passengers shall not be allowed as it violates Federal Transportation guidelines.

Buses will be inspected for cleanliness and safety each day.