

Beech Grove City Schools
Return to School Plan
School Year
2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024



Second Required Public Review/Comment and Posting: 12/14/21

Edited to include updates from IDOH: 1/20/22

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Edited to include updates from CDC: 2/28/22

Third Required Public Review/Comment and Posting: 6/21/22

Fourth Review - No Edits/Changes: 12/2/22

Fifth and Final Review - 6/20/23

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE ACTIONS INDICATED WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT MAY NEED TO BE CHANGED PER ORDER OF THE MARION COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, the INDIANA HEALTH DEPARTMENT, and/or the CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

Vision

Prioritize student engagement in a safe and supportive learning environment through in person instruction resulting in a positive impact on student achievement, mental health, and physical well being.

BGCS Operational Plan

100% In Person Instruction

All students will attend school five days per week (unless the school calendar indicates otherwise)

- Individualized remote learning options will be available for students with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
- Remote learning options will be available for students during any period of mandatory quarantine due to a positive test for Covid-19 or being identified as a close contact with a need for quarantine/isolation.

CDC Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools

Beech Grove City Schools will deploy the CDC's Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools. Additionally, local requirements will be deployed according to the Marion County Public Health Department (MCPHD).

CDC has developed guidance for prevention strategies that K–12 school districts can use to help protect students, teachers, and staff, and slow the spread of COVID-19. When prevention strategies are strictly adhered to, K–12 schools can safely open for in-person instruction and remain open. This document provides an operational strategy for safe delivery of in-person instruction in K–12 schools through the integration of a package of prevention and control components:

1. Consistent implementation of layered prevention strategies to reduce Covid-19 transmission in school
2. Consideration of indicators of community transmission to reflect levels of community risk
3. Phased prevention strategies based on levels of community transmission

CDC Health Equity Considerations

Long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put many racial and ethnic minority groups at increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19. People who identify as American Indian/Alaska Native, Black, and Hispanic are disproportionately affected by COVID-19; these disparities have also emerged among children.

The absence of in-person educational options might disadvantage children from all backgrounds, particularly children in low-resourced communities who might be at an educational disadvantage. These students might be less likely to have access to technology to facilitate virtual learning and more likely to rely on key school-supported resources such as school meal programs, special education and related services, counseling, and after-school programs. Some parents and caregivers might have less-flexible jobs that do not permit staying at home to provide childcare and aid with virtual learning if schools are closed to in-person instruction.

On the other hand, certain racial and ethnic groups have borne a disproportionate burden of illness and serious outcomes from COVID-19. These health disparities are evident even among school-aged children,¹ suggesting that in-person instruction might pose a greater risk of COVID-19 to disproportionately affected populations. For these reasons, health equity considerations related to in-person instruction are an integral part of this complex decision-making.

To enable in-person learning in schools that serve racial and ethnic groups disproportionately affected by COVID-19, school administrators and public health officials will continue to work together to help plan and implement comprehensive prevention strategies, engage community partners, and assist with

referrals to medical care. We believe that our schools play a critical role in promoting equity in education and health for groups disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

Prevention Strategies to Reduce Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in Schools

Regardless of the level of community transmission, it is critical that our schools use and layer prevention strategies. Five key prevention strategies are essential to safe delivery of in-person instruction and help to prevent COVID-19 transmission in schools:

1. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
2. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities

All prevention strategies provide some level of protection, and layered strategies implemented at the same time provide the greatest level of protection. Our district will deploy prevention strategies to the largest extent practical and commit to a layered approach.

Universal and correct use of masks

The following guidelines are in place for mask wearing:

- Masks are optional indoors for all students and staff.
- Masks are optional on the school bus/school district transportation.

Physical distancing

Core principle for physical distancing: School policies and structural interventions will be implemented to promote physical distance between people.

- Classrooms will be arranged to maximize space.
- Remove nonessential furniture and make other changes to classroom layouts to maximize distance between students.

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Core principle for handwashing and respiratory etiquette: Through ongoing health education units and lessons, students will be taught proper handwashing, those behaviors will be reinforced, and students will be provided with adequate supplies. Ensure that teachers and staff use proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette.

- Supplies: Hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes will continue to be available.
- Proper hand washing, cough, and sneeze protocols are required.

- Water bottle filling stations are installed and available in all schools.
- Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students, teachers, and staff. If handwashing is not possible, hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol should be used.

Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities

Core principle for cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities: Make changes to physical spaces to maintain a healthy environment and facilities, including improving ventilation. Routinely clean high-touch surfaces (such as doorknobs and light switches).

- All high touch surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized frequently.
- Ventilation: Improve ventilation to the extent possible to increase circulation of outdoor air, increase the delivery of clean air, and dilute potential contaminants. This can be achieved through several actions.
 - Bring in as much outdoor air as possible.
 - Ensure Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) settings are maximizing ventilation.
 - Filter and/or clean the air in the school by improving the level of filtration as much as possible.
 - Use exhaust fans in restrooms and kitchens.
 - Open windows in buses and other transportation, if doing so does not pose a safety risk.

Testing/Vaccination

CDC recently released guidance on the ability of fully vaccinated people to resume pre-pandemic activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.

- Being vaccinated is a great way to protect oneself and others from Covid-19. Vaccination sites are conveniently available across our community.
- Covid-19 testing is reliable and sites are conveniently located across our community

Viral testing strategies should be part of a comprehensive prevention approach. Testing should not be used alone, but in combination with other prevention to reduce risk of transmission in schools. When schools implement testing combined with prevention strategies, we can detect new cases to prevent outbreaks, reduce the risk of further transmission, and protect students, teachers, and staff from COVID-19.

Vaccinations are an important tool to help stop the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers and staff hold jobs critical to the continued functioning of society and are at potential occupational risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2. Vaccinating teachers and staff is one layer of prevention and protection for teachers and staff. Strategies that minimize barriers to access vaccination for teachers and other frontline essential workers, such as vaccine clinics at or close to the place of work, are optimal. The following CDC resources are available to provide information about Vaccinations:

- The [COVID-19 Vaccines for Teachers, School Staff, and Childcare Workers](#) web page provides school and childcare staff with the latest information about where and how to book an appointment.
- The [COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit for School Settings and Childcare Programs](#) provides schools and childcare programs with ready-made materials they can use to communicate with staff about COVID-19 vaccination.

School officials and health departments can work together to also support messaging and outreach about vaccination for members of school communities. School communication platforms can facilitate outreach to encourage vaccination of household members of school-age children as they become eligible. This should include outreach in a language that limited English proficient family members of students can understand and in alternate formats as needed to facilitate effective communication for individuals with disabilities.

Implementation of layered prevention strategies will need to continue until we better understand potential transmission among people who received a COVID-19 vaccine and there is more vaccination coverage in the community. In addition, vaccines are not yet approved for use in children under 16 years old. For these reasons, even after teachers and staff are vaccinated, schools need to continue prevention measures for the foreseeable future, including requiring masks in schools and physical distancing.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities will be provided with individualized accommodations to address any health and safety needs. These accommodations will be addressed through the Child Find process, during the case conference committee meeting through an Individualized Education Plan, and/or through an Individualized Learning Plan under the Section 504 Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Mental Health Supports

Beech Grove City Schools has expanded Counseling and Home School Advisor support through the addition of Full Time Employees to meet the growing mental health needs of the students we serve. Additionally, the district is engaged in the development of an articulated Multi-Tiered System of Supports where academic and behavioral health needs are met through a data driven and individualized series of interventions. Beech Grove City Schools engages with Adult and Child for an additional layer of school based behavioral and therapeutic resources for students with acute and chronic mental health needs.

