

# Carson City School District

## Plan for a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services for the 2023-24 School Year

Revised: May 23, 2023

### Introduction:

Although Governor Sisolak announced the end of the State of Emergency related to COVID-19 pandemic on May 6, 2022, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) receiving ARP ESSER funds to maintain Plans for a Safe Return to Instruction and Continuity of Service through September 30, 2023. In addition, ARP requires LEAs to review and update the plan every six months. As a result, Carson City School District's current plan has been updated for the 2023-24 school year. With this document, the Carson City School District intends to continue to provide the information and guidance needed to help the community, families, students, and staff understand the aspects of the reopening and operation of District schools under current public health conditions.

Carson City School District's plan provides for full in-person instruction, five days per week for the 2023-24 school year. All programs and services offered by the District are available to students and families. Students in grades 6-12 may continue to apply for full remote (off campus) education through Pioneer Academy. In addition, any students who may be quarantined due to COVID-19 or who must remain at home for any health-related reason during the 2023-24 school year have access to academic content for short term absences (approximately two weeks or less) through District provided technology including support for internet connectivity. Only if and when governmental authorities' close schools or limit school operations, a combination of distance education and in-person instruction, or a hybrid model may be implemented in response to a universal, public health threat or condition.

This plan is the result of input from a variety of sources including citizens, parents, staff, public agencies, and community partners. The Carson City School District's Safe School Reopening Plan – now renamed "Plan for a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services" -- was first presented at a workshop for the public held on June 22, 2021 and was considered for additional public comment and approval by the Carson City Board of Trustees on July 13, 2021. After receiving feedback from the Department of Education in November of 2021, the plan was revised and approved by the Carson City Board of Trustees on January 11, 2022. As required by ARP, the plan was then updated and approved six months later by the Board on June 28, 2022 and January 10, 2023

**First Day of School for Students:** Schools will open for the 2023-24 school year on **August 14, 2023** for students in grades 1-12. The first day of school for Pre-K and kinder students will be **August 17, 2023**. The 2023-24 academic calendar can be found at <https://carson.ss3.sharpschool.com/cms/One.aspx?portalId=801611&pageId=1239216>

### Communication:

It is the goal of the Carson City School District to continue to provide students, families, staff, and community partners with the information needed to understand the processes associated with the opening of schools for the 2023-24 school year. The District will utilize local media outlets through press releases, district and school websites, text messaging, email, social-media, and automated telephone-calls to educators, families, students, community members, and other key stakeholders in the dissemination of pertinent safe school opening information. All information concerning the opening of school will be available in both English and Spanish.

The District will provide consistent and accurate communication to staff and students regarding health and wellness considerations and expectations using a variety of methods. Signs or posters are placed in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, classrooms, and restrooms) that promote everyday personal protective wellness measures such as social-distancing, handwashing, and other preventative measures, and describe how to diminish the spread of contagions. Regular announcements using the public address system and flat-panel, hallway monitors at schools will help to remind students and staff of tips to reduce the spread of illnesses.

Free, family-friendly materials will also be available in school lobbies for students, families, and staff. All health-related messages will be available in both English and Spanish. The District will provide current, informational, health and wellness related resources dealing with COVID-19 on the District's web page. The District will also create opportunities for staff training and support regarding illness and pandemic responses tailored to different staff in varying roles or assignments.

#### **Emergency Management:**

In an attempt to reduce health risk in schools, the District partners with Carson City Health & Human Services (CCHHS) to monitor community health through absentee rates and school nurse reports of specific illnesses, Covid-19 being one of these. Key components of a school-based health program include the promotion of vaccines; individual and school-wide infection control measures; and how to contain, manage, and prevent further spread of infectious diseases.

In the event of an emergency, district and school leaders will use the District's Communication Plan and its electronic communication system to contact stakeholders. The District and schools will provide guidance to staff and families to maintain operational integrity. Carson City School District has a robust communication plan and electronic means by which to notify families, staff, and students. The District's communication plan can be found at [https://carsoncityschools.com/news/communication\\_plan](https://carsoncityschools.com/news/communication_plan).

In the event of an emergency, the District will use all available resources to inform and update stakeholders. The District has an established Safety Services Department that uses a decision-making model based on FEMA's Incident Command System. Carson City School District has the capacity, resources and networking with other public agencies to continue operational services and systems in case of an emergency. The District's safety protocols can be found at <https://carsoncityschools.com/cms/one.aspx?pageId=1267533>

#### **Reopening School Buildings and Grounds:**

All school buildings and grounds will be open to the public for the start of the 2023-24 school year. The Governor returned authority to local school officials to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. As such, Carson City School District will continue to operate in-person schools, offices, and grounds for instructional, administrative, and extracurricular activities under the following conditions:

- 1) The school year will proceed according to the approved 2023-24 School Year Calendar.
- 2) School will be in session five (5) days per week for in-person, on campus learning.
- 3) Full-time remote learning for grades 6 -12 will be available by application through Pioneer Academy.
- 4) Students experiencing short-term absences (usually less than two (2) weeks in duration) will have access to instruction through digital or paper means through their school and teachers. The District will provide all enrolled students with Chromebooks and will assist families with internet connectivity on an as needed basis.
- 5) Reducing the likelihood of an outbreak and responding to outbreaks:
  - a. Surveillance is an essential component of any public health system and is used to monitor disease trends over time, detect illness outbreaks, and increase knowledge of risk factors. The Nevada Administrative Code Chapter 441A and county disease reporting regulations require reports of specified diseases, foodborne illness outbreaks and extraordinary occurrences of illness be made to CCHHS. Disease reporting allows CCHHS to rapidly respond and prevent additional illness, recognize trends in diseases of public health importance and to intervene in outbreak or epidemic situations.
  - b. The District will respond to new COVID-19 cases and/or outbreaks in schools in accordance with the Outbreak Response Plan developed in partnership with the Quad County Health Coalition. If a school-wide outbreak of COVID-19 is identified by the applicable local health authority in any school, a universal face covering policy shall be implemented immediately for all students in the school building where the outbreak occurred until the local health authority determines that the outbreak is closed. Additional mitigation measures may be required by the local health authority for that school as deemed necessary by the local health authority.
  - c. Per Carson City Health and Human Services:
    - i. An outbreak will be defined as having several cases at school during a 14-day period that exceed 10% of the school's census population, based on the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) definition.
    - ii. The outbreak will be mitigated by following the advice from Carson City Health and Human Services, which may include the aforementioned face covering mandate for a period of 28 days.
    - iii. The outbreak will be monitored and closed under the direction of Carson City Health and Human Services.
  - d. The District adheres to the guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) which can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-childcare-guidance.html> as well as the Nevada Division of Health and Human Services.
  - e. The District follows the guidelines of the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA) for student athletes.
  - f. School health offices are equipped to provide testing for students and staff that present symptoms at school.

### Approximate School Schedules for Start and Dismissal Times:

Elementary	Middle School	Pioneer Academy	Carson High School
8:25 AM	7:45 AM	7:35 AM	7:40 AM
3:15 PM	2:25 PM	2:15 PM	2:05 PM

Each site develops its own master schedule to make the best use of available services and resources. Elementary schools have the flexibility to work within this schedule to assign time for specialist teachers to assist with school operations and engage the curriculum. Middle schools teach a straight six or seven period day where core subjects and electives are offered. Each middle school has the ability to vary their class schedule according to staff availability and school resources. The District's high schools use the block schedule.

### Special Populations:

- The Carson City School District has implemented the following support and resources to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities, as outlined in the CDC COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 Schools:
  - The District works with the families of all students with disabilities to understand the unique needs of each student;
  - IEP meetings are held for all students with disabilities to address each student's specific needs;
  - As a result of these meetings, programming, accommodations and modifications are made in order to improve the safety and health of our students;
  - Additional PPE is provided to staff who serve students who are medically fragile or in need of a higher level of protection;
  - A variety of behavioral techniques such as modeling, picture schedules, timers, visual cues and positive reinforcement are implemented to help students adjust to changes in routine; and
  - Families with students that have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are also encouraged to contact the Student Support Office with questions or concerns (775) 283-2350
- English Language Learners can contact the EL Department at 283-1521
- Families with questions about Nutrition Services can call 283-2150
- Families with questions about Transportation can call 283-1950

### Grading Systems:

- Grading at the elementary level will use the Standards-Based model
- Grading at the secondary level will use the traditional A-F system

### Student Attendance:

Students who are unable to attend school due to Covid-19 symptoms or other transmittable illness will be marked absent in Infinite Campus. When the student can safely return to school, the parent/guardian will need to submit a written excuse (note from medical personnel, positive test results, or other related documents) to the school office within 3 days of the student's return.

### **School District Operations:**

Student and staff safety is of utmost importance. A multi-layered approach to building cleaning and disinfecting has been implemented to keep buildings clean and people healthy. This process includes enhanced and frequent disinfecting of surfaces, the flushing of fresh air through filtered HVAC systems, an increased volume of fresh air through the system, scheduled and supervised handwashing with soap and water, and the availability of hand sanitizer and disinfectant in every classroom.

### **Cleaning and Sanitation:**

Custodial and sanitizing services, along with increased ventilation processes, will continue to occur according to heightened operational protocols. A building management system that adheres to fresh air standards and proper indoor air quality enhances all the buildings in the District. The District contracted with an HVAC Specialist to perform a HVAC Readiness and Pre-Occupancy Assessment so that staff, students, and families could return to the schools with confidence. This activity has been performed on HVAC, filtration, ventilation and domestic water systems. A final engineering report was produced and summarizes the general recommendations of OSHA, CDC and ASHRAE. The District has upgraded air filtrations systems to at least a MERV-11 filter for all air-handling equipment. System filters are changed 3 times per year.

Carson City School District's standard Clean, Healthy, Educational, Environments (CHEE) Process cleaning program requires staff to disinfect touchpoints, table surfaces, and restrooms EVERY NIGHT. Custodians began an enhanced disinfectant program, electrostatic disinfectant misting, in nurses' offices every night since January 2020 and will continue using this system each night during the 2023-24 school year. The electrostatic disinfecting process is performed 3 nights a week in common areas of the schools like hallways, cafeterias, and main entryways. Classrooms continue to be electrostatic disinfected twice a week and the CHEE process engaged twice a week. Bio layers are stripped from classroom surfaces and cleaned with soap weekly so that the disinfecting process is thoroughly employed. The District has also employed the use of Sani-Carts which are micro-fogging systems used to disinfect large areas and have been very effective in treating known infected areas.

At the end of each school day, students and staff will clear the floor of debris and regular school materials (pencils, crayons, paper, books, etc.) and store them properly or discard them as trash. Trash bins and soiled cleaning materials are to be placed in the halls outside of the classroom for removal or disposal. These activities provide extra time for custodians to clean and sanitize the building.

The District has purchased personal protective equipment (PPE), hand washing materials, and cleaning supplies available to staff. Liquid/foam sanitizer stations are placed at every building in the main entrance. In addition, wall mount dispensers are positioned throughout the building and classrooms. Hand pump dispensers are also provided in the office areas.

Teachers have access to a non-toxic, food safe spray sanitizer that can be used on desktops and other surfaces during the day. The product works quickly and has a minimal dwell time, so the process can occur between classes.

### **Nutrition Services:**

Carson City School District will continue providing nutrition services during the school year. Students attending school in person will be served meals according to school schedules.

All students attending school in person and on-campus will eat free of charge for the 2023-24 school year.

Each meal served in the Carson City School District is structured around strict calorie, sodium, and fat guidelines set by the US government in the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010.

- Each school meal is served with a fruit and/or vegetable serving as defined by MyPlate (formally known as the Food Pyramid).
- All grains served are either whole grain or enriched grains that contain more vitamins, minerals, and fiber than refined counterparts.
- Student favorite foods are served to encourage meal-time eating. Examples are: The District's pizzas are made with whole grain crust, low sodium pizza sauce, and low-fat cheese. Chicken nuggets are breaded with whole grain flour and baked, not fried.
- Skim or low-fat milk is offered at each meal.

### **Transportation:**

Student and staff health and well-being is also of concern on our school buses. Transportation for students with IEPs will continue as currently organized.

School walk zones will not be altered at this time. Through the online registration process parents should identify if their student requires transportation. Seats will be assigned to qualifying students. School bus ridership will be strictly enforced. Families living inside of the official walk zones should not expect to have their children transported to school.

### **Student Health and Wellness:**

The District's wellness protocols are outlined below and also available on our website:

<https://www.carsoncityschools.com/cms/One.aspx?portalId=801611&p>

- Any students, staff, or volunteer with a fever, flu-like or cold symptoms, or in general are feeling un-well should not come into the school.
- Once at school, if a student or staff member presents with symptoms of an illness, CCSD will follow wellness protocols for intervention:
  - Students who develop flu-like symptoms during the school day will be isolated in a designated area;
  - Testing for students and staff who become symptomatic during the school day or have been identified through contact tracing as a close contact of a confirmed positive COVID case will be available;
  - Parents will be expected to pick up their students immediately;
  - Students sent home will not be allowed to return to school until they have been symptom free without the use of fever reducing medications for 24 hours; and

- Nurses will coordinate with families the need to deliver medications to the school.

### **Social and Emotional Health of Students:**

Goal 4 of the CCSD Strategic Plan, *Empower Carson City 2027*, is to promote optimal wellness for all students. Specifically, Objective 4.1 advances social and emotional wellness: Adopt, implement and support a sense of community, wellness and belonging using best practices as part of an empirically supported social emotional learning program. This includes:

1. School-Wide Supports:
  - a. The District has social workers at every school and counselors at all secondary schools who support our students directly and also provide assistance and coaching to teachers and other staff that work with our students.
  - b. Students are provided with a safe environment within their schools and classrooms that include predictable routines and positive expectations.
  - c. School/home connections are fostered at the classroom, school and district levels.
  - d. Students are engaged in learning via a variety of modalities and are provided with positive and supportive feedback.
2. Progress Monitoring:
  - a. Teachers monitor student progress to ensure that students are making progress.
  - b. Learning Loss plans are put in place at each school to address academic deficiencies that resulted from the pandemic.
  - c. Data is collected at the classroom, school and district level to monitor student progress.
3. Tiered Systems of Academic and Behavioral interventions:
  - a. The District has adopted MTSS (multi-tiered systems of support), an evidenced-based three-tiered framework to improve and integrate supports for all students:
    - i. Tier I includes practices and systems that establish a foundation of regular, proactive social and emotional support for all students (school wide) while preventing unwanted behaviors.
    - ii. Tier II practices and systems support students who are at risk for developing more serious academic and behavioral issues with early intervention strategies.
    - iii. Tier III provides intensive, individual support to improve behavioral and academic outcomes:
      - Included in this Tier is on-going trauma support for students who may have experienced losses within their families due to the pandemic.
    - iv. Additional strategies for keeping students on track, including specific strategies for English learners and students with disabilities, are provided in Tiers II and III.

### **Other Hygiene and Safety Precautions:**

- Hand-washing will be encouraged throughout the day and expected before and after meals.
- Hand Sanitizer is provided throughout the buildings. Students and staff may have their own containers.
- Extra and co-curricular activities will occur according to guidance from the NIAA.
- Visual signs reminding students and staff about personal hygiene practices will be placed in schools according to administrative needs.

### **Human Resources:**

Employees who have medical conditions and/or circumstances that may prevent them from returning to work at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year should consult with their medical advisor as soon as possible. The staff member should also contact Human Resources to discuss his/her employment concerns. The number for the Human Resources Department is 283-2130.

Currently, the federal government is not providing leave benefits to employees for missed work days associated with COVID-19. Any quarantine or missed workdays associated with COVID-19 will require use of the employee's sick leave. Before leaving for work, all employees should:

- Monitor individual health and symptoms (fever, shortness of breath, etc.)
- Maximize physical distance from others to the extent practicable
- Take any and all precautions necessary to protect themselves
- Consider non-essential travel from a wellness perspective
- Continue to practice good hygiene
- Stay at home when unwell

All District staff should anticipate the possibility of experiencing potential modifications to their usual and customary duties and assignments.

### **Resources to Support the Social, Emotional and Mental Health of Staff:**

- Recognizing the need to support staff during this pandemic, the following resources were reviewed with all supervisors to help them support staff throughout the District:
  - [Employees: How to Cope with Job Stress and Build Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic \(cdc.gov\)](#)
  - [What Workers and Employers Can Do to Manage Workplace Fatigue during COVID-19 | CDC](#)
  - The Employee Assistance Program provides links to specific information on COVID-19 along with mental health resources such as grief and loss counseling, managing stress, depression, anxiety and family issues.
    - Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
    - There is no out-of-pocket cost to employees, dependents and eligible household members
    - Benefits are voluntary and confidential

**Timeline:**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Initial Reopening Plan Developed and Submitted to NDE; consultation with community	June - August 2021
Plan posted on District website	August 2021 to present
Feedback on CCSD plan received from NDE	November 12, 2021
Stakeholder feedback gathered	November 30, 2021 to January 10, 2022
Revised plan provided to public via Board meeting and District website	January 11-13, 2022
Revised plan provided to public and parents via Parent Square	January 11-13, 2022
Press release with link to revised plan sent to media outlets	January 11-13, 2022
Plan submitted to NDE	January 14, 2022
Evidence of consultation collected	July 2021 through February 2022
Sixth month plan reviewed and updated by internal stakeholders	June 2022
Revised plan provided to public via Board meeting and District website	June 28, 2022
Revised Plan Effective	First day 2022/23 School Year: August 15, 2022
Sixth month plan reviewed and updated by internal stakeholders	December 2022
Revised plan provided to public via Board meeting and District website	January 10, 2023
Sixth month plan reviewed and updated by internal stakeholders	May 3, 2023
Revised plan provided to public via Board meeting and District website	May 23, 2023

**Conclusion:**

The Carson City School District is committed to providing high-quality, accessible learning opportunities to all students – without regard to means, ability, or at-home support, while taking significant precautions toward preserving the health and safety of students, staff, and the community.

During the 2023-24 school year, District Officials will continue to watch for changes in governmental recommendations associated with COVID-19, its variants, or related health conditions. As changes occur in the public health that warrant further action, the Superintendent will report these changes to the Board of Trustees and recommend potential changes to the school operations as necessary.

**The educational plan represented here is subject to change.**