As champions for all students, North Kansas City Schools' mission is to ensure that all are life-ready and ethically grounded in an ever-changing world through innovative educational experiences that inspire lifelong learning, embrace inclusion and forge a unified community. The purpose of this plan is to guarantee continued and safe school operations that best serve all students and staff through full in-person instruction during the 2021-2022 school year.

Information included in North Kansas City Schools' Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan (SRCSP) aligns to guidance from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). This plan will be updated at minimum every six months or as practices and recommendations change throughout the 2021-2022 school year.
Overview

NKC Schools learned many lessons while navigating the pandemic. Effective communication and collaboration with all stakeholders proved essential. This will remain a priority as we begin a new school year. NKC Schools is fully prepared for any scenario that may arise. While the world around us changes and evolves, it is imperative for the school district to learn and grow, preparing students to be successful and resilient regardless of the opportunities and challenges brought to our community by COVID-19.

Throughout the last school year, a task force of students, parents, educators, classified staff members, representatives from teachers’ unions, medical professionals and community agencies with whom we work met periodically to determine procedures that will best serve all students and staff. The end result entails a combination of mitigation strategies, continual monitoring of district data and ongoing partnership with local health partners to support in-person instruction. Collaborative review with stakeholders happens on an ongoing basis, at minimum every six months or as practices and recommendations change throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

NKC Schools is thankful for the support of our community as we strive to be champions for all students. A unified effort is critically important. District leaders stand ready to work in partnership with all families for a successful 2021-22 academic year!

Contents

- Mitigation Strategies
- Case Protocols
- Vaccination Opportunities
- Accommodations
- Continuity of Services

Additional information, updates and resources are available online at nkcschools.org/coronavirus.
Mitigation Strategies

NKC Schools’ COVID-19 mitigation strategies follow guidance from the Clay County Health Department (CCPHC), Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Clear and consistent implementation of recommended mitigation strategies will support in-person instruction. NKC Schools will continue to collaborate with our local health departments and monitor data, particularly at individual school sites.

CLEANING & HYGIENE

NKC Schools’ Custodial Services Department has developed clear procedures for extensive cleaning throughout the day and each evening. High-touch surfaces have been identified and ventilation systems reviewed to support healthy environments. Regular handwashing and the covering of coughs and sneezes will continue to be taught and reinforced to students. Hand sanitizer will be available throughout each site.

DISTANCING

Physical distancing of students and staff is no longer required. Distancing of students and staff may continue to the extent possible, if a situation dictates it.

MASKS

In accordance with Board policy, NKC Schools has consistently followed the ordinances requiring masks that are voted upon by members of the respective city councils in which our schools are located. The current ordinance for schools approved by the Kansas City, Missouri City Council will sunset on January 1, 2022. The city of North Kansas City’s ordinance is set to expire on January 15, 2022. Based on the information we currently have, we do not anticipate an extension of the current ordinances.

As a result, masks will no longer be required for students, staff and patrons when we return from Winter Break, with the exception of Briarcliff Elementary and North Kansas City High School, where masks will be required for all until January 15, 2022. Due to the federal mandate currently in effect through March 18, 2022, masks will continue to be required on all buses.

Clay County Health Department’s guidance for schools recommends masks be worn indoors by all individuals (age 2 and older), unless medical or developmental conditions prohibit use. The individual choice to wear a mask is one that should be respected based on circumstance and conviction, and tolerance for this personal choice is critically important for both students and staff.
COVID-19 Case Protocols

The goal of NKC Schools’ COVID-19 protocols is to minimize the risk of COVID-19 in our school sites through identification, tracking and guidance in the event of a potential positive case. The district works in close partnership with the Clay County Health Department and the Kansas City, Missouri Health Department.

NKC Schools’ COVID-19 protocols are available online here.

Procedures are in place for all possible scenarios, including:

- COVID-19 symptoms with no known exposure
- Known or possible exposure to an individual with COVID-19, on or off-campus
- Positive COVID-19 test or diagnosis
- Consideration of vaccination status
- Return to work or school protocols, including testing criteria

Health department partners provide expert guidance to those who have tested positive or may have been exposed to a positive case. NKC Schools will provide support to staff and families in accessing diagnostic testing through both on-site antigen testing and widely available community resources.

Stay-at-home procedures will be updated as necessary to align with health department guidance.

Communication

The goal is always to share what we can, when we can, while complying with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and/or Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines. To provide the greatest level of transparency possible, we will notify impacted communities in the event of a probable or confirmed case.

Staff:
All building staff members, including traveling and classified staff members, will be made aware of a positive case in their building.

Families:
All families of students attending the same school will be notified of a positive case, regardless of exposure level. Families are also notified in the event of a positive case within their child’s classroom (for grades PK-5).
Additional Considerations

**VACCINATION OPPORTUNITIES**

NKC Schools’ goal is to ensure that vaccination against COVID-19 is convenient and accessible for those staff members and families who would like to take advantage of the opportunity.

When Missouri’s K-12 educators were approved to receive the vaccine in March 2021, NKC Schools hosted a series of on-site clinics for all employees. As eligibility was extended to all individuals ages 16 and older, the district partnered with Children's Mercy to offer vaccination opportunities at each high school. For students ages 5-15, NKC Schools has collaborated with multiple organizations to host clinics at our school sites across the district.

We will continue to provide opportunities for vaccination to students and staff, including resources for students ages five years or older. Vaccination status is not a condition for employment nor access to activities and athletics.

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

Accommodations will be provided to students as necessary or mandated by their Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated and other underserved populations will monitor implementation of the plan to determine need for additional accommodations and/or revisions.

This plan has been made available in the home languages of the students served by NKC Schools.

A virtual learning option exists for K-12 families who would prefer this learning mode for their child in the 2021-2022 school year. More information is available at nkcschools.org/virtual.

**CONTINUITY OF SERVICES**

These updates to procedure will continue throughout the winter and spring. In the event we see an increased number of positive cases in our community, NKC Schools will re-evaluate our district health and safety protocols in conjunction with the health department.
References

- Clay County Health Department School Guidance
- Missouri DESE & DHSS School Reopening & Operating Guidance

For questions, comments or concerns regarding this collaboratively developed plan for the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services, please contact North Kansas City Schools at 816.321.5000.

Additional information and updates are available at nkcschools.org/coronavirus.