

Cottonwood Joint School District #242

Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

Website Link: www.sd242.org

Introduction

In-person learning plays an integral role in the success of all students. Cottonwood Joint School District #242 is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for students that support social and emotional development, provide access to services and improve life outcomes. Although COVID-19 outbreaks have occurred in school settings, transmissions rates can be lowered if prevention strategies are in place.

Cottonwood Joint School District #242 works with the local public health department and local hospital to determine necessary protocols and prevention strategies. School Administrators consider multiple factors when making decisions about implementing prevention strategies against COVID-19. Cottonwood Joint School District #242 has created a Covid 19 Committee that creates and reviews protocols that the district follows to ensure the safety of staff and students on a daily basis.

Mitigation Strategies (Table 1)

Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks

The Cottonwood School District #242 does not require masks, but they are recommended and encouraged. We currently have students in both the elementary and high school that elect to wear a mask daily which we support.

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

Staff and students will be encouraged to practice handwashing and respiratory etiquette. Students and staff covering coughs and sneezes, and are instructed to cough and sneeze into the crease of the elbow rather than into their hands to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses including COVID-19.

Hand sanitizer dispensers are placed throughout both buildings. At entrances, in the hallways, by water fountains, etc.

Signs are placed in all bathrooms encouraging students and staff to wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 sec.

Teaching healthy habits such as covering mouth and nose appropriately, and having students keep their hands to themselves

Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities

- Standard cleaning procedures will be done daily.
- Bathrooms cleaned daily
- Desks and chairs are wiped down daily.
- Handrails, door knobs, light switches, telephones, sinks, drinking fountains, countertops wiped down daily.
- Lunchroom tables will be cleaned prior and after each meal service.
- Classrooms will be vacuumed daily
- Computer labs / keyboards will be disinfected daily.
- Trash will be removed daily from the classroom / building.
- Cafeteria will be cleaned as required on a daily basis.
- Food service staff will wear gloves while serving
- Hand sanitizer, soap/paper towels and tissues will be made available to all employees/students.
- Gymnasiums and locker rooms will be cleaned after use.

Contact Tracing

Cottonwood Joint School District will continue to collaborate with state and local health departments 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 (within the same day if possible) after the district is notified that someone within the school has tested positive.

Based on the school board adopted flow chart, we have parents and students check for symptoms if they were exposed. If students are not showing signs or symptoms, they can attend school. We ask that parents monitor their students closely and if there is any slight symptom we ask that the student stays home for at least a day to make sure symptoms do not become more severe. If they are feeling better, they can attend school.

Diagnostic and Screening Testing

When contacted by the local health department or local hospital of a positive test, we contact the parents of students who were exposed to the positive student and/or staff member. If a staff member or student has received the vaccination, they do not need to quarantine.

Students, teachers and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, are encouraged to stay home and speak to their healthcare provider for possible

testing and care. We want our parents and students to be honest and if they do not feel well, stay home for a minimum of 24 hours to monitor the illness.

Efforts to provide vaccination to school communities

The latest statistics show that 11 vaccinated people out of 100,000 need hospitalization where 288 non-vaccinated people per 100,000 need hospitalization. 96.6% of hospitalized Covid patients are not vaccinated. The school district does not mandate vaccinations, but parents and students are encouraged to visit with their local health providers about vaccinations. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at a lower risk of symptomatic or severe infection. Evidence suggests that people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are less likely to have an asymptomatic infection or transmit COVID-19 to others than people who are not fully vaccinated. According to the CDC, people who are fully vaccinated can safely resume activities they did before the pandemic, in most settings.

Accommodations for Children with Disabilities

Staff and Students 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 Cottonwood Joint School District 242 will comply with any accommodations written in IEP's or 504 plans regarding Covid preventative measures or procedures.

Attendance and Absenteeism

Cottonwood Joint School District will monitor student and staff attendance on a daily basis. Students and staff will be encouraged to stay home when sick, especially if they have any cold or flu-like symptoms. Students will also be sent home if they are running a fever (100.4) or display any signs of cold or flu like symptoms. We ask that parents stay in contact with the school if a student is ill. We will work with students and parents to provide work that can be done from home if the student is able to complete it.

If the district has confirmed cases, schools will only operate under the guidance of the local health department. If school is in session, staff may take personal, sick or vacation leave unless there are other state or federal protocols in place.

Communication Plan

Cottonwood Joint School District has created a COVID Committee which will meet a minimum of every 6 months to review current protocols and the district "Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services." The "Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services" is a document that will be updated and finalized by the end of November.

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?

Cottonwood School District will offer in-person instruction for students during the 2021/2022 school year. As a district, we are aware that students will get sick whether it is Covid, flu, or your common cold. We will work with students and parents while students are away to give them an opportunity to complete work from home if the student(s) are able to work from home.

For the 2021-2022 school year, Cottonwood Joint School District has moved a paraprofessional from a half time position to a full time position to assist in our elementary school with students in need. We completed iStation testing the first two weeks of school and that data shows that there are a number of students K-6 that are not at grade level. With the addition of this full time paraprofessional along with other paraprofessionals, we have the opportunity to work with more kids one on one to assist with the academic needs.

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

Cottonwood Joint School District #242 has a district wide focus on social emotional learning. The Cottonwood Joint School District is a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) District that focuses on the social well being and healthy connections between peers and adults. Communication between schools, families and the community is important. The Cottonwood Joint School District has placed an emphasis on building positive relationships between the school district and homes of our students. During the 2020-21 school year the district purchased 60 additional chromebooks to phase out older chromebooks for K-12 to assist teachers in providing direct instruction with students regardless of the student's location.

Building healthy connections between staff and students provides a positive learning environment and a place that students feel comfortable attending.

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

The Covid team met on Wednesday, October 27, 2021 to discuss what can be done to assist our staff with various needs. Topics that were discussed were: setting up subs throughout the year in both buildings for teachers working in the same content area to have time to collaborate to better their instructional practices. We know this will be a work in progress, but we were thinking if we could have morning and afternoon subs to accommodate teacher collaboration times. One

group of teachers would meet for a morning session and another group of teachers would meet for an afternoon session. This would be a good time to address certain students and their learning gaps as well due to the pandemic and closing down in March 2020-May 2020. We were fortunate enough to be back in person for the 2020-21 school year, but that 3 month break has made some of our students fall behind. We also discussed the integration of PD days in the school calendar or integrating early release days in the calendar so teachers can have the afternoon to collaborate. The team also discussed the importance of having time to just visit with colleagues to break up the continual grind of the classroom setting. Breaks are key for teachers to visit amongst themselves. We plan to have staff gatherings outside of the school setting after hours for a time to visit and decompress as well. We will continue to meet and brainstorm for the next 3 years to continue to assist all district staff with their needs.

The process and timeline for review and revision of the plan no less than every 6 months through Sept. 30, 2023.

<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Persons</u>
January 10, 2022	Mid-Year Plan Review	Covid Committee
January 12, 2021 Board meeting January 17	Submit any changes to Board of Education for review.	Superintendent Jon Rehder
May 9, 2022	Plan Review – Planning for 2022/23 school year.	Covid Committee
May 11, 2022 Board meeting May 16	Submit any changes to Board of Education for review	Superintendent Jon Rehder
January 9, 2023	Mid-Year Plan Review	Covid Committee
January 11, 2023 Board meeting January 16	Submit any changes to Board of Education for review	Superintendent Jon Rehder

May 8, 2023	Plan Review – Planning for 2023/24 school year.	Covid Committee
May 10, 2023 Board meeting May 15	Submit any changes to Board of Education for review	Superintendent Jon Rehder

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.

Cottonwood Joint School District 242 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 online learning. Professional development is planned for the staff regarding the use of programs, security options and supporting students in an online environment.

COVID-19 Committee Members

- Jon Rehder- Superintendent/Elementary Principal
- Matt Elven- Jr/Sr High School Principal
- Suzi Quintal- Counselor
- Darbie Duclos- High School teacher
- Andrea Brannan- Elementary teacher
- Gus Hoene- Board Trustee
- Aaron Hinkelman- Board trustee
- Tara Klapprich- Board trustee
- Pat Alfrey- Board trustee
- Keith Holcomb- Board trustee
- Community members-TBD

