

# USD 247 Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

## 2021-2022

**BOE Approved: (Currently posted for public review and comment. Board approval date is July 12, 2021)**

### District Statement

Since the start of the 2020-2021 school year, USD 247 learned a great deal about mitigating and operating during a pandemic and has pursued full-time in-person learning for all students. Additionally, we offered a remote learning environment as an option for families early in the pandemic before moving to a full, in-person model. Given our extensive planning and logistical work during the pandemic, we are well positioned for a safe return for the 2021-2022 school year, especially if local, state and federal guidance continue their trends of easing restrictions and ending mitigation requirements. Currently, we are planning for a full, in-person return this fall with an environment much more similar to non-pandemic years. Should there be any continued requirements for social distancing, mask wearing, etc., we will be ready to safely return our students while adhering to local, state and federal requirements, as we did during the 2020-2021 school year.

The USD 247 Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services plan was created to meet the requirements of Congress, the United States Department of Education, the Kansas State Department of Education, the Center for Disease Control, the Crawford County Health Department, and the USD 247 Board of Education.

The most important goal of this plan is to keep students and staff in school while ensuring the highest level of health and safety. **All procedures and practices and related safety measures will be based on ongoing consultation with the Crawford County Health Department (CHD) and are subject to change as conditions concerning the pandemic develop.**

#### Contact Information

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#### Important Links

- [USD247](#)
- [Crawford County Health Department](#)
- [Center For Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
- [Kansas Department of Health and Environment \(KDHE\)](#)
- [Kansas Department of Education \(KSDE\)](#)

## Schedule for Periodic Updates

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are required to periodically review and, as appropriate, revise their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023. Each review must include seeking public comment on the plan and developing the plan after taking into account the public comment. Tentative periodic updates are as follows:

- July 12, 2021
- December 13, 2021
- May 9, 2022
- November 14, 2022
- May 8, 2023
- October 8, 2023

## Health and Safety Strategies

### Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks

Our school district has removed the mask mandate based on vaccination rates and infection rates for the school and community and through recommendation of the Crawford County Health Department. Masks are optional but still recommended for unvaccinated individuals and unvaccinated groups. Should a mandate for wearing masks while in school occur, USD 247 will share all requirements through ongoing communication to parents, students, and staff.

If needed, we may adopt reasonable safety measures to protect the safety of district personnel, students, and visitors during school-related activities. Reasonable safety measures may include, but may not be limited to, cleaning and sanitization plans, use of physical safeguards and barriers, and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Exceptions to any requirements may be granted as required by law, state, county, and/or local health officials, and on a case-by-case basis. We will continue to monitor national, state, and local government and health agency mandates, guidance, and recommendations as well.

Lastly, the district will continue to train students and staff in the proper wearing of personal protective equipment as needed, and we will post signage outlining the proper wearing of personal protective equipment as needed.

### Physical Distancing

Where possible, social distancing practices will be utilized. Efforts will be made to maintain classroom seating with a minimum of 3 feet of social distancing between students and between students and staff for the 2021-2022 school year. Considerations will be made for cohorts or podding if needed.

### Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette will continue to be taught to students with emphasis and practice protocols rehearsed more frequently in the primary grade levels. Signage will continue to be posted throughout our buildings as reminders of handwashing and respiratory etiquette. In addition, hand sanitizing stations and liquids will continue to be made available for use in all classrooms.

### Cleaning & Maintaining Healthy Facilities - Including Improving Ventilation

Custodial staff have been and will continue to follow specific cleaning protocols and procedures. We will continue to consider assignments/reassignments to applicable shifts in order to continually clean high traffic and high contact surfaces. Our district will continue to use cleaning solutions that are rated to eliminate the COVID-19 virus. We will continue to monitor ventilation efficiency and effectiveness for opportunities to continually improve air quality. Deep cleaning of schools will be completed prior to students/staff returning. Additional cleanings during school holidays/breaks will be added as needed.

School Buses - Students will be assigned seats. Frequently touched surfaces, including handrailing, student bus seats, and surfaces in the driver cockpit commonly touched by the operator should be sanitized daily.

### Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine, in Collaboration with the State, Local, Territorial, or Tribal Health Departments.

Our district nurse, along with building administration will complete all contact tracing documentation and efforts. Individuals who have been in close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID will be expected to follow current school and health department quarantine and self-isolation guidelines and recommendations.

### Diagnostic and Screening Testing

Students, staff, and community members can access COVID-19 diagnostic or screening tests through a variety of community partners. The school nurse and health support staff will continue to monitor for symptoms and trends, and request that students and staff seek medical services as appropriate.

### Efforts to Provide Vaccinations to School Communities

Our district will participate and partner with vaccination efforts in accordance with state and federal law for staff and eligible student groups. The District will not refuse, withhold from, or deny a person any services, goods, facilities, advantages, privileges, licensing, educational opportunities, health care access, or employment opportunities based on the person's COVID-19 vaccination status.

### Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities with Respect to Health and Safety Policies

Our district will provide reasonable, necessary, and appropriate accommodations to its policies and practices for students with disabilities as determined by individual student needs and in accordance with an individual's documented accommodations and/or individualized education plan (IEP). Parents or guardians of students requiring accommodations should contact the applicable building administrator(s) to request information on plans for students with disabilities.

### Coordination with State and Local Health Officials.

Applicable district personnel currently participate, and will continue to participate, with our local county health department and/or agencies on a frequent basis to determine next steps as needed.

# Continuity of Services

## Services to Address Students' Academic Needs

Our district plans to continue full time, in-person instruction beginning the fall of 2021. Summer learning programs and after school learning programs will be provided to assist students with academic recovery. Additional instructional personnel have been added or reassigned where possible to implement further academic recovery efforts in core curriculum areas. Where possible, specialists, paraeducators, and educational consultants will be available and utilized during the instructional day, on professional development days, and/or during before and after school tutoring programs throughout the year to support students.

## Students' and Staff Social, Emotional, & Mental Health

Our district has PreK-12 staff to monitor and address the social and emotional learning needs of our students. We have employed a school-based therapist and we will continue to partner with social workers and local mental health services with the goal of helping students and families overcome obstacles with connecting to school.

Our district has provided staff with opportunities for social and emotional support through our district's participation with an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider. Staff social and emotional wellness and mental health are also considered in district communications and professional development.

## Other Needs, Which May Include Student Health & Food Services

Free meals will be made available for all eligible youth during the 2021-2022 school year. Families may also contact their child's school for any other health or food service needs.

Students and staff will be required to wash their hands prior to coming to the serving line or at a minimum use available hand sanitizer.

Food service staff must wear masks during food preparation and serving.

Drinking fountains will not be used. Students and staff are encouraged to bring refillable water bottles from home.

## Exclusion from School

Students and employees exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 without other obvious explanations are prohibited from coming to school, and if they do come to school, they will be sent home immediately. The current known symptoms are: 100.4 or higher fever, chills, muscle or body aches, fatigue, headache, sore throat, lower respiratory illness (cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing), loss of taste or smell, congested/runny nose, and diarrhea.

Individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 will be required to quarantine based on state and local guidelines.

## Return to School After Exclusion

If an individual is fully vaccinated and has a negative COVID and Influenza test, they may return to school or work when fever free for 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing medications.

If fully vaccinated and have an alternative diagnosis, the individual may return when appropriate for that diagnosis (e.g. strep, flu, etc.)

If fully vaccinated and **does not** have a COVID test and no alternative diagnosis, the individual may return when fever free for 72 hours without the aid of fever reducing medications..

Unvaccinated students and staff will need to be out of school until 72 hours fever free without the aid of fever reducing medication unless there is an alternative diagnosis and then those guidelines will be followed.

Students and staff diagnosed with influenza will be out of school for a minimum of 7 days from the onset of symptoms and 24 hours fever free without the aid of fever reducing medications..

Persons awaiting test results will be isolated at home until test results are received.

A doctor's note for returning to school may be required in some scenarios.

## Expectations for Parents/Visitors

All parents and visitors must complete a screening process before being allowed into any school facilities.

Face masks are optional but encouraged for unvaccinated individuals.

Social distancing of at least 3 feet is expected as well as proper handwashing and/or sanitizing.