

WARRICK COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION

*As WCSC continues its school opening planning process for the 2021-2022 school year, we will continue to coordinate with health officials and take into account all guidance from the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Warrick County Health Department (WCHD). We will also continue to follow Indiana Department of Education guidance for implementation.

**All guidance is subject to change as CDC and other expert guidance changes.*

*The following information is a framework for the 2021-2022 fall school re-entry. As updated plans occur, they will be approved by the Warrick County School Board of Trustees at a public meeting where public comment is welcome.

*While our community certainly experienced the challenges and impact of the pandemic, WCSC students were able to benefit from continuous in-person instruction. For the upcoming school year, Warrick County School Corporation plans to open five days a week.

*Updates to our plan will occur based on the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), and the Warrick County Health Department (WCHD). A key to our success during the past school year was consistent collaboration with our state and local health officials. We will continue to rely on their expertise to guide and assist us in making decisions that impact WCSC.

*Warrick County School Corporation will use a three-level system contingent upon the COVID-19 conditions at any given time. Warrick County School Corporation will concurrently offer families a virtual option under all levels.

*Green: K-12 students are physically present at school.

*Yellow: Hybrid (some students are present at school while others may be working virtually from home).

*Red: No students in the physical building. K-12 virtual learning from home.

*See full descriptions and expectations for each option on the subsequent pages.

As of July 15, 2021, Warrick County School Corporation will return to school in person on August 11, 2021 on a Level GREEN.

GREEN - STUDENTS REPORT TO SCHOOL

Below are the expectations and conditions under which Warrick County School Corporation will proceed in Level Green:

FACE COVERINGS

*WCSC will consider federal, state, and local requirements regarding face coverings in the public schools. Face covering requirements are subject to change based on the issuing of new guidance.

*As of Monday, November 8th, 2021, face coverings are optional in WCSC except for bus transportation (drivers and riders) per the federal transportation mask mandate.

*See Parent Communication - Appendix A.

*WCSC students and staff will always have the option to wear face coverings, even when face coverings are not required during a particular time or location.

*When wearing face coverings, it is important to wear and handle the face covering properly for maximum effectiveness. Link to CDC mask wearing recommendations: [Your Guide to Masks](#)

BEFORE LEAVING HOME/SCREENING

*SCREENING - Parents will screen their children for the following symptoms:

- Temperature 100.4 or higher or chills
- Sore throat
- Severe headache (particularly new onset, especially with fever)
- Uncontrolled cough or shortness of breath
- Nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain
- New loss of taste or smell

*If a student exhibits these symptoms, the parent or guardian will call school to report the absence. The student will stay home.

*All WCSC staff members will self-screen before leaving home.

BUS STOP

*Students are encouraged to social distance and are *required* to wear face coverings to enter the bus (masks, face shields, gaitors) per federal guidelines.

*As the bus approaches, students will have face coverings on ready to board the bus so there is no delay to the schedule.

ON THE BUS

*Students are *required* to wear face coverings.

*Bus drivers are *required* to wear face coverings.

*Parents have the option to transport their students to school rather than ride the bus if they so choose.

*Transportation will assign seating according to pick-up order in an attempt to eliminate unnecessary student-to-student contact on the bus.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

*Students may be assigned an entryway to enter the building.

*Face coverings are optional.

CLASSROOMS

*Hand sanitizer will be available for student use upon entering the room.

*WCSC will physically distance seating.

*No shared student supplies.

*Face coverings are optional.

LIBRARY

- *Students will physically distance.
- *WCSC will provide hand sanitizer for use upon entering and exiting the library.
- *Libraries may create a contactless return system.
- *When books are returned, they may be quarantined for 24 hours, or books with *plastic coverings* may be wiped down and recirculated immediately.

HALLWAYS/TRANSITIONS/RESTROOM

- *Face coverings are optional.
- *During elementary school transitions, students and teachers are encouraged to practice physical distancing.
- *Water fountains will be shut down. Students may bring their own water bottles. In addition, each school will have contactless water stations.
- *Students are expected to practice physical distancing while in the restrooms. When possible, the number of students entering the restroom at one time will be limited.

LUNCH

- *Students may be assigned locations for eating lunch.
- *Lunch number entry keypads will be sanitized frequently or students may choose to verbalize their number to avoid keypad.

RECESS

- *Playground equipment will be sanitized as needed.
- *Students will be encouraged to wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after recess.
- *Face coverings are optional.

DISMISSAL

*Face coverings are optional except for bus students who will need to have face coverings on to enter the bus.

SAFETY PROTOCOL/CLEANING & DISINFECTING

*WCSC will clean and disinfect all areas of the school building on a routine basis, including classrooms, offices, hallways, entryways, common areas, locker rooms and restrooms.

*High touch surfaces and higher potential exposure areas (such as nurse clinics) will be disinfected according to best practice.

*Hand sanitizer dispensers will be maintained daily.

*Debris containers will be emptied daily.

*WCSC will continue to monitor ventilation systems as needed to allow for appropriate air flow in our facilities.

*Enhanced cleaning protocols will be utilized throughout the day, after dismissal, and on buses.

*Enhanced cleaning protocols may include the following: wiping down desktops and high-touch surfaces with virus-killing disinfectants and misting of classrooms and buses as needed.

*WCSC will continue to monitor and modify its facilities as needed to best accommodate physical distancing protocols. WCSC purchased additional tables for cafeteria areas to ensure the ability to distance appropriately when large groups of students are present in large spaces.

*Field Trips will be allowed if physical distancing requirements and all other current COVID-19 protocols can be met, including wearing face coverings on buses, per the federal transportation mask mandate.

HEALTH PROTOCOL

*All staff (teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, office staff, custodians, cafeteria workers, coaches, sponsors, and health office staff) will be trained on how to recognize signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

*Students who exhibit signs of COVID-19 at any point in the day will be escorted to a quarantine area. The school nurse will evaluate and call parents to pick up the child if deemed necessary.

*In certain situations, parents may choose to have the school health office administer a COVID-19 test.

*When parents call in absences, office staff may inquire about COVID-19 symptoms.

*No perfect attendance awards or incentives will be given in the 2021-2022 school year. Keep ill children home.

HANDWASHING & RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

*Keeping hands clean is one of the most important things we can do to stop the spread of germs and stay healthy.

*Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds whenever hands are visibly soiled and in the following situations: before and after meals and snacks, before and after recess, before and after sharing supplies or equipment, before and after going to the restroom.

*Staff, students, and families should build time into daily routines to incorporate hand washing.

*Hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol are available near frequently touched surfaces, doors, shared equipment, and where soap and water are not readily available.

*Staff, students, and families should avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

*It is always important to cover coughs and sneezes. To help stop the spread of germs:

*Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

- *Throw used tissues in the trash.
- *If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.
- *Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

CONTACT TRACING

*WCSC will continue to utilize recommended contact tracing protocols during the 2021-2022 school year, with continued alignment to the Indiana State Department of Health guidelines and the Warrick County Health Department expectations.

*WCSC will also continue to work with the ISDH on any state reporting requirements. Community members may continue to view the current information on COVID-19 cases throughout the state on the [Indiana Department of Health Dashboard](#).

*Staff will continue to utilize seating charts in learning spaces and on school buses to allow for contact tracing.

*Fully vaccinated students or students who have had COVID-19 in the past 90 days will not quarantine if considered a close contact.

VACCINATIONS

*WCSC has collaborated with the Warrick County Health Department to ensure families and employees have information about how to access the Covid-19 vaccine if they choose this for themselves and/or their children. In the spring of 2021, WCSC students 12+ and families were sent information about vaccinations and how to access them in an attempt to help increase access for those parents who wanted this option for their child(ren).

*Vaccinations are now available to students ages 5 and older. The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) has several resources to help individuals access vaccinations across the state for those who want this option. Please [click here](#) if you would like more information about how to access vaccines in our area.

APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATIONS

*WCSC is dedicated to meeting the needs of all of our learners academically, socially, and behaviorally. Additionally, WCSC is committed to providing enhanced support to any student who needs increased health and safety support due to the pandemic. Specifically for Special Education, 504, and ILP students, WCSC will continue to provide support indicated by the student's IEP/504/ILP plans, including any additional health and safety needs. Teachers will ensure students have access to the curriculum and will support students and families. Annual Case Reviews and Case Conference meetings will take place to support students with meeting their IEP/504/ILP goals and make adjustments when needed. School psychologists will continue to provide evaluation and support to students based on need and parent input following local, state, and federal guidelines.

COMMUNICATION

*Warrick County School Corporation will use its website (refer to the COVID-19 tab), autocal system, and Synergy to communicate and provide updates as the situation warrants.

**All guidance is subject to change as CDC and other expert guidance changes.*

VIRTUAL OPTION

A virtual option is available under all levels for students who want to remain enrolled in Warrick County schools but cannot attend onsite for reasons such as the student and/or family member is in a high-risk category.

*We expect students who choose the virtual option to commit to a SEMESTER at a time.

*Students must have reliable internet access.

*Students must follow all of the same expectations and meet all deadlines as if they were in the physical classroom.

*Students must follow the virtual option expectations outlined by WCSC.

*Students who choose the virtual option will not be eligible to participate in in-person extracurricular, co-curricular, or athletic activities.

*WCSC will partner with Edmentum (K-8) and Apex (9-12) for the delivery of virtual instruction.

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YELLOW - HYBRID

Warrick County School Corporation will move to Level Yellow (a mandated mix of virtual learning and onsite learning) when the Warrick County Health Department or the WCSC Superintendent deems it necessary based on current COVID-19 data.

*It is possible that some schools, grade-levels or classes may move to Yellow while others remain at Green.

*All protocols listed under Level Green will remain in effect for those schools, grade-levels, or classes that remain onsite.

*The exact Level Yellow schedule will be determined based on the current situation and communicated to parents at that time.

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RED - VIRTUAL LEARNING

Warrick County School Corporation will move to Level Red when the Governor of Indiana, the Indiana State Department of Health, the Warrick County Health Department, or the WCSC Superintendent closes all schools based on current COVID-19 data.

*Virtual learning for all.

*Students must follow the virtual learning expectations as outlined by WCSC.

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*Initially approved by the Warrick County School Board of Trustees on July 26th, 2021.

*Per ESSER requirements, the plan was open to public comment, reviewed and approved by the Warrick County School Board of Trustees on December 13th, 2021.

APPENDIX A

11/2/21

Dear WCSC Families:

WCSC will begin operating under a mask-optional policy in all schools and for all extracurricular events, beginning Monday, November 8th, for all students and staff. After careful consideration and planning, we believe we can operate our schools safely in a mask-optional environment. As I stated in my message last Friday, Warrick County's health metrics continue to show a consistent decline in the number of cases, as well as a steady drop in the positivity rate. As of today, Warrick County continues to have a two-metric score of 1.0 with a positivity rate of under 6%. Additionally, our in-school data show that we are averaging less than one case per school across the entire corporation.

To make our mask-optional plan work effectively, we are implementing a series of "circuit breakers" to ensure that if positive case numbers shift and move rapidly in the wrong direction, we are able to respond swiftly. Here are some of the important features of the mask-optional model that we will begin to follow on Monday, November 8th:

- Any student riding a WCSC school bus must wear a mask on the bus at all times. The USDOT (United States Department of Transportation) continues to have this rule in place and our students and drivers will comply. We will be prepared to provide masks for any student who requests one.
- Masks are still recommended as an additional layer of protection for students and staff. We support students, staff, and families who still want to wear a mask in their school environment.
- Per Governor Holcomb's executive orders, we will follow IDOH (Indiana Department of Health) guidelines on determining close contacts and quarantines. More specifically, only students who have been vaccinated or who have had COVID19 in the past 90 days will be allowed to remain in school if they are deemed to be close contacts. According to the executive order, we will also begin contact tracing students at six feet on Monday due to the mask-optional environment.
- If the number of students and staff testing positive reaches 2% of the total student and staff population of that school, the school will be asked to take additional precautions, which will likely include a temporary return to a mask-required environment. Schools will report their information at the end of the day each Thursday. Principals will communicate with families if their school is being asked to take extra precautions.
- If the number of students and staff in quarantine reaches 7-10% of the total student and staff population, we will initiate a discussion with the building administration to determine if patterns and numbers dictate that extra precautions need to be taken. Excessive

quarantining puts stress on families, teachers, and the learning environment. We must be conscious of this as we move forward.

- If Warrick County's two-metric score accelerates quickly and begins approaching the 3.0/Red range, district administrators and principals will determine if extra precautions are needed.
- All WCSC schools have implemented rapid/BinaxNow testing in order to reduce quarantine length for close contacted students. Starting November 8th, we will also test symptomatic students. These testing measures will support our efforts to minimize quarantine time and to keep our students in school. Please check with your school for more details on scheduling rapid/BinaxNow testing.

Our leaders are committed to continuing to operate our schools in a safe manner and to keeping our doors open. We know that our students learn best when they are with their teachers and support staff each day, so we will follow our guidelines consistently. We will continue to share both our case and quarantine information on our webpage, and we will also make the necessary changes to our displays so that you have the information on our updated measures. Additionally, you should be on the lookout for any school-specific information from your child's principal and teachers.

Thank you.

Todd Lambert