



RESPONSE TO CDC GUIDELINES AND PLANNING PROCESS FOR 2020-21

Recently, a graphic listing “New CDC Guidelines [sic] for Reopening Schools” has been circulating on social media. It is our understanding that this graphic originated from a 60-page document titled *CDC Activities and Initiatives Supporting the COVID-19 Response and the President’s Plan for Opening Up America Again*, accessible here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/CDC-Activities-Initiatives-for-COVID-19-Response.pdf>

In light of growing concerns over this list, please allow us the opportunity to share the status of our planning process for the upcoming school year.

The guidelines cover many recommendations, along with the caveat that “all decisions about following these recommendations should be made in collaboration with local health officials and other state and local authorities who can help assess the current level of mitigation needed based on levels of COVID-19 community transmission.”

To make assumptions today about what our expectations and operations will be in August based on this this list is misguided. The CDC makes very clear throughout their guidelines that the local health departments are the key advisor in assisting schools with re-opening plans. In Indiana, schools will combine the following to make determinations:

- The guidance Governor Holcomb provides in July;
- Guidance from the Indiana Department of Education;
- CDC guidance that is based on the COVID-19 stage, determined by the local health department;
- Indiana Back on Track stage;
- Local school district data such as input from stakeholders and local governmental officials.

Planning for the 2020-21 School Year

Lebanon Community School Corporation shares in the goal of the Governor, other state leaders, and fellow school districts to open businesses and schools. We want to choose a re-entry strategy that allows us to move toward normal operations and avoid taking steps backward. At this time, we are doing our best to prepare for any guidelines that may impact our essential operations.

Governor Holcomb has stated that he will make an announcement in early July regarding the 2020-21 school year. We anticipate that we will know more about how the upcoming school year will look at that time. While no major decisions have yet been made, our administrative team is preparing for a variety of scenarios.

To assist us in planning for the fall, we have asked for all LCSC families, students, and employees to respond to our [COVID-19 Response Survey](#). The feedback we gather will be utilized to make important decisions about the 2020-21 school year. We will continue to monitor information regarding COVID-19 and work with local health department officials to assist us in determining the best way to welcome our students and staff back in August, while providing the safest possible learning and working environment.



We understand that this information is critical and time-sensitive. Throughout the summer, we will provide updates to our families and community as they are available, with the intent to share concrete details no later than mid-July.

LCSC has committed to preparation for the 2020-21 school year by:

- Purchasing CDC-approved cleaning supplies;
- Purchasing equipment to enhance our daily cleaning and sanitation protocols including Ultraviolet Light Sanitizer Units (UV-C);
- Installing partitions at all school and building entries;
- Purchasing personal protective equipment (PPE) including thermometers, face coverings, and other items that may be used by staff and visitors;
- Adding signage to improve the flow of students, staff, and visitors to maximize social distancing;
- Deep cleaning of all classrooms and gathering spaces;
- Planning for meals and menus that will not require students to plate their own food when food service resumes;
- Consulting with area physicians to review national guidance when preparing to resume interscholastic athletics;
- Training of our staff to maximize safety protocols;
- Developing screening protocols for those entering all district facilities.

On Tuesday, May 21, as part of the annual student handbook review, the Board of Trustees voted to include the language below in student handbooks for the 2020-21 school year:

Students will be required to comply with all requirements and recommendations of public health agencies, federal and state department of education, state and federal laws and executive orders related to the Coronavirus or any other communicable diseases.

While masks may be one item on a list of recommendations, it is important to remember that guidance from the CDC, State of Indiana, and local health departments is presented on a continuum and covers a wide range of topics and items.

This addition to the student handbook makes clear that students are expected to respect and adhere to that guidance (such as not removing face coverings from fellow students, not crossing barriers that are put in place to allow proper distancing of students, and/or maintaining distancing as instructed by their teachers). It is important to consider that some students and staff may have respiratory or other health issues that require an even more isolated environment.

While we have few concrete answers at this time, we are confident that our students, parents, faculty, staff, and administration will rise to whatever challenges we face. The entire school community has shown tremendous flexibility and resiliency and has remained positive over the past several weeks.