

RENSELAER CENTRAL SCHOOLS CORPORATION
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
MONDAY, AUGUST 30, 2021

RENSELAER CENTRAL SCHOOLS CORPORATION ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM
900 E. Washington Street
Rensselaer, IN 47978

EXECUTIVE SESSION

5:00 p.m.

- A. Call to Order
- B. Establishment of a Quorum
- C. I.C. 5-14-1.5-6.1(3)
For discussion of the assessment, design, and implementation of school safety and security measures, plans and systems.
- D. Adjourn in to Emergency Special Session

EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSION

6:00 p.m.

- A. Call to Order
- B. Establishment of a Quorum
- C. Agenda Additions/Deletions
- D. Approval of Agenda
- E. Presentation of Revised 2021-2022 School Re-Opening Plan
- F. Public Comments on Revised 2021-2022 School Re-Opening Plan
- G. Approval of Revised 2021-2022 School Re-Opening Plan
- H. Adjournment

Rensselaer Central Schools Corporation

Re-Entry Plan for 2021-2022

Draft for Consideration by RCSC Board on August 30, 2021

08-27-2021

RETURN TO IN-PERSON LEARNING

Rensselaer Central Schools will offer students in-person instruction at 100% capacity, 5 days per week for the 2021-2022 school year. This plan was developed to provide a safe and secure learning and working environment for all staff and students.

Rensselaer Schools will review guidance from the Indiana Department of Health, the Jasper County Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control in making adjustments to this plan. RCSC will evaluate this plan at least monthly.

Parents and guardians play an essential role in helping set a positive tone for the school year by encouraging, informing, and preparing students as they transition back to school. We appreciate the support of our families and welcome feedback to help us improve this re-entry plan. Our goal is for all students to return to school through a process that is safest for everyone involved while minimizing the negative impact of the pandemic. It will take all of us working together and cooperating through many challenges.



School Protocols

Absences and Positive COVID 19 cases

Student and staff absences will be monitored and COVID cases recorded on a daily basis.

Facial Coverings

Facial coverings that cover the nose and mouth are recommended but optional on school grounds. According to federal regulations, facial coverings are required on school buses.

Enhanced Cleaning

High touch areas will be cleaned and sanitized to reduce the potential for infection. This includes desks, doorways, chairs and restrooms.

Shared items will be limited and cleaned after student use.

Hand Washing

Students will be taught proper hand washing techniques and will be expected to wash their hands before eating, entering/exiting the building and when using the restroom.

Water Fountains and Bottle Filling Stations

Water fountains will be on in the building but students and staff are encouraged to use the water bottle filling stations.

Athletics, Extracurricular, Co-Curricular Activities and Events

Attendance may be restricted based on capacity and the ability to meet social distancing requirements.

Volunteers and Guests

Classroom volunteers and guests will be permitted. However, any guests entering the building will be required to wear a mask unless fully vaccinated or six feet of separation can be maintained.

Food Service

Food selection and distribution will be designed to reduce the spread of infection. Tables will be cleaned after each lunch period.

Transportation

All buses will be disinfected daily. High touch areas will be cleaned as needed throughout the day.

Mitigation

Screening Procedures

It is the expectation of parents/guardians to monitor students daily and keep students home if they exhibit the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100.4 or greater
- Congestion or runny nose
- Sore throat
- New uncontrolled cough that causes difficult breathing (For students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline.)
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain
- New onset of severe headache, especially with fever
- Loss of taste or smell

Screening Procedures for Staff

Staff are directed to self-screen for COVID symptoms prior to coming to work to determine if they should stay home.

Vaccination

Vaccination for COVID-19 is recommended but not required. The vaccine is available for individuals 12 and older at no cost.

Contact Tracing and Quarantine

- When a positive Covid-19 case is confirmed, contact tracing will be performed.
- Individuals who have been within six feet for a total of 15 minutes of the person identified as positive for Covid 19 will be considered close contacts.
- Close contacts and their parents will be notified.

- **RCSC will follow the requirements of the Indiana Department of Health for quarantine.**

Asymptomatic individuals, unless fully vaccinated or recovered from a COVID-19 infection within the past 90 days, who are identified as **a close contact of a COVID-19 case shall quarantine, including exclusion from schools, preschools, daycare settings, employment, and public places, until:**

- A. 14 days after the date of last exposure;
- B. 10 days after the date of last exposure, following additional precautions for days 11-14; or

C. 7 days after date of last exposure with a negative PCR test result occurring on day 5 or later, following additional precautions for days 8-14.

- If close contacts develop Covid, procedures will be reviewed.
- The RCSC School Board will review the reopening plan at least monthly.

Vaccination and Quarantine

Vaccinated individuals with an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 **are not required to quarantine**, if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Fully vaccinated with both doses of 2-dose series and two weeks has elapsed since the second dose.
- Fully vaccinated with a single dose of a single-dose vaccine and two weeks have passed since the dose.
- Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure,

Exhibiting COVID-like Symptoms

If an individual exhibits symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they will be sent home and presumed to have COVID until such time as a health care provider determines the illness is caused by something else and provides a note for return.

Without a health care provider's note, the individual will need to stay home for 10 days and be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

If a student or staff member is exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 but tests negative with an antigen (rapid) test, the individual may be directed to get a PCR test to confirm with the school nurse. A PCR test is considered more reliable than antigen tests in determining if an individual is COVID positive.

Only results from a health care setting will be accepted.

COVID Isolation Areas

Students who exhibit COVID-like symptoms will be sent to isolation areas to await pickup

School Closure

Decisions on whether part or all of a school will need to close will be made in consultation with the Jasper County Health Department. This decision will be influenced by the number of students who have to quarantine and the ability to staff a building in addition to other considerations.

FACILITY MODIFICATIONS

- The amount of fresh air brought into the buildings by the HVAC system has been increased.

- Additional water bottle filling stations have been added.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed throughout the buildings.
- Glass barriers have been installed in the school offices.

MENTAL HEALTH

The routine of school has changed and this change can cause stress for students. It is important to encourage students to communicate their fears and concerns. If you have questions or a child that needs assistance, please contact the child's teacher, counselor, nurse or school office.

Rensselaer Central Schools Corp. 2021-2022 Reopening Plan
Draft to be Considered for Approval by RCSC Board on August 30, 2021
08-27-2021

Questions and Answers

- **What quarantine guidelines will RCSC follow this year?**

- **RCSC will follow the requirements of the Indiana Department of Health for quarantine.**

Asymptomatic individuals, unless fully vaccinated or recovered from a COVID-19 infection within the past 90 days, who are identified as a **close contact of a COVID-19 case shall quarantine, including exclusion from schools, preschools, daycare settings, employment, and public places, until:**

- A. 14 days after the date of last exposure;
- B. 10 days after the date of last exposure, following additional precautions for days 11-14; or
- C. 7 days after date of last exposure with a negative Covid test result occurring on day 5 or later, following additional precautions for days 8-14.

- **Do fully vaccinated people have to quarantine?**

All vaccinated people (students and staff) no longer need to be quarantined, unless a vaccinated person has a breakthrough infection of COVID-19 and has symptoms.

- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms or starting the date of their positive test.

- **Will vaccinations be required for students and staff?**

- No, vaccinations will not be required for anyone. We will NOT request vaccination information from staff or students.

- **Are COVID-19 tests mandatory for students who will be participating in school?**

- No, students are not required to take a COVID-19 test prior to coming to school. If a student is showing symptoms of COVID-19, we recommend getting a confirmation of the diagnosis by having the student tested for COVID-19.

- **What physical distancing and other mitigation measures will be taken?**

- RCSC students and staff will transition back to normal capacities this year. Spacing will be adjusted as practical to reduce the number of close contacts.

- **Who is considered a close contact to someone with COVID-19?**
 - For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as anyone who was within 6 feet of a person who receives a positive test result (OR a written doctor's diagnosis for COVID-19) for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before the person began feeling sick until the time the patient was isolated. (The distance is no longer 3 feet because we have eliminated the mask requirement.)

- **Who will screen students and staff for COVID-19 symptoms each day?**
 - Parents must screen their children for COVID-19 symptoms each morning. All staff must self-screen for symptoms each day prior to coming to school.
 - People with COVID-19 can have a wide range of symptoms - ranging from mild to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus.
 - Daily Screening Process - If the answer is "yes" to any of the following, parents/guardians must keep the student home and contact the school nurse:
 - In the last 14 days, have you been asked to self-isolate by a public health official or medical personnel
 - Fever (100.4 °F or higher)
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Runny nose/nasal congestion
 - New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline)
 - Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain
 - Sore throat
 - New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever
 - RCSC will NOT be screening every student and staff member each day.

- **Will individuals identified as close contacts be monitored?**
 - Close Contacts will be **required to quarantine** according to Indiana Department of Health requirements.

- **What is the process for reporting a suspected COVID-19 infection for a student or staff?**
 - In order to prevent the spread, it is necessary to report absences due to COVID-19 symptoms or exposure to an infected person. Please notify your child's school immediately based on the following guidance:
 - Students - follow the normal absence reporting process
 - Staff - direct supervisor
 - Visitor - school building and the individual with whom you met
 - A student or staff member who is awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test cannot return to school IF he/she is, or has been, experiencing symptoms. If a student or staff member does not have symptoms (is asymptomatic) and is only taking a COVID-19 test out of an abundance of caution, he/she may return to school immediately and self-monitor for symptoms.

- Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 who had a negative test may return to school:
 - Must be 24 hrs fever free without the use of fever-reducing medications
 - Other symptoms resolved
 - No doctor's note required
 - If having symptoms, must complete 10-day isolation
 - Anyone with symptoms who is not tested must isolate. Siblings may attend school unless the symptomatic household member receives a positive result from the COVID-19 test or the sibling develops symptoms.
 - If a household member tests positive, a student or staff member will have to quarantine for 10 days.
 - Anyone with symptoms in a household who is tested should quarantine while waiting for test results.
 - If the symptomatic person without a positive test is diagnosed with another condition that explains the symptoms, or tests negative, then no quarantine for close contacts is necessary.
 - If not tested, a provider's note with alternate diagnosis will be needed to return to school.
 - Parents may choose for their other child or children to stay home and quarantine if a household member is awaiting a COVID-19 test result, but the siblings or other family members are not required to quarantine at this time.
 - The school WILL NOT send students or staff home who are feeling well when one of his/her family members is sent home by a school nurse because he/she is sick at school.
- **What will happen if a student or staff member has a confirmed case of COVID-19?**
 - Notify the school office.
 - RCSC's nurse or school principal will contact the Jasper County Health Department.
 - If a closure or change in school format is necessary, the school may consult with the Jasper County Health Department to determine the status of school activities including the length of closure, extracurricular activities, co-curricular activities, and before- and after-school programs.
 - School nurses will closely track student and staff absences. When a parent or guardian notifies the school that a student is ill, the school may ask the parent whether the student is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19. If an employee calls in sick or appears ill, the school can inquire as to whether the employee is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.
 - School nurses will work with each family to plan the re-entry for on-site learning. A doctor's note may be required for re-entry.
 - Siblings of students who are sent home because they are sick do not need to be sent home from school as long as they do not exhibit any symptoms.

- **What will happen if a student or staff member has an unconfirmed case of COVID-19, yet exhibits symptoms?**
 - Parents and guardians **MUST** communicate with the school nurse when they believe a child could have an unconfirmed case of COVID-19.
 - School nurses will work with each family to plan the re-entry for on-site learning. A doctor's note may be required for re-entry.

- **Will there be a Remote Learning Option for my child this year?**
 - All students will return to in person classes for the 2021-2022 School Year. RCSC will **NOT** provide a Remote Learning Option.
 - **Students in Quarantine**
 - Students who are required to isolate or quarantine at home because of symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test need to continue working from home so that they do not fall behind in their learning. We count students in quarantine as present at school for attendance as long as they complete their work each day. If a student is too ill to continue schoolwork, then he/she will be counted absent and need to follow the student handbook policy for make-up work for their school.

- **How will RCSC implement the attendance plan this year?**
 - All schools will not use attendance incentives, like perfect attendance awards, to promote attendance, but all schools will follow the regular attendance plan and procedures.
 - RCSC staff will still contact parents of students who are chronically absent to discuss the reasons for being absent, but we will do so with the understanding that health concerns are a priority to ensure the safety of all students and staff.

- **Will I be allowed to visit my child's school?**
 - All visitors and volunteers need to have a background check on file
 - At this time, visitor processes for programs, events and other activities will return to normal, pre-pandemic expectations.
 - Visitors to the classroom will be required to wear a mask
 - Parents may choose to attend a case conference on-site. Our preference is for all case conferences to be completed using video conferencing to minimize any health risks for all who are involved on the Case Conference Committee. We also found this option to be extremely convenient and efficient for families.
 - If the parent/guardian chooses an on-site conference, he/she **MUST** complete the COVID-19 self-check for possible symptoms prior to entering the school.

- **Will students attend field trips throughout the year?**
 - Yes, field trips will return to normal.

- **Will RCSC change the procedures if Jasper County goes to red or the school has a specific number of positive cases?**
 - Decisions on school closure will be made based on individual circumstances.
There are no predetermined points for school closure.