

**ROCHESTER COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATIONS'**

**2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR**

**AMENDED SAFE SCHOOL REOPENING POLICY**

Based on the guidance provided by various Executive Orders of Governor Holcomb and the State of Indiana's Color-Coded Scoring System the Rochester Community School Corporation has created the following plan for the operation of the Rochester Community School System in reopening the education of Rochester students for the fall 2021 and spring 2022 semesters. This policy is subject to change and/or amendment by and upon the recommendation of the Fulton County Health Department, the Rochester School Board, the Superintendent, or by Order of the Governor of Indiana. This policy will remain in place and in full force and effect until further action of the Rochester School Board or Superintendent.

*I. General Requirements*

Based on Governor Eric Holcomb's Executive Orders 21-15 and 21-24 and **21-34** and CDC guidelines:

- a. "Fully Vaccinated" students or staff are individuals **who have completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last six months or completed the primary series of Johnson and Johnson within the last two months or have been boosted.**
- b. "Unvaccinated" students and staff means any person who is not Fully Vaccinated.
- c. All individuals in the Hoosier state, whether vaccinated or not, are strongly encouraged to obtain a COVID-19 test if they become symptomatic.
- d. All individuals who are not fully vaccinated are strongly encouraged to obtain a COVID-19 test if they have been in close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- e. All individuals who are fully vaccinated and have been exposed to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 do not need to get tested or self-quarantine, unless, as described by the CDC, the person becomes symptomatic or if the person lives or works in a correctional or detention facility, homeless shelter or other congregate living facility, then you should still get tested.
- f. All individuals, whether fully vaccinated or unvaccinated, who test positive for COVID-19, shall self-quarantine or self-isolate for the time period set by the CDC and are strongly encouraged to cooperate with contact tracers.

- g. Specific guidelines for K-12 educational institutions are outlined below.

## II. *Educational Operations*

- a. Rochester Community School Corporation will open for the fall semester on August 3, 2021 for students, with organizational day for teachers on August 2, 2021, pursuant to the school calendar. All classes will be in session on August 3, 2021, pursuant to student schedules.
- b. Masks or face shields must be worn in hallways at all times.
- c. Rochester Schools will provide learning opportunities for students based on IEPs or a doctor's diagnosis, (including but not limited to if the student is medically fragile) provided to the school, using school provided one-to-one electronic devices.
- d. Students who are ill with Coronavirus or have a COVID-19 diagnosis, or who are ordered into quarantine by a physician or by the County Health Department, shall have excused absences and follow the educational platform provided by their school building.

## III. *Social Distancing*

- a. Individuals within the state of Indiana should engage in social distancing with all other individuals. The phrase "social distancing" means maintaining at least 6 feet of distance from other individuals or, in the event 6 feet of distance is not possible, use of a barrier or mask or face shield to separate individuals.
- b. It shall be the policy of Rochester Schools to provide as much physical distancing as is possible in classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and at other school facilities. The recommended 6 feet is not possible in most instances.

## IV. *Bus Transportation*

- a. All students or children regardless of age or grade, all faculty, all staff, all vendors, all contractors, all volunteers, and all visitors shall wear a face covering or a face shield while on a school bus or school-sponsored mode of transportation except those who fall within an exemption listed in ¶ V.
- b. Athletic transportation to and from athletic events shall comply with the terms of ¶ IV(a).
- c. Buses shall be sanitized daily after use.

## V. *Exemptions to Face Covering Requirements*

It is recommended that all students and staff wear masks or face shields whenever the student is unable to maintain 6 feet of social distancing unless exempt as listed below:

- a. Food Consumption: Face covering or face shields are not required while eating or drinking.
- b. Faculty/Staff Areas: Faculty and staff, while working – other than to prepare food or meals – along with other individuals who are in a room, office or place, where all individuals not of the same household can maintain 6 feet of social distance from each other are not required to wear a face covering or shield.
- c. Classroom Settings:
  - i. Where a classroom or place of instruction can be configured so that all students and instructors can maintain 6 feet of social distancing from one another at all times, face coverings or face shields do not need to be worn during in-person educational instruction.
  - ii. Where a classroom or place of instruction cannot be configured so that all students can maintain 6 feet of social distance or social distancing from one another at all times, face coverings or face shields must be worn during in person educational instructions by students. Instructors must wear a face covering or face shield unless the instructor(s) can maintain 6 feet of social distancing from students. At the direction of the instructor, a student may be permitted to remove his or her mask or face shield on an intermittent and temporary basis.
- d. Recess: Face coverings and face shields may be removed during recess periods, so long as social distancing can be maintained.
- e. Any person with a medical condition, mental health condition or disability which prevents wearing a face covering.
- f. Any person who is deaf or hard of hearing, or communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication must wear a clear face covering and/or shield.
- g. Any person for whom wearing a face covering would create a risk to the person related to their work, as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.
- h. Proof of exemption is the responsibility of the person claiming the exemption.

- i. If a person who is not wearing a mask or face shield due to an exemption under this policy tests positive for COVID-19, close contacts within 6 feet of the positive person must quarantine per this policy unless fully vaccinated or have been ill with COVID-19 within the previous three months and recovered, and without any symptoms. <sup>1</sup>
- j. Students and staff participating in lunch, band, choir, Tri-Epsilon, Vocal Music, Cheerleading, or any athletics will not be required to mask or wear a face shield for the duration of said activity.

#### VI. *Screening*

- a. Each student/parent or staff member shall be personally responsible to screen their own physical condition daily by taking their temperature before school starts. Those with a temperature that equals or exceeds 100.4 degrees shall be kept at home and their absence properly reported to the school building.
- b. If a student or staff member attends school and thereafter appears to be showing signs of illness, by elevated temperature, coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell, they should report to the school nurse who may quarantine the student and contact a parent or guardian to pick up the student or send the staff person home, responsibly. Once a student or employee is removed from the school environment, they will be permitted to return if they satisfy the guidelines in ¶ IX.

#### VII. *Medical Inquiries*

The school will take every opportunity to inquire concerning COVID-19 symptoms for employees and students, including:

- a. If a parent tells the school that a student is ill, the school will ask the parent whether the student is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- b. If an employee calls in sick or appears ill, the school will inquire whether the employee is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.
- c. If a person is obviously ill, the school may make inquiries about the symptoms exhibited, and may exclude the person from school property, only to return in accordance with ¶ IX.
- d. If a student or staff member is fully vaccinated and has been exposed to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 and chooses not to get tested

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/K-12-Guidance-12-30-21.pdf>.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2021/s1227-isolation-quarantine-guidance.html>

or self-quarantine, the parent or staff member must provide proof of a COVID-19 vaccination before the child or staff member will be invited to return to in person instruction. The student and staff member shall then monitor their symptoms for 10 days after exposure and may be quarantined by the school nurse per ¶ VI (b).

#### *VIII. School Response to Confirmed COVID-19 Cases*

- a. After it is confirmed that a person infected with COVID-19 was on school property, the following steps shall be taken:
  - i. Notification to the Indiana Department of Education;
  - ii. Implementation of sanitization efforts in areas where the infected person was engaged in the educational program; and
  - iii. Parents of students in close contact with a positive person will receive a phone call and email from the school nurse and/or principal notifying the parents of the close contact.
  - iv. Upon receiving notification of close contact, it is the parents' choice whether or not their student will quarantine, unless symptoms develop. <sup>2</sup>If the student returns to school, they will be required to mask or wear a face shield and monitor their symptoms for 10 days.
- b. The superintendent and/or administration may shut down buildings, buses, classrooms, or other facilities for such time as is appropriate for the protection of the community.

#### *IX. Return after Exhibiting Symptoms*

Persons who have been self-quarantined, or removed or excluded from school may return after:

- a. If not tested for COVID-19 they may return if:
  - i. They have not had a fever for at least 24 hours without the use of medication to reduce fever; and
  - ii. Their other symptoms such as coughing or shortness of breath have improved for two days continuously; and
  - iii. At least 5 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

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<sup>2</sup> See attached IDOH "Wear a mask. Stay in School." graphic.

- b. Persons who experience symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 may return if, in addition to the above requirements, the individual has received a negative COVID-19 test, and 24 hours of improvement from the end of symptoms.
- c. If a person tests positive for COVID-19 but has exhibited no symptoms, they may return 5 days after the test **as long as they do not have a mask exemption. If the individual is not masked coming back, then they need to fulfill a 10 day isolation period.**

*X. Sanitation Issues*

- a. Water Fountains: All water fountains shall be disabled at the drinking spigot. Bottle filling water fountains have been installed in buildings, and more will be installed as available. Students needing hydrations shall be responsible to provide their own water bottle, which shall not be shared with other persons. Restrictions on the presence of water bottles in classrooms are lifted.
- b. Restroom Use: Students shall wear masks or face shields in all restrooms, unless qualified for an exemption under ¶ V.  
Riddle and Columbia schools shall handle restroom usage by classroom visits. No more than one class shall be released for restroom use at a time.
- c. Hand Washing or Sanitizing: Hand sanitizers shall be available at all entry doors, at the cafeteria, and throughout the building. All persons should use hand sanitizers at the following times:
  - i. Upon entering the building in the morning;
  - ii. Before eating;
  - iii. After using a restroom;
  - iv. After blowing the nose, coughing or sneezing; and
  - v. After using shared equipment

The school will provide sanitizers for these purposes

*XI. High Risk Facilities*

Several classrooms, due to the nature of instruction, are considered high risk facilities. If a student is in such a classroom, special protections and procedures will be provided to assure adequate airflow, as required for classroom participation.

Adopted this 6th day of **January, 2022**, by a vote of \_\_\_\_\_ aye, \_\_\_\_\_ nay.

ROCHESTER COMMUNITY SCHOOL BOARD

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ATTEST:

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Board Secretary