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**COVID-19 School Operations Plan\***

September 16, 2021

## Introduction:

The Kentucky General Assembly passed Senate Bill 1 on September 9, 2021, during a Special Session called by Governor Andy Beshear. Senate Bill 1 requires all public school districts in the state of Kentucky to develop a COVID-19 Operations Plan. This plan addresses face mask requirements, quarantine procedures, Test to Stay program, non-traditional instruction (NTI) days, and remote learning. The goal of the Somerset Independent School District is to prioritize in-person learning for all students in the safest manner possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Somerset Independent Schools will focus on the following areas to prevent transmission of COVID-19:

- ✓ Social Distancing
- ✓ Face Coverings
- ✓ Contact Tracing, Quarantine, and Isolation
- ✓ Sanitation and Cleaning

## Prevention Strategies to slow the spread of Covid-19 in schools:

**Diagnostic Screening and Vaccination Efforts** – Somerset Schools will work with Lake Cumberland Medical Associates and Lake Cumberland Regional Hospital for possible school mobile clinics for diagnostics and student/staff vaccination efforts. A staff vaccination event was held in the winter/spring of 2021 so that any staff member could receive the vaccine.

**Face Masks** – Somerset Schools have provided appropriate masks for all students and staff members. **Masks will continue to be required for all students, employees and school visitors through October 29<sup>th</sup>.** The purpose of this requirement is to provide the most protection from COVID-19 while it is so prevalent in Somerset and the Pulaski County community. Fall Break is October 4-8, 2021, and masking inside school buildings for a period of time afterwards will be necessary. School district officials will evaluate the local conditions surrounding COVID-19 and finalize plans for the use of face masks inside schools during the October 29, 2021, school board meeting. Any change in mask plans will be communicated by October 29, 2021. **Masks will be required on school transportation, such as a school bus, until there is a change in the federal mandate.** If a student has a medical or other applicable exemption that does not allow the student to wear a mask, the parent will need to bring a doctor's note to allow the student to go without a mask at school while masks are required inside school buildings.

**Physical Distancing** – All buildings in the Somerset Independent School District will maximize distance in classrooms and common areas. Preschool through second grade will utilize cohorts or pods during classroom instruction to help reduce the opportunity for transmission and aid in contact tracing. Each teacher will need to maximize social distancing in the classroom. Classroom seating needs to be designed in such a way so that students are separated as much as possible. The best practice is for all students to face the same direction, if possible. Cafeteria seating will have maximum distance between students as possible. The best practice is for students to not face each other at a table while eating. Tables will be marked indicating spaces for students to sit while eating.

**Improving Ventilation** - Each school facility has been provided air purification system components during the past school year. The district will place additional purification devices/systems as needed.

**Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette** – All Somerset students are scheduled to receive direct instruction in handwashing and respiratory etiquette that is appropriate to the age and grade level. Teachers and staff train and encourage students to wash their hands multiple times during each school day. The district purchased additional hand sanitizer for students and staff to use in times when soap and water handwashing is not available. The district placed handwashing instruction graphics near all sinks to remind students and staff proper handwashing techniques.

**Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities** – The district has a process in place in each of the buildings to clean and sanitize each of the classrooms and common spaces daily. High touch surfaces and areas are cleaned more often to help prevent transmission of germs from person to person. Teachers clean desks and other high touch surfaces between class changes.

**Contact Tracing with Isolation and Quarantine** –The district and school level administrators work together, with consultation of the local health department, to identify and communicate with students and families about the need for quarantine for individual students/groups. Each school will designate a “Sick Bay” or holding room [outside of the office area] for students with symptoms of an illness waiting to be taken home. To aid work with contact tracing, seating charts are kept in each classroom, bus, and cafeteria setting. Teachers need assigned seats in all classes and have a paper copy of all seating charts readily available. Teachers can change seating assignments, but seating charts MUST be updated and current. **Any individual testing positive for COVID-19 will need to isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms or the day of the test, if asymptomatic.**

**Test to Stay-** The district has adopted an option for on-site testing to permit non-symptomatic students to remain at school if they test negative following a school-related exposure to a positive COVID-19 case. This strategy applies to school-related exposures only and is not applicable to exposures that occur outside of school or in the community. The Test to Stay program is voluntary. The testing site will be at Central Office in the Conley Manning Conference Room, daily from 7:00 a.m. until 7:30 a.m. The close contacts, who request to participate in the Test to Stay Program, will take a Rapid COVID test daily for 5 consecutive days. If the person tests negative, then they will stay at school and be expected to wear a mask. Students under the age of 18 will need a signed parent permission slip to participate in the Test to Stay Program. Any student or employee testing positive for COVID-19 will need to go home and consult with his or her healthcare provider.

#### **Instruction for Isolated or Quarantined Students-**

A student in quarantine or isolation will be contacted by email and/or phone by each teacher to receive instructional materials while the he or she is out of the classroom. Students in grades 5-12 will use their Google Classroom. Teachers will provide paper/pencil assignments as necessary. Students in grades PK-4 will have paper/pencil assignments prepared by their homeroom teacher.

## Quarantine Procedures:

When a face covering has been properly worn by the close contact of a positive case, the close contact will be notified and asked to monitor for symptoms for 14 days. **If symptoms develop for a close contact, he/she will need to quarantine and work with his/her healthcare provider whether fully vaccinated or not.**

If face covering was not worn, or not worn properly, by the close contact of a positive case, the individual will be required to quarantine for 10 days from the last date of exposure (no test needed as long as symptom free) or quarantine 7 days from the date of exposure (may return on day 8 with proof of a negative PCR test result and being symptom free), or participate in the school district's Test to Stay program.

Household Positive Case Contact [members of household of a person with a positive COVID-19 test]:

- Quarantine 10 days from exposure and may return when symptom free OR
- Quarantine 7 days from exposure and may return with proof of a negative PCR test on Day 8

Classroom Positive Case Contact [members of classroom of a person with a positive COVID-19 test]:

- If mask is worn properly and contact does not have symptoms:
  - Monitor for symptoms and no quarantine required as long as symptom free
- If mask is not worn/worn properly:
  - Quarantine 10 days from exposure and may return when symptom free OR
  - Quarantine 7 days from exposure and may return with proof of a negative PCR test on Day 8 OR
  - If symptom free, participate in the school district's Test to Stay Program

School Bus Positive Case Contact [riders on a bus with a person with a positive COVID-19 test]:

Masks will be required on school bus as long as there is a federal executive order.

- If mask is worn properly and contact does not have symptoms:
  - Monitor for symptoms and no quarantine required as long as symptom free
- If mask are not worn/ worn properly:
  - Quarantine 10 days from exposure and may return when symptom free OR
  - Quarantine 7 days from exposure and may return with proof of a negative PCR test on Day 8 OR
  - If symptom free, Participate in the school district's Test to Stay Program

Lunchroom Positive Case Contact:

- Quarantine 10 days from exposure and may return when symptom free OR
- Quarantine 7 days from exposure and may return with proof of a negative PCR test on Day 8 OR
- If symptom free, participate in the school district's Test to Stay Program

Extra-curricular Positive Case Contact [individual who participated in activity with a person with a positive test]:

Masking and social distancing protocols should be followed as much as possible during extracurricular activities. These exposures will be assessed based on the conditions (outdoor vs indoor, team bus, etc...). If the exposure is purely extracurricular activity based, the individual will have the following options:

- Quarantine 10 days from exposure and may return when symptom free OR
- Quarantine 7 days from exposure and may return with proof of a negative PCR test on Day 8 OR
- If symptom free, participate in the school district's Test to Stay Program

If a close contact of a positive Covid-19 case is fully vaccinated, the individual will monitor for symptoms for 14 days. No quarantine will be needed as long as the person is symptom free.

## Other items related to the Guidance for K-12 School Operations for In-Person Learning:

- ❖ The school administrator reviews non-essential visitors before being invited/allowed into the school building to reduce the number of outside persons.
- ❖ The district follows the KHSAA guidance for athletic groups and events.
- ❖ The district consults with the Lake Cumberland District Health Department to monitor local transmission and make necessary adjustments to implementation of additional transmission reducing strategies.
- ❖ All students and staff must wear masks while riding the school bus. On the bus, students are assigned seats and buses are sanitized daily.
- ❖ In classrooms, we discourage the sharing of items that are hard to clean or disinfect. Each student's material are marked and kept for their own use.
- ❖ All students in grades 3-12 are assigned an electronic device to use during the school day and/or use at home if there is a short-term or long-term closure.
- ❖ Field trips and large group activities are limited and must be approved by the principal.
- ❖ Each school has added extra people to help watch students during dismissal; this helps students stay socially distanced and keep their hands to themselves. Students at Hopkins and Meece remain in classrooms until their bus numbers have been called and are wearing masks while on the bus.

## TRI - Temporary Remote Instruction (Short-term Classroom, Grade Level or School Closure):

Students in a classroom, grade or school may be assigned to remote instruction for the shortest time necessary. The SIS Board of Education gives authorization to the superintendent to temporarily assign students to remote instruction. The temporary assignment to remote instruction shall be no longer than is necessary to alleviate student and staff absences due to COVID-19. Students temporarily assigned to remote instruction shall receive at least the minimum daily instruction required pursuant to KRS 158.060, which shall include the content standards as provided in the Kentucky Academic Standards

## NTI – Non-Traditional Instruction (Short-term District Closure):

The district has an approved NTI for 21-22 which allows for up to 10 days that count for instruction. Grades PK-4 will still need to prepare/complete packets since we are not 1:1 with technology in these grades. Teachers may need to video lessons to post or have “Google Meets” as necessary. Folders will be sent home with students and marked with lessons for NTI days. Grades 5-12 will be able to take Stream or Chrome Books home. Teachers may need to video lessons to post or have “Google Meet” meetings as necessary. For students without internet service, folders, with designated NTI lessons, will be sent home with students. Teachers using Google Classroom will be able to have students download assignments while at school then work on them at home, even off-line. Then, the assignments can be uploaded when students return to school if they do not have internet services at home.

## Staff Attendance for Remote Instruction or NTI:

When the school district implements a Temporary Remote Instruction or Non-Traditional Instruction day, all certified and classified staff will perform work duties on-site unless an employee has been approved to fulfill his or her job duties remotely.

**\*This plan can be modified at the discretion of the Superintendent.**