

HIGHLAND JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT #305  
Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity  
of Services

<http://www.sd305.k12.id.us/>

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## **Introduction**

Schools are the heart of our rural communities. Highland Joint School District is committed to providing a safe supportive environment for students that addresses social and emotional development, provides access to services, and improves life outcomes. Although COVID-19 outbreaks have occurred in school settings, multiple studies have shown that transmission rates within the school setting, when multiple prevention strategies are in place, are typically lower than community transmission levels.

Highland Joint School District is committed to working with the local public health department to determine necessary protocols and prevention strategies. School Administrators consider multiple factors when making decisions about implementing prevention strategies against COVID-19.

Highland Joint School District 305 has established a COVID19 Committee consisting of school administrators, teachers and other stakeholders. The committee creates and reviews protocols followed by the district to ensure the safety of staff and students on a daily basis.

## **Mitigation Strategies (Table 1)**

### **Promoting Vaccination**

Vaccination has been identified as a leading public health prevention strategy to prevent COVID-19. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at a lower risk of symptomatic or severe infection. COVID-19 vaccinations help protect eligible people from getting severely ill with COVID-19; staying up with vaccinations is the leading public health strategy to prevent severe disease.

**For additional information regarding vaccination clinics or additional information, contact North Central Health District at (208) 882-7506 or access the website at: <https://www.idahopublichealth.com/> Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks**

Individuals, who are not vaccinated, who wear masks consistently and correctly protect others as well as themselves. Consistent and correct mask use is especially important in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

- **Indoors.** Mask use is recommended by the CDC in public places where there are a lot of people around. It may be difficult for very young children or for some children with disabilities to safely wear a mask. Other prevention strategies will be considered to support these students.
- **Outdoors.** In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. However, masks may be worn when in a crowded outdoor setting or during

activities that involve sustained close contact with others who may not be fully vaccinated.

When masks are worn by teachers, staff or students, the masks should meet one of the following criteria:

[CDC Mask Recommendations](#)

[ASTM International Standard Specification for Barrier Face Coverings](#)

[NIOSH Workplace Performance and Performance Plus Masks](#)

***\* Highland Joint School District will be supportive of anyone who chooses to wear a mask.***

### **Ventilation**

Highland School will continue to optimize ventilation and improve air quality to reduce the risk of germs and contaminants spreading through the air by ensuring HVAC systems are cleaned and well maintained. When COVID-19 community levels are high the school will increase outdoor air intake and improve air filtration.

### **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**

Hand washing can prevent the spread of infectious diseases. The school will reinforce proper hand washing to lower the risk of spreading viruses. Adequate hand washing supplies will be provided in restrooms, and hand sanitizer will be made available throughout the building. Signage will be displayed that provides instruction on proper hand washing.

The school will reinforce proper respiratory etiquette and encourage covering coughs and sneezes to help keep individuals from getting and spreading infectious diseases.

### **Cleaning**

Surfaces will be cleaned regularly to reduce the risk of germs spreading by touching surfaces.

### **Modifying Facilities**

Staff and families of students will be made aware of known situations where students and/or staff have been exposed. If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the school, parents and students will be notified and given safety/ health recommendations or guidelines to follow. If necessary, classrooms may be rearranged or moved to a different area to allow for social distancing.

Highland Schools may implement the use of Cohorting. The use of Cohorting can limit the spread of COVID-19 between cohorts but will not replace other prevention measures. Cohorting means keeping people together in a small group and having each

group stay together throughout the day. Cohorting can be used to limit the number of students, teachers, and staff who come in contact with each other, especially when it is challenging to maintain social distancing.

Social Distancing: Based on studies from 2020-2021, the CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of distance between students within the classroom.

### **Contact Tracing**

Highland Joint School District will continue to confidentially provide information about people diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19. This allows the district to identify which students, teachers and staff with positive test results should isolate and/or quarantine. School officials will notify, to the extent allowable by law, teachers, staff, and families of students who were close contacts as soon as possible after the district is notified that someone within the school has tested positive.

### **Staying Home When Sick**

People who have symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal infections, such as cough, fever, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea, should stay home. Students, teachers and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, are expected to stay home and are encouraged to speak to their healthcare provider for possible testing and care.

Testing is recommended for people with symptoms of COVID-19 as soon as possible after symptoms begin. Staying home when sick can lower the risk of spreading infections to other people. Flexible, non-punitive, and supportive policies will be implemented.

***\*Refer to the Quarantine/Isolation requirements at the end of this document.***

### **Diagnostic and Screening Testing**

Screening tests identify infected people, including those with or without symptoms. In K-12 schools, screening can help promptly identify and isolate cases, quarantine those who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and are not fully vaccinated, and identify clusters to reduce the risk to in person education.

### **Accommodations for Children with Disabilities**

Parents of at-risk students will be encouraged to speak to a health care provider about safety protocols that are being recommended for them in a school environment. The Highland Joint School District will comply with accommodations written in IEP's or 504 plans regarding COVID-19 preventative measures or procedures. Students receiving special services who are out of school due to illness will have regular contact with district personnel to ensure their needs are met.

### **Attendance and Absenteeism**

Highland Joint School District will monitor student and staff attendance on a daily basis.

If parents are uncomfortable sending students to school, they are encouraged to speak to Administration about possible options for Online instruction.

### **Visitors**

Highland Joint School District will be limiting non-essential visitors, volunteers and activities involving external groups or organizations with people when there is moderate-to-high COVID-19 community transmission. All Visitors are required to be checked in and registered at the office upon entering the building.

### **Communication Plan**

Highland Joint School District has created a COVID Committee which will meet to review current protocols and the district "Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services".

COVID-19 updates will be provided to the local school board and school staff when there are confirmed cases within the school community. No individual or personal information will be released to the community as a whole.

## **Narrative Information Required in District Plan (Table 2)**

### **How the LEA is addressing and plans to address students' academic needs?**

Highland School District will offer in-person instruction for students during the 2022/2023 school year. If parents are uncomfortable sending students to school, parents may contact District Administration to determine what options are available for their child(ren).

Online students must be signed up for a minimum of a semester. Attendance will be counted based on the student's academic progress in the online program. District assessments will be offered to students on days when school is not in full session.

Highland School District will continually progress monitor all students and work to provide additional support and resources in student's individual areas of need.

### **How the LEA is addressing and plans to address students' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs?**

Highland School District is focused on all aspects of student learning. The District is a School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention School District (SWPBIS) that focuses on the social wellbeing and healthy connections between peers and adults. We have two part-time counselors, one to support student social, emotional, and mental health needs and the other to support other needs. Communications between schools, families, and community is important. The Highland Joint School District has placed an emphasis on maintaining lines of communication between the school district and the families of our students.

The district allocates professional development days throughout the school year. The MTSS process is used to identify students who may be at-risk academically, socially, emotionally, etc., and provide support and interventions as needed. Our staff works to ensure that every student has at least one adult they have a connection with in the district who can provide them consistency and support.

### **How the LEA is addressing and plans to address their staff's social, emotional, mental health, and other needs?**

The district has included an Employee Assistance Program as part of the health insurance package for our staff. Information on third-party mental health providers is available to staff as needed. We will continue to hold staff meetings regularly to ensure we are meeting their social, emotional, and mental health needs. Administration meets with staff on an ongoing basis to ensure their needs are being met. The process and timeline for review and revision of the plan no less than every 6 months through Sept. 30, 2023.

<b><u>Time line</u></b>	<b><u>Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Persons</u></b>
Jan 2022	Mid-Year Plan Review	COVID Committee
Jan 2022	Submit any changes to Board for review.	Supt. Gion
May 2022	Plan Review – Planning for 2022/23 school year.	COVID Committee
May 2022	Submit any changes to Board for review	Supt. Gion
November 2022	Mid-Year Plan Review	COVID Committee
November 2022	Submit any changes to Board for review	Supt. Gion
May 2023	Plan Review – Planning for 2023/24 school year.	COVID Committee
April 2023	Submit changes to Board for review	Supt. Kellogg

**LEA’s need to support and/or technical assistance related to implementing strategies identified in Table 1/ Mitigation Strategies and Table 2/ Narrative Information if applicable.**

Highland Joint School District will continue to provide support to staff and students regarding the use of 1:1 device within the district and for those who are participating in limited online learning. The district employs an IT director who ensures the devices and infrastructure are functioning properly. The staff has received PD on the use of programs and security protocols for supporting students in an online environment.

Highland Jt. School  
District Pandemic  
Operations Plan

Category 1—Mild to Moderate Community Transmission

Category 2—Moderate to Substantial Community

Transmission  
Category 3—Substantial Community  
Transmission

**Category 1**

**PPE Strategies**

- It is recommended that when students or staff are sick they should stay home
- Optional Masks and/or Face Shields.
- Any staff/student or visitor exhibiting any of the following symptoms should wear a mask until leaving campus. It is expected that parents will pick up their children promptly if any of these symptoms are exhibited.
  - 100.4 Fever or greater
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - diarrhea
  - Loss of taste/smell
  - Cough
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Congestions or runny nose
- Establish and maintain hand hygiene stations throughout the building.

**Classroom**

- Will be cleaned on a regular basis
- Good hygiene practices should be integrated into instruction and classroom expectations.
- When possible, windows should be open
- Limit the use of shared materials and spaces:  
Students and staff should use personal water bottles

**Cafeteria**

- Students will be encouraged to wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to eating lunch.
- Salad bar availability will be determined in consultation with the public health department



## **Visitors**

- Parents may only go past the office if approved by administration:
- All lunches, school work, etc. should be dropped off at the office

## **Gatherings**

- Normal gatherings will occur.
- Participants are encouraged to use proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette

## **Busing**

- Riders are encouraged to use proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Changes may occur depending on the level of community transmission

## **Recess**

- If outdoor recess is not feasible, indoor recess will occur in the gymnasium.

## **Confirmed Case in School, Regardless of Community Transmission**

- If there is a confirmed case in the school, the school facilities will be disinfected according to CDC and local public health official's guidance.
- The Highland School District will continue to follow the mitigation protocols outlined in this document and recommended by our health partners.

## **Category 2**

All Category 1 operations are in place, plus:

- Coordinate with the local public health district and follow CDC guidance regarding necessary protocols
- Encourage parents to screen students every morning before attending school. Parents should not send students to school that exhibit symptoms.
- Visitors may only be allowed to come to the office.
- Lunch may be closed. Students may be expected to remain on campus during lunch.
- Recess: Each class may be assigned a designated area for play.
- Field trips, assemblies, etc. may be canceled.
- No loitering in the hallways:
  - Elementary students will enter the building using the outside doors directly into their classrooms.
  - Secondary students will go directly to their 1<sup>st</sup> period classroom after going to their lockers to get their materials.

**Highland School Board will determine if the school needs to enter Category 2 Protocols.**

## Category 3

School may go into distance learning mode based on severity of community transmission.

**Highland School Board will determine if the school needs to enter Category 3 Protocols with the exception of a short term Category 3 distance learning mode**

### **PROTOCOLS:**

Positive test results:

- o 5-day isolation for positive person 5 day isolation begins on day of onset of symptoms or positive test result with release on day 6, if not showing symptoms.
- o Once the 5-day isolation ends, masks will be required for an additional 5 calendar days. Any student/staff unwilling to wear a mask will be asked to remain at home for the additional 5 days.
- o Close contact/Exposure 5-day monitoring period, if individual starts to show any symptoms of COVID-19, will presume positive and isolate from 5 days of initial exposure.
- o Once the 5-day isolation ends, masks will be required for an additional 5 calendar days.

Updated on 1/24/22

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