

# ITAWAMBA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

### 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

The Itawamba County School District (ICSD) desires to keep its staff, faculty and students as safe as possible while also carrying out the necessary job of educating our most valuable assets, the children of Itawamba County. Therefore, these guidelines are being provided to outline what steps are to be taken when COVID-19 is suspected or confirmed. ICSD personnel have been researching this issue since school closed in the Spring of 2020, keeping informed of the guidelines outlined by the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) as well as other organizations. The ICSD plans to reopen schools and follow guidance given by the MSDH. However, these guidelines and expectations are not exhaustive and other items may be mandated as needed. **Therefore, these guidelines will be updated with new information as it becomes available, and decisions will be made in coordination with local and state guidelines.**

The safest and most basic course of action is that if a staff or faculty member or a student is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, **do not** come to school. The ICSD will also be requiring behaviors that reduce the spread (such as, frequent hand washing/sanitizing) of the virus. However, the fact that people will get the virus or be in close contact with someone who is positive for the virus is inevitable, but the spread of the virus can be mitigated.

#### **WHEN A STUDENT OR NONESSENTIAL FACULTY OR STAFF TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19**

- Notify your school or direct supervisor immediately.
- Isolate at home for 10 days from onset of illness (or from the date of a positive test for those who are asymptomatic).
- Be symptom free for 24 hours, including being fever free (100.0 degrees F or below) without medication, even if 10 days of isolation have elapsed.
- Parents will be notified when a student, staff or faculty member tests positive. The notification will be targeted to specific people dependent upon those potentially exposed. The names of those who test positive will not be identified by the ICSD.

#### **WHEN AN ESSENTIAL FACULTY OR STAFF TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19**

- Notify your school or direct supervisor immediately.
- Isolate at home for 10 days.
- Be symptom free for 24 hours, including being fever free (100.0 degrees F or below) without medication, even if 10 days of isolation have elapsed.
- Parents will be notified when a student, staff or faculty member tests positive. The notification will be targeted to specific people dependent upon those potentially exposed. The names of those who test positive will not be identified by the ICSD.

#### **WHEN STUDENT OR NONESSENTIAL FACULTY OR STAFF HAS BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT (SEE DEFINITION BELOW) WITH SOMEONE WHO TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19**

- Self-quarantine for 14 days (see exception below).

- If symptoms develop, get tested for COVID-19.
- Remain isolated until you are symptom free for 24 hours, including being fever free without medication, even if 14 days have elapsed.
- There is no requirement to quarantine if the student has tested positive for COVID-19 or its antibodies within 3 months prior to coming into contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.

**WHEN ESSENTIAL FACULTY OR STAFF HAS BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT (SEE DEFINITION BELOW) WITH SOMEONE WHO TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 AND THE FACULTY OR STAFF IS SYMPTOMATIC**

- Self-quarantine for 10 days.
- Get tested for COVID-19.
- Remain isolated until you are symptom free for 24 hours, including being fever free without medication, even if 10 days have elapsed.

**WHEN ESSENTIAL FACULTY OR STAFF HAS BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT (SEE DEFINITION BELOW) WITH SOMEONE WHO TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 AND THE FACULTY OR STAFF IS NOT SYMPTOMATIC**

- Continue to work under the following criteria
  - Remain symptom free
  - Have symptoms, including temperature monitored daily of the school
  - Wear a cloth face covering or mask the entire time they are on campus
- If become symptomatic
  - Self-quarantine for 10 days from on-set of symptoms until you are symptom free for 24 hours, including being fever free without medication, even if 10 days have elapsed.

**WHEN A SYMPTOMATIC CHILD IS SENT HOME**

- Self-quarantine for 14 days unless, after the time the child was sent home, the child obtains a negative COVID-19 test result or a doctor's statement indicating that the symptoms were related to something other than COVID-19 and a COVID-19 test was not warranted.

**CLOSE CONTACT** is defined by the MSDH as being less than 6 feet from someone for 15 minutes or more.

**CONTACT TRACING** – When the ICSD obtains reliable information that an employee or student has tested positive for COVID-19, the ICSD will attempt to locate all [close contacts](#) of the infected person starting from 1 day before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 1 day prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the employee or student is isolated. Due to the sometimes meandering nature of students, exact close contact determination may not be feasible, but due care will be taken to determine all close contacts.

## **SYMPTOMS INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO**

- Fever above 100.0 degrees F and chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Headaches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

**CALCULATION OF QUARANTINE TIME** will be governed by the CDC. For more information go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

## **DISMISSALS/CLOSURES**

This ICSD will strive to keep school open and dismissals to a minimum while also working to help ensure the health, wellness, and safety of our students, staff and faculty. **Parents, faculty, staff and students should understand that a positive COVID case does not necessarily mean that classes or schools will be closed. The ICSD will evaluate each situation individually using risk assessment guidelines recommended by the MSDH in determining if any closings should occur.** Hard and fast rules are difficult to create and even more difficult to follow. **These guidelines will be updated with new information as it becomes available, and decisions will be made in coordination with local and state guidelines.**

Dismissals and closures could be limited to just a group or a classroom. Certain case levels may necessitate temporary dismissal of students in particular buildings or even the temporary closure of one or more schools. Parents should be prepared for any of these events.

- If schools are closed by order of the state or federal government or by the local school board, students will participate in school with distance learning. The ICSD will help ensure that students have the technology and needed internet to complete lessons virtually. For those students who are unable to be provided reliable internet access for portions of the day, manual work will be provided with other means of instruction as needed.
- In the event of an outbreak (3 or more cases within a single group, e.g. class or team) all group members will self-quarantine for 14 days and each member will remain isolated until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours, including being fever free without medication, even if 14 days have elapsed.
- In the event of an uncontrolled spread in a school, the particular building in which the spread occurred may dismiss, if practical, for 14 days. If not practical, the entire school may close for 14 days. These dismissals and closures will only occur after a risk assessment has been conducted and a determination has been made that mitigating factors cannot be implemented to reduce the spread.
- An uncontrolled spread could include:

- Multiple simultaneous outbreaks or affected groups (i.e. 3 or more separate groups having positive cases).
- School difficulty conducting education due to student or staff absences.
- A risk analysis includes an evaluation of the following.
  - How people move around in the questionable space? People who move around in a directed fashion are at a lower risk, while people who move around in an undirected fashion are at a higher risk.
  - How long are people in the space? Being in a space for 15 minutes or less has a lower risk, while being in a space for more than 15 minutes creates a higher risk.
  - How close together are the people in this space? Being more than 6 feet apart has a lower risk, while being closer than 6 feet apart creates a higher risk.
  - How many people are in the space? Being over the recommended number places people at a higher risk.
  - How are people breathing in the space? Normal breathing has a lower risk, while panting or hard breathing has a higher risk.
  - How do people engage with objects or fixtures in the space? Areas where there is frequent contact with hard to clean or shared times has a high risk than those areas where there is less contract with hard to clean or shared items.
  - Are their points of high congestion? Areas of high congestion are at a higher risk than areas where there is little congestion.
- Mitigating factors could include:
  - Increased awareness and application of and increased supplies for healthy hygiene behaviors, such as hand washing/sanitizing, sneezing and coughing in to elbow or other covering and posting signs.
  - Requiring facial coverings.
  - Deep cleaning and disinfecting.
  - Discouraging the sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.
  - Modified seating layouts.
  - Closing communal spaces.
  - Modification of food services.

The ICSD desires that each and every child, staff member and faculty member be healthy and safe and that every child be educated. ICSD is taking measures and precautions to help ensure a safe environment for everyone and is planning for a productive educational year in 2020-2021. We believe that this is possible with the support of our employees, parents and students while we navigate these new times.

(Any Itawamba County School District Board Policy, Plan or Procedure, or any part thereof, inconsistent with this COVID-19 Response Plan shall be suspended for the 2020-2021 school year.)