



Sugar-Salem School District No. 322

105 West Center • P.O. Box 150 • Sugar City, ID 83448  
Phone (208) 356-8802 • Fax (208) 356-7237

# Return *to* Learn

**SAFE RETURN TO IN-  
PERSON INSTRUCTION &  
CONTINUITY OF SERVICES**



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July 1, 2021

Sugar City Parents and Patrons:

As we are preparing for the upcoming school year, we have put a great deal of thought into how we can meet the needs of our students, parents, teachers, and patrons and still provide a safe learning environment. We know that face-to-face instruction is the most effective method for instruction and student learning. As such, we will be starting the next year in Phase 1 and hope to continue to operate under those guidelines for the entire year. If necessary, Phase 2 and 3 plans are prepared and available.

Given our experience of last year, we absolutely believe that we can provide for the safety of our students and teachers and still provide a school experience for students that will operate very similar to what we familiar with. We have made adjustments to last year's plan that are in accordance with the guidelines that we have been given from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH), and the Sugar Salem Board of Education. This plan is outlined in the enclosed pages.

We are looking forward to the upcoming school year! We are committed to providing the best possible experience that we can for everyone involved. The effects of the pandemic continue to manifest themselves in various ways. As such, we will continue to be responsive and adapt to the existing circumstances, as each situation demands.

Sincerely,

Chester Bradshaw  
Superintendent of Schools

## **Rationale for Reopening Schools**

We believe that it is in the best interest of the students at Sugar Salem Joint School District 322 to continue with face-to-face instruction and learning as much as possible. This plan will provide key information on additional steps that we will take to provide for the health and safety of our staff and students as we reopen schools on August 23rd. Based on the following information, we believe that we can open schools and continue to protect the health and safety of staff and students.

1. Idaho has successfully entered Stage Four of the Governor's Idaho Rebounds Plan, which permits unrestricted staffing of worksites with physical distancing, personal protections, and sanitation for protection.
2. The Center for Disease Control is encouraging the reopening of Schools wherever possible. The CDC is also encouraging local communities and boards to stay aligned with the needs of their community. "The CDC has always said that local policymakers need to make policies for their local environment," according to CDC director Rochelle Walensky in a statement on June 30<sup>th</sup>.
3. The Eastern Idaho Public Health District has not issued any orders suggesting that schools should not be educating in a face to face environment.

## **Guiding Principles**

1. **We will take reasonable and rational precautions to protect the health and safety of our staff and students.** Precautionary measures to protect students' health must be balanced against the potential disruptive or obstructive impact on student learning.
2. **We will collaborate with our local public health officials** to make decisions in the face of an upsurge in community transmission.
3. **We will use official health agency information to make decisions.** Guidance from the CDC and state public health will be reviewed in collaboration with our local health agency to identify appropriate steps and to evaluate the viability and necessity of recommended strategies. Information from non-official sources may provide additional insights; however, our decisions will be based on information from official public health agencies. All other sources of information will be carefully selected to ensure our decisions are based on research-based evidence.
4. **We believe that students learn best through direct instruction from highly effective teachers.** Continuing to promote face-to-face instruction to happen safely is our top priority. If that ideal becomes impossible, then **we will make every effort to continue students' learning through** online instruction at home.
5. **The expectation in all phases is that families will fully support their student's educational needs during this pandemic.** We will strive to deliver a full curriculum as we continue to work through the effects of the Pandemic.

## **Phase 1: Schools Reopen for All Students with Additional Precautions**

In Phase 1, students will return to school with additional precautions to protect the health and safety of students and staff. To the extent practical, recommendations from the CDC and Idaho public health agencies will be implemented. Phase 1 presents the highest risk of transmission, but also provides the most comprehensive education for students. We believe that implementing this plan that includes key strategies to minimize the risk of transmission is the right decision for student success. Other plans will only be implemented if public health agencies mandate more restrictive measures or if staff or student absences make it impractical to continue with Phase 1.

### **Family Responsibilities - Phase 1**

- Monitoring symptoms.

Parents and guardians will be asked to monitor their children for symptoms each morning, including checking their children's temperatures each day before sending them to school.

- Self-quarantine.

If any student has been in close contact with an individual who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, they will be asked to self-quarantine for 14 days in accordance with CDC guidelines.

- Personal protective equipment.

In keeping with the Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) COVID-19 Regional Response Plan, students are allowed to wear masks to help prevent the transmission of disease, especially during times that physical distancing will not be possible. Students who ride school buses may choose to wear face masks. Teachers may encourage students to wear masks in their classrooms when it is appropriate.

- Personal hygiene

Families are asked to teach their children good hygiene practices, specifically frequent handwashing. Students are encouraged to bring their own refillable water bottle to school.

### **Staff Responsibilities - Phase 1**

- Monitoring symptoms

Staff will be encouraged to monitor themselves for symptoms each morning, including checking their temperatures each day before they come to school.

- Self-reporting

Staff should self-report to their school's direct supervisor and/or principal if they have symptoms of COVID-19, a positive test for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days in accordance with health information sharing regulations for COVID-19. This information will be kept confidential as part of their personnel health file and will only be disclosed to appropriate personnel within the Human Resources Department and Superintendent/designee, as necessary.

- Self-quarantine. If any staff member has been in close contact with an individual who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, and subsequently develops symptoms, they may be asked to self-quarantine for two weeks in accordance with CDC guidelines.

- Personal protective equipment.

Staff will be provided with masks to minimize the risk of transmission of disease, especially in situations where they will be within close proximity to students or other staff members (less than 6 feet). Professional judgment should be used to determine whether masks will substantially interfere with instruction and other essential job functions, especially if the mask may create additional safety risks for the employee or others.

### **Classroom Instruction and Learning - Phase 1**

In Phase 1, all schools will be open for in-person instruction with the following modifications:

- Monitoring symptoms

Non-touch thermometers will be available in the office to scan students as needed. Students with temperatures above 100°F or other unexplained symptoms will be sent to the school's quarantine room to wait for parents to pick them up.

- Online Learning and Instruction

Students who are isolated due to illness or quarantined by order of a public health agency or medical physician will be provided the opportunity to continue their learning. Students who continue their learning while quarantined at home will not be counted absent from school.

- Personal protective equipment

In keeping with the Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) COVID-19 Regional Response Plan, students are allowed to wear masks to help prevent the transmission of disease, especially during times that physical distancing will not be possible. Students who ride school buses will be allowed to wear face masks. Teachers may encourage students to wear masks in their classrooms when it is appropriate.

- Sanitization and cleaning

Regular handwashing and hand sanitization will be expected. Hand sanitizer will be provided in each classroom for student use. Desks and other common surfaces will be disinfected each school day.

### **School Transportation - Phase 1**

- Physical distancing

It will not be possible to maintain recommended physical distancing between students on the school bus on typical school bus routes. Where possible, students will be assigned seats to maximize physical distancing. Students will be assigned seats in order of pick up from back to front to minimize interactions among large groups of students. When disembarking, students may be dismissed individually to ensure physical distancing between students.

- Sanitization and cleaning

Seat surfaces and handrails will be wiped down with approved disinfectant after each bus run. Deep cleaning of floor, seats, and touch surfaces at the end of each day. Use of approved cleaning solutions, equipment and methods as outlined by "School Bus Fleet Online"

- Staffing

All transportation staff will be screened daily for “fit for duty” criteria before engaging in their transportation duties. Protective masks will be provided for use by bus drivers during loading and unloading of passengers. Masks will not be worn while driving. Some special education students will require close physical proximity by an aide to facilitate embarkment and disembarkment. Aides will be provided with face masks and disposable non-latex gloves as personal protective equipment to use during these interactions.

### **Cafeterias and School Lunches - Phase 1**

- Meal options for students

Regular hot menu items will be provided for both breakfast and lunch at no charge for the upcoming year.

- Physical distancing

Where possible, the entire cafeteria should be used for feeding students to increase physical distancing during mealtimes. Lunch time will be staggered at the schools

- Sanitization and cleaning

Hand sanitizer will be made available to students at the start of each serving line. Cafeteria tables will be disinfected between groups of students.

### **Nonessential School Activities - Phase 1**

- High School and middle school extracurricular activities

Activities that are organized under the Idaho High School Activities Association and associated activities at the middle school level will continue under the guidance of the IHSAA. These activities are completely voluntary and families who choose to participate in these activities should assume there will be inherent additional risk from participating in activities which will often require close personal contact with others.

Clubs and other-non IHSAA activities must take reasonable precautions to ensure appropriate steps are taken to protect the health and safety of members and advisors. Precautions could include sanitization of areas, wearing face masks and physical distancing among participants.

Assemblies, school dances, and other large-group activities that bring large numbers of students into close contact with each other for more than 15 minutes will be planned on a case-by-case basis. We will continually evaluate the risk vs. reward for scheduling these activities.

- School field trips

Field trips and other nonessential student travel, except for IHSAA associated activities, will be permitted on a case-by-case basis until further notice. We will continually evaluate the risk vs. reward of allowing field trips.

- Elementary PE and music

PE and music programs will continue to be provided to students in elementary schools. Instructors will plan to provide physical distancing during PE and music activities.

- High School and middle school music programs.

High school and middle school music programs will continue. However increased protections must be planned following guidance of state or national music associations.

## **Phase 2: Schools Reopen with Alternating Day Schedule**

Certain circumstances may make it impossible or impractical to continue with Phase 1. These circumstances include:

- Sugar Salem Board of Trustees, upon the advice and counsel of available expertise, conclude that the health risks to students and staff is too great to continue a face-to-face delivery of education.
- Excessive teacher or staff absenteeism that negatively impacts our ability to continue normal operations,
- Other unforeseen circumstances.

Phase 2 is based on creating an alternating day schedule to reduce the number of students in schools and on buses by 50%. Phase 2 presents moderate risk of transmission, with significant impacts to students' education. For this reason, this strategy will only be implemented if it is determined by the Sugar Salem Board of Trustees that the risk of continuing in the Phase 1 model of education warrants the educational loss that is certain to occur in a Phase 2 education delivery model.

### **Organization and Scheduling**

Students will be organized alphabetically into two groups to attend school. Families with children with different last names may submit a request for all of their children to attend school on the same day, but the day will be assigned by District administration.

- Group A: (Last names A-J) will attend school on Mondays and Wednesdays
- Group B: (Last names K-Z) will attend school on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Fridays will be scheduled for regular hours to support student needs, individual help, and teacher collaboration.
- Fridays were selected as the non-instructional day because of the high number of Friday's that have scheduled extra-curricular activities.

### **Family Responsibilities - Phase 2**

- Monitoring symptoms

Parents will be asked to monitor their children for symptoms each morning, including checking their children's temperatures each day before sending them to school.

- Self-quarantine.

If any student or member of their family has been in close contact with an individual who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, they will be asked to self-quarantine for two weeks in accordance with CDC guidelines.

- Personal protective equipment.

In keeping with the Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) COVID-19 Regional Response Plan, students are allowed to wear masks to help prevent the transmission of disease, especially during times that physical distancing will not be possible. Students who ride school buses will be allowed to wear face masks.



Teachers may encourage students to wear masks in their classrooms when it is appropriate. Families who cannot provide masks for their children may request schools to provide a set of reusable masks for their children to wear at school.

## **Classroom Instruction and Learning - Phase 2**

- Monitoring symptoms

Non-touch thermometers will be available at the office of every building to monitor student symptoms as needed. Students with temperatures above 100°F or other unexplained symptoms will be sent to the school's quarantine room to wait for parent pick up. Students who are isolated due to illness or quarantined by order of a public health agency or medical physician will be provided the opportunity to continue their learning. Students who continue their learning while quarantined at home will not be counted absent from school.

Classrooms will be arranged to maximize 6 feet of physical distancing between students during instruction. All unnecessary furnishings and other large items will be removed from classrooms.

- Personal protective equipment

Students will be strongly encouraged to wear masks to minimize the risk of transmission of disease. Teachers and other staff members are also encouraged to wear face masks or shields when physical distancing cannot be maintained and when they do not substantially interfere with instruction.

- Sanitization and cleaning

Regular handwashing and hand sanitization will be expected. Hand sanitizer will be provided in each classroom for student use. Desks and other common surfaces will be disinfected at the end of each school day.

## **School Transportation - Phase 2**

- Physical distancing

Limited physical distancing will be created by limiting seating to one child per seat as much as possible. Students will be assigned seats in order of pick up from back to front to minimize interactions among large groups of students. When disembarking, students will be dismissed individually to ensure physical distancing between students.

- Sanitization and cleaning

Seat surfaces and handrails will be wiped down with approved disinfectant after each bus run. Deep cleaning of floor, seats, and touch surfaces at the end of each day. Use of approved cleaning solutions, equipment and methods as outlined by "School Bus Fleet Online."

- Staffing

All transportation staff will be screened daily for "fit for duty" criteria before engaging in their transportation duties. Protective masks will be provided for use by bus drivers during loading and unloading of passengers. Masks will not be worn while driving. Some special education students will require close physical proximity by an aide to facilitate embarkment and disembarkment. Aides will be

provided with face masks and disposable non-latex gloves as personal protective equipment to use during these interactions.

### **Cafeterias and School Lunches - Phase 2**

- Meal options for students

Regular hot menu items will be provided for both breakfast and lunch. Meals may be pre-plated behind the serving lines.

Breakfast and lunch meals will be served to student's curbside outside of the school building, or in a manner that is deemed to be the most practical for the health and safety of everyone involved.

According to current guidance from the USDA, all student meals are free for the upcoming year. Meals will still be available for the off-day students. An online order form will be required the day before for orders.

- Physical distancing

Student seating will be designated to create alternating seats between students to maximize physical distancing. The entire cafeteria will be used for feeding students to increase physical distancing during mealtimes. Lunch times will be staggered.

- Sanitization and cleaning

Hand sanitizer will be made available to students at the start of each serving line. Cafeteria tables will be disinfected in between groups of students.

### **Nonessential School Activities - Phase 2**

- High School and middle school extracurricular activities

Activities that are organized under the Idaho High School Activities Association and associated activities at the middle school level will continue under the guidance of the IHSAA. These activities are completely voluntary and families who choose to participate in these activities should assume there will be inherent additional risk from participating in activities which will often require close personal contact with others. A separate plan for these activities will be developed and provided to participating families.

Clubs and other-non IHSAA activities must develop a plan to ensure appropriate precautions are taken to protect the health and safety of members and advisors. Precautions should include sanitization of areas, wearing face masks and physical distancing among participants. Plans must be submitted to the designated building administrator and approved by the Superintendent.

- Assemblies, School Dances, and other nonessential activities

School assemblies, dances, and other nonessential activities that bring large numbers of students into close contact with each other for more than 15 minutes will be planned on a case-by-case basis. We will continually evaluate the risk vs. the reward of assemblies, dances, and other nonessential large-group activities.

- School field trips

Field trips and other nonessential student travel, except for IHSAA associated activities, will be permitted on a case-by-case basis. We will continually evaluate the risk vs. the reward of allowing field trips.

- Elementary PE and music program

PE and music will continue to be provided to students in elementary schools. Instructors will plan to provide physical distancing during PE and music activities

- High School and middle school music programs.

High school and middle school music programs will continue. However increased protections must be planned following guidance of state or national music associations.

### **Phase 3: Soft Closure with Online Learning for All Students**

During Phase 3 the district will enact a soft closure of schools and transition to online learning at home. Phase 3 presents the lowest risk of transmission but has the most impact to students' education and presents significant challenges and barriers to equity and access to learning. For this reason, this strategy will only be implemented if a governmental or public health agency orders the closure of District 322 schools, or if the Sugar Salem Board of Trustees feels that the situation warrants such a drastic move.

#### **Organization and Scheduling – Phase 3**

Teachers will provide instruction to students using distance learning platforms. Every effort should be made to use the district adopted Learning Management System (LMS) of Canvas to provide content and learning activities for students in grades 6-12. Elementary Teachers may also use other supported platforms as approved by administration. Elementary will provide instruction in ELA and math daily. Secondary will provide direct instruction in each class period daily. Teachers will be expected to hold virtual office hours to provide additional instruction and support to students for at least 30 minutes daily.

#### **Cafeterias and School Lunches - Phase 3**

- Meal Delivery

Breakfast and lunch meals will be served to student's curbside outside of the school building, or in a manner that is the most practical to provide for the health and safety of all involved. According to current guidance from the USDA, meals for the upcoming school year will be free to everyone.

- A meal delivery option to central locations could be available for students in this phase. Details will follow if needed.

- Staff Personal Protective Equipment

Necessary protective equipment will be provided to Child Nutrition staff and other staff members who are assigned to help provide meals to students during an extended school closure.

#### **Nonessential School Activities - Phase 3**

- High School and middle school extracurricular activities

All activities, including those that are organized under the Idaho High School Activities Association and associated activities at the middle school level will continue under the guidance of the IHSAA, but may be suspended while schools are in soft closure.

- Assemblies, School Dances, and other nonessential activities

School assemblies, dances, and other nonessential activities that bring large numbers of students into close contact with each other may be cancelled while schools are in soft closure.

- School field trips

Field trips and student travel including IHSA associated activities may be suspended while schools are in soft closure.

- Elementary PE and music program

An “at home version” of PE and music will be provided to students in elementary schools while schools are in soft closure.

- High School and middle school music programs.

High school and middle school music programs will transition to online instruction while schools are in soft closure. Performances may be suspended while schools are in soft closure.

This plan has been developed collaboratively by members of the Sugar-Salem School District Board of Trustees and Administration.

School Board	Administration
Chester Bradshaw Superintendent	
Kristin Galbraith Board Chair, Sugar City South	Jared Jenks Principal
Greg Stoddard Salem	Jay Miller Vice Principal/Athletic Director
Whitney Crapo Newdale/Moody	Kevin Schultz Principal
Plano	Neil Williams Principal
Ian Luke Sugar City North	Rich Garner Principal