
Auburn-Washburn School District
Approach to 2021-22 School Year
Updated January 19, 2022

Introduction

Our school environment has been disrupted in multiple ways for students, families, and staff since March 2020 due to COVID-19. Numerous plans and mitigation strategies have been implemented to respond to factual COVID-19 data documented by the Shawnee County Health Department or from within the Auburn-Washburn School District. Our goals for the 2021-22 school year are to keep students and staff safely in school every day and to provide learning environments conducive to achieving our Mission and Vision that can be summarized by: Inspiring, Challenging, and Preparing Every Child, Every Day.

Internal Auburn-Washburn data will guide decision-making on mitigation strategies. Specifically, staff and student data on positive COVID-19 cases and quarantine numbers will be closely monitored and a summary will be posted on the district website every Friday. Routine communication will occur with the Shawnee County Health Department and the Kansas State Department of Education and their guidance will be considered. Factual information and guidance provided from other sources and agencies will also be closely monitored and reviewed.

Changes to our approach can be made at any time throughout the 2021-22 school year based on updated factual information, guidance, and/or COVID-19 and quarantine trend data.

Mitigation Strategies

Staying Home When Sick

Students and staff should perform a daily self-screen before arriving at school. If the student is unable to complete the self-screen, the parents or caregivers should complete the screen on their behalf. At-home screening reinforces the importance of protecting other students, staff, and the community as a whole. Performing daily screening before a student arrives at school also reduces the likelihood that a student will need to be isolated at school and/or sent home due to symptoms.

When screening, ask the question, Has the student had any of the following symptoms since he or she was last at school? Fever, chills, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, new cough,

new loss of taste or smell, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, headache, muscle or body aches, fatigue.

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

Handwashing removes pathogens from the surface of the hands. Students and staff will practice handwashing and respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes) to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses. Schools will monitor and reinforce these behaviors and provide adequate handwashing supplies.

Masks in Schools

At the November 15, 2021, Board meeting, the Board approved a revised Auburn-Washburn Scorecard. The three primary goals for updating the Auburn-Washburn Scorecard were: 1) Ensure safety, 2) Create metrics that define when masks are required, and 3) Move from district-wide decision making to school-specific decision making.

The four sections of the Scorecard are:

- New Weekly COVID-19 Cases (students out of school in quarantine)
- New Weekly Quarantine Cases: In-School Close Contact (students out of school in quarantine)
- New Weekly Quarantine Cases: Out of School Close Contact (students out of school in quarantine)
- New Weekly Test to Learn Cases (students in school for modified quarantine)

At the January 13, 2022, Board meeting, the Scorecard was adjusted to the following formula using the data collected as described above is as follows per school:

- Positive cases + In-school close contacts + Out of school close contacts + Test to Learn Numbers / School enrollment (converted to a percentage)
- Based on this formula, when the Shawnee County Indicator Score is in Green, Yellow, or Orange, schools with 0 – 0.9% will be shaded in green meaning masks are optional. Schools with 1 – 4.9% will be shaded in yellow meaning masks will be strongly encouraged. Schools with 5%+ will be shaded in red meaning masks will be required at that specific school until that school is out of the red for two consecutive weeks.
- Based on this formula, when the Shawnee County Indicator Score is Red, schools with 0 – 2.9% will be yellow meaning masks are strongly encouraged. Schools with 3+% will be shaded in red meaning masks will be required at that specific school until that school is out of the red for two consecutive weeks.
- The Auburn-Washburn Scorecard will continue to be released each week on Friday.

Masks on School Buses

Masks are mandated on school buses due to a Federal Order. Order under Section 361 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 264) and 42 Code of Federal Regulations 70.2, 71.31 (b) 71.32(b), Requirement for Persons to Wear Masks While on Conveyances and at Transportation Hubs, includes school buses.

Masks Outdoors and at Outdoor Events

Masks are not required outdoors during the school day nor while attending at school-related outdoor events.

Mask Exceptions

Mask exceptions must include a document signed by a qualified, licensed medical doctor which includes primarily an MD and DO. A Nurse Practitioner (ARNP) or Physician's Assistant (PA) may also provide the signed document under the supervision of an MD and DO.

- If a form is needed or requested: Request for Mask Exception, 2021-2022

Mask exceptions for qualified educational purposes during a designated time of school day will also be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

- Examples for exceptions or situations in which accommodations need to be made:
 - Individuals with asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or other respiratory disabilities may not be able to wear a face mask because of difficult or impaired breathing.
 - Individuals with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), claustrophobia (an abnormal fear of being in enclosed or narrow spaces), severe anxiety may feel afraid or terrified when wearing a face mask. These individuals may not be able to stay calm or function when wearing a face mask.
 - Individuals with autism are sensitive to touch and texture. Covering the nose and mouth with fabric can cause sensory overload, feelings of panic, and extreme anxiety.
 - Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, or communicating with a person that is deaf and hard of hearing. In these cases, the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication. Masks can be uncomfortable for individuals who wear hearing aids or cochlear implants.
 - Individuals with a speech communication disorder. Wearing masks can at times make communication more difficult. Masks can muffle sound, making it more difficult to understand speech and some higher-pitched voices. Masks take away the ability to read lips and see facial expressions which assist with understanding what is being heard. Speaking with a mask can be hard for individuals with communication problems, like aphasia and voice problems.
 - An individual with an English Second Language or is an English Language Learner that needs to hear the distinct sounds of the English language which may be impaired through a mask.
 - An individual who has cerebral palsy may have difficulty moving the small muscles in the hands, wrists, or fingers. Due to their limited mobility, they may not be able to tie the strings or put the elastic loops of a face mask over the ears. This means that the person may not be able to put on or remove a face mask without assistance.

- An individual who uses mouth control devices such as a sip and puff to operate a wheelchair or assistive technology or uses their mouth or tongue to use assistive ventilators may be unable to wear a face mask.
- An individual with Dyslexia that compensates for mildly to profoundly impacted phonological (sound) processing. Due to dyslexia, masking can have significant effects on sound. Furthermore, multi-sensory instructional supports that focus on the lips, mouth, and tongue placement can be concealed by a mask.

Exception requests may originate from parents/legal guardians, professional recommendations sought by parents/legal guardians, and/or concerns from school personnel. Exception requests benefit from a clear discussion on concerns, needs, and instruction throughout the school day. Requests may also lead to appropriate accommodations or could lead to a mask exception for strategic times during the day through the spectrum of a school day.

Physical Distancing

Spaces will be arranged to distance students when possible. The following quarantine exemption from the Shawnee County Health Department will serve as a guide on how to arrange spaces:

- Elementary and middle school students in the classroom or during recess/gym and both individuals wore their masks correctly for the entire duration of the close contact.
- Elementary and middle school staff in close contact with a student in the classroom or during recess/gym and both individuals wore their masks correctly for the entire duration of the close contact.
- High school students in the classroom or during gym/weightlifting and both individuals were spaced 3-feet apart and wore their masks correctly for the entire duration of the close contact.
- High school staff in close contact with a student in the classroom or during gym/weightlifting and both individuals were spaced 3-feet apart and wore their masks correctly for the entire duration of the close contact.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Effective cleaning and disinfecting schedules will be maintained in schools and on buses. Adjustments will be made, school by school, to address specific needs that surface.

Ventilation and Indoor Air Quality

Indoor air quality has been upgraded by adding air purification systems in duct work at each facility and the frequency of filter replacements has been doubled. Indoor air quality exceeds American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers Standards. Ventilation systems are routinely serviced and meet code requirements.

COVID-19 Vaccinations

There are work-related and school-related benefits to vaccinations. Per the Shawnee County Health Department, vaccinated staff and students will not need to quarantine if they are in

close contact with a positive COVID-19 case. Therefore, the school year will not be disrupted for those individuals. Two-way communication will occur between school and home regarding positive COVID-19 cases, close contacts, and the potential need to quarantine. Information shared by parents will be received as factual unless there is cause to further investigate.

Testing

Testing identifies infected people who may be contagious so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission. While not required, students can opt-in with informed consent to participate in testing programs. Minors will need informed consent from a parent or guardian to participate in a testing program.

Test to Learn / Work

Test to Learn / Work is a modified quarantine option available in Shawnee County which allows students to continue to attend school and participate in activities while in quarantine.

Application

The Test to Learn / Work applies to only in-school learning and participation in school-related events. When not engaged in school or a school-related event, the student must quarantine at home.

Eligibility

Eligibility Eligible students must meet all of the following criteria:

- The student has had a close contact to COVID-19 at school, at home, or in the community.
- The student does not already meet criteria for quarantine exemption.
- The student does not have a household contact in isolation for COVID-19.
 - The student becomes eligible once the household contact has been released from isolation.
- The student has opted-in with informed consent. Minors will need informed consent from a parent or guardian. Those who do not opt-in will complete quarantine at home.

Testing

Testing with rapid antigen or PCR tests can be completed when it is first confirmed that an individual was a close contact. The rapid test should result in less than one hour. Tests may be school-based or conducted at a community testing location. The negative test result must be known before the student continues school activities, and the result must be verified and documented by the school. Verbal reports will not be sufficient.

Students who test negative may continue in-school learning and participation in school-related events for that day. Students who test positive must immediately isolate at home for a minimum of 5 days. Students who, for whatever reason, do not complete a test must quarantine at home for that day.

Students should not be in proximity to other students or staff until a negative test result is known. For school-based testing, the student should go directly to the assigned testing location at the assigned time before going to school. The student should not ride the bus or carpool with students from other households unless a negative test result has already been collected that day.

Effective January 19, 2022, Test to Learn / Work includes diagnostic testing to support students and staff who become symptomatic during the school day and/or notify a school nurse of being symptomatic.

Symptoms

The participating student must be screened daily for COVID-19 symptoms prior to completing a test. Students who are asymptomatic may be tested with either an antigen or PCR test. Students who are experiencing symptoms must have a negative PCR test to continue in-school learning and school-related events that day.

Duration

The duration of the Test to Learn / Test to Play period is consistent with shortened quarantine guidance.

Masks

The student must properly wear a mask throughout the Test to Learn / Work period when indoors during school or participating at indoor school-related events. The agreement to properly wear a mask will be included in the informed consent.

Isolation and Quarantine

Isolation

The isolation period for COVID-19 is a minimum of 5 days. Students and staff may return to school after the isolation period if they have not had a fever for over 72 hours (without fever-reducing medication) and have improving symptoms.

The first day of isolation is considered Day 0. This is the day symptoms started (onset), or in the absence of symptoms, the day the positive test was collected. Isolation at home is completed on Days 1-5, and the earliest return to school is Day 6 and a mask must be worn on Days 6-10.

Quarantine

Quarantine guidelines are the responsibility of the Shawnee County Health Department and their guidelines can be found [here](#).

On January 18, 2022, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), the Shawnee County Health Department (SCHD), and the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) have stated that the ability to effectively contact trace has become nearly impossible. Efforts and resources should be shifted towards identification and rapid isolation of actively infectious students and staff. Auburn-Washburn has leaned on the guidance provided by KDHE, SCHD, and KSDE throughout the pandemic. Their guidance will be followed on contact tracing.

Effective January 19, 2022, the Auburn-Washburn School District will no longer contact trace in schools and at extracurricular settings. Test to Learn / Work has changed to include diagnostic testing to support students and staff who become symptomatic during the school day and/or notify a school nurse of being symptomatic.

Household Close Contacts

An extended quarantine period is required for any student or staff who has a household contact infected with COVID-19. This is necessary because the household contact exposes the entire household to COVID-19 for the entire duration of the isolation period. For this reason, the student or staff will quarantine throughout the household contact's isolation period in addition to their own quarantine period. In other words, Day 1 of the student or staff quarantine will begin the day the household contact is released from isolation. If a student or staff is able to completely separate themselves from any exposure to the infectious household contact, they may request a modified quarantine from the Shawnee County Health Officer. These will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Quarantine Exemptions

- Vaccine Immunity – fully vaccinated students and staff are exempted from quarantine if asymptomatic.

- Outdoors – close contacts which occur outdoors are exempted from quarantine if asymptomatic.
- Specific School Scenarios – extensive research conducted during the 2020-2021 school year demonstrated low transmission rates in schools where mitigation strategies were in place. Based on this evidence, the Shawnee County Health Officer has approved the following quarantine exemption scenarios. These apply only to close contacts occurring in school or school-related activities. Each situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, through collaboration with the school and Shawnee County Health Department.
 - Elementary and middle school students in the classroom or during recess/gym and both individuals wore their masks correctly for the entire duration of the close contact.
 - Elementary and middle school staff in close contact with a student in the classroom or during recess/gym and both individuals wore their masks correctly for the entire duration of the close contact.
 - High school students in the classroom or during gym/weightlifting and both individuals were spaced 3-feet apart and wore their masks correctly for the entire duration of the close contact.
 - High school staff in close contact with a student in the classroom or during gym/weightlifting and both individuals were spaced 3-feet apart and wore their masks correctly for the entire duration of the close contact.

Approach to Quarantine Learning

High School

1. An opportunity for daily contact with the student will be provided during Advisory through a live streaming link. This will provide the student with an opportunity to engage with their advisory teacher regarding their progress, needs, and to ensure a consistent connection.
2. For classes outside of Advisory, when requested by the student and/or parent, the classroom teacher will provide information on how instruction may be accessed.
3. Classes, outside of Advisory, may be livestreamed at the request of the quarantined student, encouraging additional opportunities for daily contact if absence extends to four or more days. Absences of three or fewer days will be treated consistent with established procedures, e.g. Advisory live stream link, email, sending work home, etc.
 - a. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with their classroom teacher the need for the course to be livestreamed.
 - b. If the student does not participate in the livestream, a teacher may discontinue.
 - c. There is limited or no livestreaming availability in some production based classes such as band, theatre, art and PE.

4. Learning Management System (e.g. Google Classroom, Canvas) for engagement in all courses
5. Advisory teachers and classroom teachers will maintain their typical monitoring expectations and have contact with parents if a student is not participating or showing progress.

Middle School

1. Parents will contact their student's Team (Advisory Teacher) and let them know that their student has been quarantined.
2. The team of teachers will communicate with the student regarding the student's work.
3. Teachers will check in daily with students regarding work and well-being through a live stream link during Advisory. Students are encouraged to also email their teachers for help as needed.
4. Learning Management System (Google Classroom) for engagement in all courses, in addition the team of teachers will provide a form to prioritize student work.
5. New learning will be supported through a recording of instruction on the learning management system or livestream opportunity as pertains to those courses.
6. Advisory teachers and classroom teachers will maintain their typical monitoring expectations and have contact with parents if a student is not participating or showing progress.

Elementary

1. Upon receiving notification of a student being quarantined, the classroom teacher will contact the parent to outline daily contact, learning opportunities during the quarantine.
2. At the primary level, packets of activities may be developed in addition to a Learning Management System (i.e. SeeSaw or Google Classroom) for engagement in the prioritized subjects of reading and math. Additional content areas are supplemental.
3. Students will have access to a variety of learning platforms for skill practice (i.e. Really Great Reading (RGR) Playground, Zearn Math, Moby Max, or IXL).
4. Teachers will provide an opportunity for students to check in daily regarding learning needs and well-being through a consistent live stream link. Parents and students are also encouraged to email the teacher with any questions or learning needs.
5. Teachers will maintain their typical monitoring expectations and will have contact with parents if a student is not participating or showing progress.

For Students that have an active 504 Plan, IEP, GEI or are ELL

1. The student's case manager, providers, and/or interventionist will contact the parent to determine services in accordance with the general education instructional plan. A consideration of accommodations, modifications, Intervention, and specialized instruction will take place.