



OKLAHOMA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

**RETURN TO LEARN**

2020-2021

OSB is honored that you have chosen our school to provide your child an education. We take this responsibility very seriously and are committed to providing the best education possible while keeping your child and our employees' health and safety as our top priority. We are excited to begin a new school year and want to inform you of our plans to increase health and safety measures due to COVID-19 concerns. These guidelines are based upon information from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Oklahoma State Health Department, and Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Some of the steps OSB will take to enhance safety measures include:

- Installing hands-free water filling stations on each floor
- Providing additional PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) e.g. gloves, masks, etc.
- Providing hand sanitizer to all classrooms and in the hallways
- Sanitizing all classrooms each day with an electrostatic sprayer
- Installing signage to remind students to wash hands appropriately and often and practice social distancing
- Cleaning and sanitizing buses/vans after each use.

## **2020-21 Instructional Delivery Methods**

OSB will provide two different delivery methods for instruction this year which are Traditional School and Distance Learning.

**Traditional School** is by far the preferred means of delivery of education for blind/visually impaired students. Students would attend classes on site as usual with extra precautions in place to limit exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

**Distance learning** will be offered to students PK-12 whose parents feel uncomfortable sending them on site due to COVID-19 virus concerns. It is intended as an option for those students that are in high risk categories, had close exposure to COVID-19, and/or ill themselves.

**IMPORTANT:** The grading process will be much different than the process at the end of school (4<sup>th</sup> nine weeks). Student **will be graded** on work performed and new instruction will be required.

Distance Learning will be practiced this school year to prepare for such time as our district finds we must move to a distance learning platform due to district closures for COVID-19 or even Snow Days. Our district has determined it is vital to be ready and have students equipped to move into a distance learning environment that will be productive and meet their individualized education needs. The importance of students understanding how to learn online and how to access their teachers' lessons is paramount as predictions for school closures may or may not be long term but will likely happen as we wait for a solution for COVID-19.

## **COVID-19**

COVID-19 stands for "coronavirus disease 2019." This virus caused the closure of our district in the spring of last school year. It is important that we review the following with you as we discuss our district plans for re-opening: 1) How the virus is known to spread, 2) What are the signs and symptoms, 3) Prevention of the spread of COVID-19.

According to the CDC and the Oklahoma State Department of Health, the virus is spread mainly from person to person. This usually happens when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or in the close contact talking for a period of time. It is also thought that it may be spread through the touching of a surface that has the virus and then touching ones mouth, nose or eyes.

Symptoms usually start 4 – 5 days after a person is infected with the virus. But in some people, it can take up to 14 days for symptoms to appear. Some of the symptoms are listed below:

- Fever
- Cough
- Trouble breathing
- Shaking chills
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Problems with sense of smell or taste

While there is not a vaccine to prevent COVID-19, there are things we can do to slow the spread or avoid the exposure to the virus. Those things include:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow
- Wear face coverings and practice social distancing

Our district's number one priority is to keep students, staff, and families in our school community safe and healthy. Therefore, it is important that everyone reads the following guidelines and understand how important it is for us to be consistent and insistent on all safeguards.

Please know we are sensitive to the feelings and emotional effects of some of the procedures we must implement to ensure we are doing all possible to keep our school community safe. Please read carefully and with understanding we will always do our best to maintain a healthy and safe environment. Our procedures have been developed as a result of the latest guidance available.

### **OSB's Plan for a Safe Re-Opening**

#### **Student / Staff Well-being:**

- All staff and students will be required to wear face coverings. Each student and staff member will be provided a mask at the beginning of each semester. The district will also have disposable masks available in the case where one has been forgotten. Exceptions to this policy may include physical education, outside recess and other areas that may be deemed mask free zones. Wearing of masks in the classroom will be at the discretion of the teacher if social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Temperatures will be taken of every person entering our school.
- Understanding it is not possible for our school to keep six feet between students, we will stress social distancing by having students report to classrooms, separate students in the cafeterias, open up new spaces for students during lunch if needed.
- All staff are required to attend COVID-19 professional development training in order to be familiar with signs, symptoms, precautions, and responsibilities.

- All students will be instructed in best practices in healthy habits including education on COVID-19, how it spreads and prevention for the spread.
- Reminders will be posted to wash or sanitize hands, not share items, and clean their environment.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in all classrooms and in the hallways.
- The addition of hands-free water filling stations are being installed on each floor.
- All students will be assigned a personal computer or iPad for their use in order to avoid sharing of devices.
- Practice social distancing as much as possible.

### **Environment Planning and Programming:**

- Seating will be spaced out as much as possible.
- Student breaks and recess times may be adjusted to help social distancing.
- Sharing of materials will be discouraged. Students needing supplies need to inform their teacher.
- There will be sanitation supplies to clean desks between classes or before or after breaks.
- All ventilation will be checked and serviced before the start of school and on a weekly/bi-monthly basis.
- Encourage outside activities as much as possible.

### **Cleaning Protocols:**

- Desks will be cleaned as students change classes.
- District purchased additional supplies for each classroom include cleaning towels and cleaning spray in addition to hand sanitizer.
- All handwashing stations will be maintained with soap and towels.

### **Visitors**

All visitors will be required to contact the school prior to coming to the campus. If arriving during normal school hours, visitors will enter through the main entrance and be screened. If arriving after school hours, visitors will enter through the west lobby.

## OSB Transportation for Initial Re-Opening

### OSB Vehicles (bus, transits, vans, etc.):

- Buses and vans are cleaned and sanitized after each use.
- Window will be lowered, if possible (in appropriate weather).
- All school vehicles will be equipped with a hands free temperature monitor.
- All students' temperatures will be taken as they enter the vehicle. If a students' temperature is over 100 degrees the student will be checked again after five minutes and will not be allowed to ride bus/van if temperature is over 100 degrees.
- Each student will be asked prior to boarding a bus if they have tested positive for COVID-19 or if they have been in contact with someone who has tested positive. If they currently have a cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, and fever they cannot board the vehicle. If they have any two of the following symptoms, they will not be allowed to board the vehicle: fever, muscle pain, sore throat, chills and/or repeated shaking with chills, headache and a new loss of taste or smell.
- Staff and students will be required to wear masks when being transported by an OSB vehicle.
- Students will be seated as far apart as possible and will be on a seating chart.
- Bus/vehicle rules will be strictly enforced.
- Students will not be allowed to switch seats while being transported to and from school.
- Pens used for signing for students would need to be wiped between uses or allow the DCS chaperone to write the name of the parent that picked-up student instead of the parent signing, to minimize parent contact with pen and clipboard.
- DCS chaperone would put on clean gloves before each stop to hand out medicine to parent and discard once stop is finished.
- DCS driver would need to put on clean gloves before each stop to hand out luggage.

## Day Students:

- Each person will have temperature checked before entering the building.
  1. If a students' temperature is 100 degrees or above a school nurse will be called to evaluate and determine whether or not the student should be sent home.
  2. If a parent or service provider or anyone other than student has temperature of 100 degrees or above they will not be permitted to enter the building.
- Thermometer will be provided to DCS staff at front door to take temperatures of students being dropped off in the parking lot before parents' leaves them to be walked in. If elevated, nurse will be called to evaluate and confirm that student should be taken back home.
- Provide more seating along hallway by the front office to be able to spread out students while waiting to be picked up.
- Thermometer will be provided to DCS staff at east lobby to take temperature of students dropped off from local districts. If the temperature is 100 degrees or higher the student will not be allowed to enter the school.
- In an effort to reduce the exposure chances, it is recommended that visitors to the building be limited to emergencies or issues of extreme importance. All meetings need to be arranged through the office. All persons going to classrooms will be limited.

## Procedures at School in Initial Re-Opening

- Building will not be open until 7:30 am each morning. Please **do not** send your child to school before this time as they will not be able to enter the building.
- All classrooms are cleaned daily. In addition, classrooms will be cleaned during the school day. Desks will be cleaned in self-contained after lunch. Desks or tables will be cleaned between students changing classrooms in the grade level classrooms where students change classes.
- Lunch time will be modified to accommodate distancing as much as possible. There will not be outside visitors allowed in the cafeteria in

the initial re-opening stage. Tables will be sanitized between lunch groups.

- Music, PE, and Library: Students will be allowed to move to classes unless it is determined to be too great of a risk to move students. At such time, students will remain in their classrooms and teachers will go to them for their special classes. PE – Students will go outside as often as possible weather permitting. If they are inside, they will be doing activities that will keep them spread out in the gym. Library – Students will go to the library as there is room in the library to social distance. Band and Athletics – These classes will have specific guidelines to follow. We will provide that information as we receive further guidance.
- All teachers will start the year providing instruction to students in the following areas: 1) COVID-19 – how viruses are spread / what we can do to prevent the spread; 2) Hand washing procedures / hand sanitizer use; 3) Not sharing materials / not touching face
- Personal Protective Devices (PPDs) - All staff and students will be required to wear a mask unless area is marked as a mask free zone.

#### **Students sent to the clinic:**

- Clinic will need to be notified prior to sending any student to the clinic.
- There will be not more than two students inside the clinic at one time.
- Every student MUST wear a mask when entering the clinic.
- Further guidance on the medical clinic and medication distribution will be given to students when they return to school.

#### **Rec Center:**

- Elementary students will attend recreational activities at a different time than MS/HS students.
- During planned activities, students will be spaced out for social distancing.
- Rec Center will be sanitized between elementary times and MS/HS times.
- Supplies, games, remotes, etc... will be cleaned and sanitized between uses.

## **Dormitory Plan:**

- Dorm assignments will be made to try to keep a minimum number of students in a dorm room as possible. Our rooms are big enough that social distancing should be able to be maintained even at capacity but will strive for less.
- DCS will be instructed on the importance of students keeping a social distance within the dorm as much as possible. DCS will use discretion when requiring masks in the dorm area. If social distancing can be maintained, masks may not be worn at all times.
- Lines to travel to cafeteria or elsewhere will be spaced out for social distancing.
- DCS will stagger student times in the bathroom at showers, stalls, and sinks.
- Each student will have his/her own personal basket for toothbrushes and toiletries for personal hygiene.
- Each student will have his/her own laundry basket and all dirty laundry goes in it as soon as it's discarded.
- Sick bays will be prepared and ready in the event there is a positive case that will remain on campus for a short time.
- Dinner times may be staggered so that students can be spread out in the cafeteria. Tables will be sanitized and wiped down between dining groups.

## **Breakfast and Lunch:**

- Students will be seated and will have their meals delivered to the table.
- Middle School students will go to lunch at 11:40. This will allow time for the elementary to have left the cafeteria so that staff can clean the tables and other areas. Students will spread out to maintain social distancing during lunch.
- High School students will go to lunch at 12:00 and will spread out to allow for social distancing.
- Breakfast will be brought to the dorm for residential and day students for the first two weeks. A staggered breakfast schedule may be implemented at a later date.

## **Recess:**

Middle School students may leave the cafeteria at 12:00. Students will go to either the Courtyard or Playground weather permitting. Middle School students will return to their homeroom class at 12:15.

High School students may leave the cafeteria at 12:15. Students will go to either the Courtyard or Playground. They will return to class when the 12:30 bell rings.

Rec room will be utilized in case of inclement weather.

## **Protocols for Students and Staff with Suspected COVID-19**

**\*\*It is important to remember we are in an unprecedented time. Our world is facing a pandemic that can be deadly to those with compromised immune systems including older persons. It is the responsibility of our school system to do all we can to provide the safest environment possible to our students as well as the community. The following protocols are in place for safety of students, staff, and community. Any of the actions of the school must not be taken as a confirmation of COVID-19 for students and staff asked to return home but the actions of a responsible entity responding in the best interest of all the school community.\*\***

All students' confidentiality is going to be respected as required in FERPA and HIPPA regulations. However, students with signs or symptoms of COVID-19 will be taken to the nurse or her designee to be assessed and parents contacted. This area will be away from the classroom. The health department conducts contact tracing for all COVID-19 cases. This will assist in all decisions made about school closures.

## **Students with fever or symptoms at home:**

- Students with a fever or symptoms should NOT be sent to school. If you take your child's temperature and it is 100 degrees or higher or has other COVID-19 symptoms **DO NOT** send them to school.
  1. Notify the office of your child's illness as soon as possible. (The principal will work with you to place your child on distance learning in order to keep up with the instruction of their regular class. This will also start their attendance being checked by distance learning and your child will not be counted as absent as long as he/she follows the

- distance learning attendance policy.)
2. Before returning to school, student/staff member should contact OSB Nursing Staff who will coordinate with Oklahoma State Department of Health to guide on returning to school/work.
- Any student at school that begins to show symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day the following will happen:
    1. Clinic will be contacted and arrangements made for the student to be assessed.
    2. Parents will be contacted and the student will be sent home immediately.
    3. The health department will be contacted.
    4. Parents will be encouraged to get child tested for COVID-19.
    5. Any area where the student has been for 30 minutes or longer will be cleaned and sanitized for safety purposes.
    6. Before returning to school, student/staff member should contact OSB Nursing Staff who will coordinate with Oklahoma State Department of Health to guide on returning to school/work
  - If the school is notified a student has tested **positive** for COVID-19 the following will happen.
    1. School officials and the Health Department will be notified immediately.
    2. If students are at school, parents will be notified and instructed to pick up student.
    3. Any students waiting on parents to pick them up will be spread out in a staging area.
    4. The area where the student or staff member spent more than 30 minutes will be isolated for a minimum of 24 hours. Then school staff will deep clean and sanitize all areas the infected person has been after the 24 hour isolation period.
    5. Health officials and school administration will work together to determine **if** or for how long school, classroom, or dorm should close.
    6. Notification will be sent out to parents of students who had contact with any student with a confirmed positive case.

**Students or Staff members exposed to COVID-19:**

1. If a staff member or student is in close contact with a person (a family member) testing positive for COVID-19, our first priority is for your

health and safety and those around you. In this rapidly changing situation health care providers will have the most up-to-date information from the CDC.

2. If your child has been in close contact with a person who tests positive for COVID-19 parents must notify the office immediately and your child should **NOT** come to school. While being in contact does not mean your child has COVID-19, there is a time period your child should be monitored for symptoms before returning to school. Your building principal will set your child up on distance learning in order for him/her to receive all instruction his/her class is receiving. Your child will not be counted absent as long as he/she follows the distance learning guidelines.
3. Please do the following:
  - Quarantine yourself in a specific room away from others in your home.
  - Contact the following (in order of priority, let them know you have been exposed to COVID-19, then follow their instructions).
    - a. Your healthcare provider.
    - b. Your supervisor/principal
  - If you are a staff member, your supervisor will work with HR to determine appropriate next steps.
4. Any student or staff member will be strongly encouraged to get a COVID-19 test.
5. Student will not be allowed back to school until conference with school principal and it is determined to be safe for the student to return to class. (The school will be following the guidelines set by the CDC/Oklahoma State Health Department.)

### **Closure of OSB Sites or Departments due to COVID-19**

OSB does not have a (set) number of cases that will trigger a closure of the school site. We will coordinate closely with medical officials, the Muskogee County Health Department, Oklahoma State Department of Education and the Oklahoma State Department of Health to make appropriate decisions.

*This re-opening plan is subject to change should current Covid-19 information deem necessary. As we receive information, we will adapt as needed to promote the health and safety of students and staff.*

*Rita J. Echelle, Superintendent*

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