Special School District Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan

Special School District (SSD) is dedicated to the safety of our students and staff. SSD will continue to monitor guidelines and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) relating to safety protocols and instructional delivery. This guidance is subject to change.

Masking:
- **Students**: All students who are able will wear masks, regardless of vaccination status, while at school and on school busses and vans.
- **Staff**: All staff are required to wear masks, regardless of vaccination status, while indoors. Staff may remove their masks when working alone or eating/drinking.
- **Outdoors**: Staff and students who are outside and socially distanced (more than 3 feet) may remove their masks.

Respiratory Etiquette:
SSD will maintain adequate supplies of soap and hand sanitizer for all District buildings. Staff will teach and encourage students to cover coughs with their elbow and sneezes with a tissue, during limited instances when individuals may be unmasked.

Transportation:
Students and staff must wear a mask while in busses and vans. If a student does not have a mask, one will be provided upon entry. Students will be seated alone whenever possible, but with no more than two students in a seat. High touch surfaces will be wiped down daily. There are no restrictions when loading and unloading busses.

Social Distancing:
To the greatest extent possible, SSD will socially distance at a minimum of three feet. If needed, physical barriers may be provided. All students will have assigned seating for contact tracing, both in classrooms and on busses.

Contact Tracing Process and Quarantine:
Schools and programs will adhere to SSD’s contact tracing process for students, staff, and visitors. Technical high schools will follow St. Louis County’s modified quarantine guidelines. Due to variations in mask compliance in SSD schools and programs, standard quarantine guidelines will be followed. In the event a student is quarantined, an instruction plan will be implemented for each impacted student. The plan will vary based upon a variety of factors, including grade level and course structure.

Health Screenings:
Students and staff will self-assess before coming to school or work. If COVID symptoms are present, stay home. If students develop symptoms at school, nurses will follow established protocols when sending a student home. Families will be contacted to pick-up students if symptoms are present. Students displaying COVID symptoms will be placed in an isolation room and monitored by staff.

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**Vaccinations:**
The Special School District has and will continue to promote vaccination opportunities to educators, staff, and students who are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. If staff or families have questions regarding vaccinations, they should contact their healthcare provider. If students or staff are vaccinated, then they may be asked to provide documentation during the contact tracing process.

**Assignments During Student Quarantine:**
If a student is required to quarantine at the direction of the school, medical provider, or health department, the school will provide the student with school work and missed assignments in a timely manner, upon request by the family or student. The school work will be asynchronous. If the student has to be absent for an extended period of time (generally, more than 10 consecutive school days), the team may consider medical homebound.

**Meals:**
Schools have safety guidelines that allow them to eat in the classroom or in the cafeteria. School leaders at each building will decide whether students will eat in the classroom or in the cafeteria, based on what they feel is most reasonable for their school.

**Special Area Classrooms and Transitions:**
To the greatest extent possible, students will remain in cohorts during the school day. Students will transition from class to class when part of their schedule, including during electives and as part of schedule rotations. Desks will be wiped down in between classes and when transitioning in and out of a room. Staff should be aware of their locations in the building throughout the day, but will no longer sign in and out of classrooms or common areas.

**Field Trips and Community-Based Instruction (CBI):**
There are no restrictions on field trips or community-based instruction (CBI). Masking and social distance guidelines will be implemented. Students and staff attending off-campus events will follow the safety precautions of the site.

**Cleaning:**
- Established cleaning protocols are in place.
- Hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies will be available in every classroom and common spaces. Additionally, SSD will promote proper handwashing and hygiene.
- Desks will be wiped down in between classes transitioning in and out of a room.
- High touch surfaces will be cleaned frequently.

**Visitors:**
Visitors and volunteers are permitted. All visitors are required to sign-in, abided by masking guidelines while on campus, and follow the student and staff health screening process.

**Family Meetings:**
In-person meetings are available. Schools and sites will continue to provide a virtual meeting based on space availability and family preference.
Group Events:
Group events, including staff meetings, trainings, and family engagement activities, may occur with approval from administration. Masking guidelines will be implemented for all group events. To the greatest extent possible, social distancing should be enforced.

Protocols for Off-Site Students and Staff:
Students and staff who are located at community sites will follow the sites’ safety protocols.

Continuity of Services:
All children with disabilities receiving services outlined in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan will continue to receive a robust education and all protocols to ensure the reception of their current level of education, will remain in place.

SSD has been providing 5-days per week, in-person instruction since January of 2021. During the 2021-22 school year, should there be any interruptions of in-person learning, the District will provide for academic needs for students in the following ways:

- All students served in SSD schools and programs will be provided a District Chromebook or other device, if they do not have access to a device.
- The District will provide internet access as needed through HotSpot devices at no cost to students or families.
- Instruction will be facilitated through classroom management systems, such as Google Classroom.
- All students and teachers will have off-site access to any needed software or supplemental software packages.

SSD will provide for the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students and staff during in-person learning or in the following manner if there is an interruption to in-person learning:

- District staff, including social workers and school counselors, will continue to engage with students and families on as needed basis to ensure student needs are met.
- Teachers and paraprofessionals will refer students who appear disengaged or need additional support to the school counselors for further follow up on a daily basis. School counselors will work with administration to identify a plan for the student.
- SSD will continue to provide social, emotional, and mental health support for staff through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Periodic Revision & Review
Modifications to this plan will be made in a timely and reasonable manner, when necessary. The plan must be reviewed and, if needed, revised at least every six months, in accordance with Federal Guidelines. Feedback will be gathered from stakeholders through a variety of means, that may include letters, email, social media, and public Board of Education meetings, throughout the school year. Any updates will be communicated to the community through the District websites. Additional information may be sent out to specific stakeholders.

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