Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan



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Revised Plan - 09/28/2022

Revisions from the previous version of this document are in blue font.

Safe Return to In-Person and Continuity of Services Plan

Overview

A district's plan must include how it will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and LEA staff, and the extent to which it has adopted policies or practices and a description of any such policies or practices, on each of the CDC's safety recommendations including: universal and correct wearing of masks; modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding); hand washing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation; contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the state, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments; diagnostic and screening testing; efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible; appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies or practices; and coordination with state and local health officials.

I. Description of maintaining health and safety

This guide presents instruction model options for students and protocols that have been developed or expanded to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC). The top priority in all decisions made by our Local Education Agency (LEA), Rock Hill School District, is the health, safety and well-being of our students, employees and school communities. This document is subject to change as conditions evolve in our community and recommendations by the CDC and SCDHEC. If and when the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic change, the guidance we receive from State and local agencies may also change and cause adjustments to our plans. As of July 15, 2022, CDC and SCDHEC have provided updated guidance regarding COVID-19 to school districts.

Policies or Practices Regarding CDC Recommendations

II. Universal and correct wearing of masks...Description of Policies or Practices, if applicable

The coronavirus can be spread between individuals interacting in close proximity — for example, by speaking, coughing, or sneezing — wearing face coverings is recommended by CDC/SCDHEC in the school setting. This is especially important in areas of significant community-based transmission. The district will provide face coverings to all staff and will provide face coverings for any student who cannot provide their own. The district has also installed Plexiglas shields in front office reception areas, and they remain for those who want them. These measures were implemented in an effort to promote a safe and healthy learning environment for our students and staff. Currently, there are no plans to utilize Plexiglas shields in the classroom setting due to space constraints with the increased

number of students in face-to-face instruction. Plexiglas shields may be used in some specialized locations in schools if appropriate and space is available.

SCDHEC's recommendations regarding COVID-19 precautions, including wearing face masks, have not changed. Wearing face coverings and taking other precautions are important disease prevention methods that protect not only the person wearing the mask but also those around them from COVID-19. SCDHEC continues to follow federal CDC guidance, backed by multiple research studies, that masks are an effective and essential tool for protecting the health of all South Carolinians during this ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. CDC recommends that schools continue to use the COVID-19 prevention strategies outlined in the current version of CDC's Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools.

III. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)

Description of Policies or Practices, if applicable

Social or physical distancing means At least three (3) feet of distance between each student should be maintained to the greatest extent possible. At least six (6) feet of distance between adults, adults and students, and athletes should be maintained to the greatest extent possible. This means people should stay the recommended distance apart from others. It also means people should avoid gathering in groups, crowded places and mass gatherings. This is especially vital, given that asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic individuals are known to spread the virus. The goal of social distancing is to limit physical contact to decrease viral spread among people in community settings, such as school. This is an effective, efficient means of mitigating disease transmission risk. All schools and facilities are taking actions to ensure all campus spaces support health and safety. Students with disabilities and employees who work with them are expected to practice social distancing when possible. Social distancing strategies may be implemented based on feasibility and the unique space and needs of a classroom or other campus location. Not all strategies will be feasible for all schools. For example, limiting hall movement options can be particularly challenging in secondary schools.

IV. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette...Description of Policies or Practices, if applicable

The CDC recommends everyone wash their hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. Schools will incorporate additional handwashing breaks into the school day and reinforce handwashing during key times throughout the school day.

V. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation...

Description of Policies or Practices, if applicable

Rock Hill Schools cleaning crews have been trained in providing enhanced cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting processes of all workplaces and classrooms. Along with their daily cleaning requirements, the custodial team will increase the frequency of disinfecting surfaces, such as high-

touch surfaces in common areas and in all classrooms and athletic areas. All spaces will strive to be at the APPA (Association of Physical Plant Administrators) Level 2 standard.

APPA 2 Level 2 – Ordinary Tidiness Level 2 is the base upon which cleaning should be maintained. Lower levels for washrooms, changing/locker rooms, and similar type facilities are not acceptable.

The Rock Hill Schools custodial team uses industry-leading practices, products, and adheres to standards and guidelines set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Association of Physical Plant Administrators. This section provides an overview of current and expanded cleaning and disinfecting processes in Rock Hill Schools and a listing of disinfecting chemicals used to neutralize the spread of SARSCoV-2, which is more commonly referred to as COVID-19.

Disinfecting units allow the custodial team to thoroughly and quickly disinfect large areas, which directly leads to an increase in instruction time. The electrostatic sprayer uses a process of adding an electric charge inside the liquid droplets when they are sprayed. This makes the droplet electrically stronger than the surface or the item it is treating. Just like magnets, they are drawn to each other and attach when one surface is more positively charged than the other. In simple terms, when you spray a solution that is properly charged with electrostatics, the solution will envelop all surfaces in the area being treated. Custodial services have a total of 107 Electrostatic Sprayer units distributed throughout the school district.

QT3 and QTPlus disinfecting chemicals, both of which are used by our custodial team, have demonstrated effectiveness against viruses similar to 2019 novel coronavirus on hard non-porous surfaces. Therefore, QT3 can be used against 2019 novel coronavirus when used in accordance with the directions for use against Enterovirus D68 or Norovirus on hard, non-porous surfaces. Combined with a chemical dispensing system, our team is able to consistently and accurately mix cleaning solutions for use in our schools and facilities. This ensures products are mixed properly to achieve the maximum impact.

Total cleaning and disinfecting of all areas and surfaces will be completed by the custodial team daily before students are allowed to use the facility the next day. Additionally, all district staff will follow strict protocols released by Nursing Services on a day-to-day assessment of CDC and SCDHEC guidance.

View the Custodial Manual and each individual tasks are in this document at -

Facilities Services / Custodial Services (rock-hill.k12.sc.us)

Return to school disinfecting video

https://youtu.be/KqgXClSvWng

Air Quality and HVAC Systems:

Rock Hill Schools will continue to adhere to ASHRAE recommendations concerning air ventilation in classrooms. For more information on the RHSD's air quality and HVAC systems please visit the following website:

Energy and Sustainability / Home (rock-hill.k12.sc.us)

VI. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine...Description of Policies or Practices, if applicable

Rock Hill Schools has the COVID information page on the district's website which includes links to the most recent information. Click <u>here</u> to access the webpage.

Rock Hill Schools will follow SCDHEC and CDC recommendations for contact tracing to determine isolation and quarantine criteria for students and staff. The district will utilize the SCDHEC guidelines in the Exclusion Criteria found at this <u>link</u>. SCDHEC has also provided school districts with guidance to use during a COVID-19 outbreak.

The links below provide updates from SCDHEC and CDC for school specific recommendations.

https://scdhec.gov/covid19/resources-community-covid-19/schools-childcare-centers-covid-19

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/

Rock Hill Schools COVID-19 Thresholds

Rock Hill Schools will use careful data analysis and establish data thresholds that would initiate a timely and structured response when the risks of COVID-19 become unacceptable, and the district must alter and/or change the academic calendar and campus operations.

CDC recommends that all decisions about transitioning to different instructional models related to COVID-19 should be made locally, in collaboration with local health officials who can help determine the level of transmission in the community. Rock Hill Schools has established data thresholds based on recommendations from SCDHEC to use in combination with SC and county level data of disease activity in our community to help guide decision making processes for students to remain safe during 5 days a week face-to-face instruction.

Data Thresholds to trigger temporary remote/virtual learning for a school, grade level or classroom

• School is unable to maintain operations with current staffing as determined by the school district

- 30 percent or higher rate of absenteeism in the school or grade level due to COVID-19 (including students in isolation and in quarantine)
- 20 percent or higher of the student body is in isolation simultaneously after testing positive (or being assumed positive based on symptoms when not tested), or
- When discussed with, and recommended by, local medical and public health professionals based on the local healthcare system's capacity
- If a school, grade level, classroom temporarily goes to remote/virtual learning for one of the above scenarios, it is recommended that they remain remote/virtual for 5-10 days then re-evaluate the situation
- SCDHEC defines an outbreak as 20% or more of the students/staff within a "shared setting" are identified as having COVID-19, or absent or sent home due to COVID-19 within 72 hours of each other. A shared setting is classroom, sports team, other group with more than 5 students/staff total. In an outbreak situation, quarantine is required for all identified close contacts who have not voluntarily provided evidence of vaccination, tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days or enrolled in the Test-To-Stay program. These cases will be reported to the regional DHEC health authorities using established reporting processes. The classroom (or room used by the cohort of students) may need to be closed for cleaning and disinfection before use again. The definition of a cluster or outbreak is subject to change as more is learned about COVID-19 variants and patterns of transmission.

VII. Diagnostic and screening testing...Description of Policies or Practices, if applicable

A student or staff member who develops symptoms of COVID-19 but does not get tested could limit SCDHEC and the district's ability to appropriately respond to new cases and ensure the health and safety of other students and staff. PCR testing (nose or throat swab) or similar rapid test that directly detects the virus is required as there is a delay in developing detectable antibodies. A negative antibody test is insufficient to rule out a new infection. Diagnostic testing is performed because of symptoms suspicious for COVID-19 or close contact to a person with COVID-19 during their contagious period. Screening involves testing asymptomatic individuals who do not have known or suspected exposure to COVID-19 in order to make individual decisions based on the test results. Screening testing looks for individual infections in a group or cohort even if there is no reason to suspect those individuals are infected.

At this time, Rock Hill Schools only participates in diagnostic testing for symptomatic students and staff and testing for the Test-To-Stay program. All schools provide onsite diagnostic testing conducted by the school nurse using BinaxNOW Antigen tests depending on test supply availability. Students and staff may utilize other community testing sites to obtain diagnostic testing and/or screening testing.

VIII. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible... Description of Policies or Practices, if applicable

Rock Hill Schools provided vaccine opportunities for staff starting in February 2021 and continued these efforts through May 2021. 1600 staff were vaccinated through partnership with the City of Rock Hill, Piedmont Medical Center and Good Pharmacy.

Rock Hill Schools will consider working with SCDHEC and community partners to offer vaccine clinics to students aged 5 years and older in the 2022-23 school year.

A valid South Carolina Certificate of Immunization for all enrolled children is required by South Carolina state law (SC Code of Laws Section 63-13-20). The SC immunization schedule for children can be accessed at the link below. A COVID-19 vaccine is not currently required for school attendance.

https://scdhec.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2021-22_School_Law_Letter-signed.pdf

IX. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies and practices...Description of Policies or Practices, if applicable

All Schools

- Students with disabilities were provided the option to register for their assigned school or the Virtual Academy for the 2021-2022 school year.
- Students with disabilities will continue to have equal access to the general education curriculum and school environment.
- Students with disabilities will follow the regular instructional school day.
- IEPs will be adhered to as determined by the student's IEP team.
- Students with disabilities will receive all support services as prescribed by the IEP team.

Students with disabilities - Items of interest for parents and guardians

- The instructional delivery model and location (virtual or brick and mortar) will be specified in the IEP so appropriate special education and related services, supports and accommodation are designed to provide meaningful educational benefits (Free and Appropriate Public Education).
- A broadened definition of Face-to-Face includes:
 - Webcam
 - Google Hangout
 - o Zoom
 - Other virtual platforms with options for active/live participation

X. Coordination with state and local health officials...Description of Policies or Practices, if applicable

CDC recommends that all decisions about implementing school-based strategies should be made locally, in collaboration with local health officials who can help determine the level of transmission in the community. SCDHEC continues to provide data about disease transmission to support decision-making at the local level. Rock Hill Schools continues to work with SCDHEC in order to implement mitigating strategies for the safety of students and staff. Our district will also continue to work with community partners to provide vaccines to students and staff.

XI. Continuity of Services

Overview

Districts must describe how the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

District response on continuity of services

Academic Needs

Rock Hill Schools is a leader in providing families educational choice options that best meet the needs of each student.

Rock Hill will offer instruction through in-person at the school level and the Rock Hill Virtual Academy. The Virtual Academy is a standalone program that provides Rock Hill Schools' students and families with a high-quality learning experience that allows flexibility in time while connecting students with rigorous coursework and strong connections with teachers. The Virtual Academy is a perfect choice for students and families who need some flexibility in the usual school schedule and who have the capacity to support rigorous schooling at home. Parents of returning students to the school district must choose Virtual Academy by June 30, 2021, and students new to Rock Hill Schools will have the option to select either face-to-face or Virtual Academy for the upcoming year at the time of registration. Although parents are asked to commit to their choice of learning program for the entire year, opportunities to request changes will be offered at designated points during the school year pending space available in either program.

For students or teachers who may be diagnosed with COVID-19 and/or are quarantined during the school year, classrooms are equipped to support continuous learning through the use of technology (laptops, cameras, microphones) and the student's learning management system (Canvas, SeeSaw). As always, students with exceptional learning needs or who may have an Individual Education Plan or 504 will be accommodated in either learning program selected.

Cultivating Emotional Resilience in areas of Mental Health and Social-Emotional Learning for Students, Staff and Community

Rock Hill Schools understands that COVID-19 closures and changes have had a significant impact on students' learning, social/emotional and mental health issues. The COVID-19 pandemic is considered a collective traumatic event that has impacted our students, staff and community. The

following positions, services and programming will be put into place to provide tiers of interventions towards improving mental health, social emotional learning as well as cultivate emotional resilience.

Director of Mental Health for Rock Hill Schools

- Addresses the mental health needs facing the students, staff and community in reference to navigating the pandemic; transitioning to school from virtual services, providing crisis intervention services related to trauma, stress and anxiety due to issues brought on by all facets of the pandemic.
- Establishes a system to identify and provide care for students with mental health conditions
- Review and/or develop and implement required policies and procedures affecting students, staff and/or community with mental health needs

Students

- Site-based mental health services at all schools -preschool through high school
 - Rock Hill School District mental health providers offer 1:1 therapy, group therapy, support groups and family therapy
 - Catawba Family Therapy offers 1:1 therapy and family therapy
- Behavior management Assistants (BMA)
 - 1 BMA is assigned to all elementary schools and preschool center
 - BMA's provide Social Emotional Learning (SEL) activities & lessons in small groups, in the general education classroom and along with the school counselor when appropriate
 - BMA's are uniquely trained to de-escalate students in crisis, assist students with self-regulation, and check-in/check-out with identified students each day
- K-12 mental health screener will be implemented in the 2021-2022 school year to assist students requiring tier 1, tier 2, and tier 3 mental health interventions
- School Counselors & BMA's (elementary) have been trained to use the Social-emotional learning curriculum S.E.L.F. (Social-emotional Learning Foundations) integrating SEL lessons and activities throughout the school day
- ABii the Robot will be utilized along with the SEL Curriculum *In Focus* with all elementary students in 2021-2022. (Currently piloted through the Hayden-Hurst Grant Foundation in Title-1 school.)
- Day Treatment Center most restrictive tier on continuum of mental health services for students requiring intensive, therapeutic mental health services
- MILO the Robot (pilot -the State Department) has been programmed to interact with elementary students that have Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Learning Connections Program at York Road Elementary. MILO is programmed to collect data on student progress focused on specific, individual goals. MILO assists each learner with social skills, self-regulation, academic skills and communication skills.
- Grant Opportunities (e.g, USC/ECU Interconnected systems of support 2021-2024)
 8 elementary schools are participating in this grant.
- Staff
 - Conversation Cafe -a virtual connection via zoom facilitated conversations to provide time with colleagues as we continue to stick with parameters of distancing.
 - RHSD Mental Health Providers- Staff at each school has the opportunity to talk to a mental health counselor.

- Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training The RHSD mental health providers are MHFA Trainers. Support Staff, Administrators, as well as the Mental Health Advisory Council will receive MHFA training.
- Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) Training There are 9 in-house CPI Trainers that continue to train and support groups of staff, including administrators and support staff each year.
- Secondary Task Force for Mental Health Services Task Force of secondary administrators, school counselors, mental health providers, etc. to provide insights & recommendations for secondary mental health services
- Professional development (eg., grief/loss of normalcy, diversity, equity and inclusion (CEI), Restorative Practices) with partnerships from Winthrop University, Keystone substance abuse center, NAMI, etc.
- Rock Hill Mental Health Resource Hotline 24/7 803-324-7464.

Community

- Mental Health Advisory Council 40 Stakeholders meet 3-4 times a year to offer input and insights to school and community mental health issues.
- Parent Academy **Navigating the Pandemic** weekly, live-stream zoom via Facebook & YouTube presentations by experts in the school system and community.

Parent Academy -**Navigating the Pandemic - Wellness-** bi-weekly, live-stream via Facebook active/workout live-stream presentation by Jazzercise Incorporated, Yoga, Mindfulness and other wellness activities. Nurses, school counselors, social workers, and Rock Hill School District mental health counselors as well as mental health contracted services will remain a vital part of the school program. Social emotional supports can be initiated by the school or provided to students virtually upon request in the following areas:

- food insecurity
- guidance counseling
- instructional fun activities to help students connect while at home
- mental and physical health counseling
- social-emotional learning

XII. Periodic Review

Overview

Districts are required to review and, as appropriate, revise their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023, including seeking public input and taking such input into account in determining whether to revise the plan and, if revisions are determined necessary, on the revisions it makes to its plan. If a district developed a plan prior to enactment of the ARP Act that was made publicly available and was developed with public comment but does not address each of the required aspects of safety established in the ARP Act, the district must, as part of the required periodic review, revise its plan consistent with the ARP Act requirements no later than six months after it last reviewed its plan.

District response on ensuring periodic updates to its plan

The district will review and revise the *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* as directed in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP Act). Our district will also follow recommendations and/or directives that are provided by local, State or Federal agencies. The Superintendent has the flexibility to administer revisions to this plan based on guidance obtained from the CDC, SCDHEC, and decisions based on community spread data. If no amendments are suggested or recommended within a six-month period, the district will provide a notation in the online document that no updates are necessary.

XIII. Public Input

Overview

The ARP Act requires that school districts make their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan available to the public online and that the plans be in an understandable and uniform format; to the extent practicable, are written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent. Before making its plan publicly available, school districts must seek public comment on the plan and develop the plan after taking into account public comment.

District response on public input in development of its plan

1. On June 8, 2021, the draft of a *Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* and the *Application and Budget Plan* categories was posted on the district's website for feedback from the community. Information pertaining to the plans was shared on the district's social media outlets directing the public to the draft plans to provide feedback. The document was posted until noon June 14, 2021.

Follow up on responses received

There were over three hundred respondents to the links provided for input on the *Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* as well as the Spending Plan for ESSER III Funding. Responses were received from the following categories: Parents 52.9%; Teachers 31.2%; and Support Staff 9.5%. In January 2022, responses were from Parents 69.3%; Teachers 26% and a mix of Support Staff, Students and Community Members 4.7%. The remaining respondents represented School and District Administrators, Community Members, Students, Bus Drivers, Custodians, Grandparents, Teacher & Parent, Alternative Programs, School Board Trustees, and Former Teachers. All of our district's school locations were represented.

There were a wide range of responses documented in the questionnaires. The responses included questions, specific opinions, concerns, reports, suggestions on moving forward, and affirmations on the content in the draft report. Be assured that all responses were read as there were concerns voiced by several respondents. As well, all responses were considered, but many could not be incorporated because of the guidelines and directives the district has received from Federal and State agencies. Additional communication will be provided to our community to respond to questions and concerns that were conveyed in the feedback questionnaire that were not within the scope of this document.

For the thirteen sections in the *Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan*, the following percentages of respondents stated, "No feedback to provide for this section".

	Section Descriptions	Percentage June 2021 295 Responses	Percentage January 2022 149 Responses	Percentage August 2022 227 Responses
I.	Description of Maintaining Health and Safety	78.7%	77.7%	93%
II.	Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks	55.3%	55.4%	79.7%
III.	Modifying Facilities to Allow for Physical Distancing	48.2%	62.8%	80.2%
IV.	Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette	84.1%	75.7%	86.3%
V.	Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities, Including Improving Ventilation	71.3%	73%	87.2%
VI.	Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine	77.7%	68.9%	86.3%
VII.	Diagnostic and Screening Testing	85.2%	77%	89.4%

VIII.	Efforts to Provide Vaccinations to Educators, Other Staff, and Students	79.1%	75%	82.8%
IX.	Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities with Respect to Health and Safety Policies and Practices	90.3%	94.6%	95.2%
Х.	Coordination with State and Local Health Officials	91.3%	88.5%	95.6%
XI.	Continuity of Services Overview	91.3%	95.3%	95.6%
XII.	Periodic Review	92.3%	97.3%	96.5%
XIII.	Public Input	86.9%	85.8%	92.5%

2. On June 14, 2021 the DRAFT of a *Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* was presented to the School Board in the regular Business Meeting for the board to provide input during the meeting. Administration also requested School Board input on the *Application and Budget Plan* categories to be submitted by June 21 to the Superintendent.

Responses from this session were considered in the response in number 1.

3. On June 15, 2021 district administration hosted a Zoom where high school student councils and all SICs were invited to provide input on the draft of *Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* and the *Application and Budget Plan* categories.

Responses from this session were considered in the response in number 1.

- 4. All input and feedback were taken into consideration to finalize the *Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* based on guidance provided by the CDC, SCDHEC, Board Policy, and applicable State and Federal guidance. The finalized *Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* was posted on the district's website and a copy submitted to the SC Department of Education by June 24, 2021.
- 5. Additional public input was requested on the *Application and Budget Plan* which must be posted on the district's website and submitted to SC Department of Education no later than August 24, 2021.
- 6. On January 10, 2022, the revised *Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* was presented to the School Board in the Board meeting. Feedback was collected for the

Return to In-Person Plan and the *ESSER III Funding Plan* on the district's website from January 11, 2022, until January 21, 2022. Of the feedback responses, 69% of the respondents were parents, 26% were teachers, and the remaining 5% were made up of support staff, students, and other community members.

7. On August 8, 2022, the revised *Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* was presented to the School Board in the Board meeting. Feedback was collected for the *Return to In-Person Plan* and the *ESSER III Funding Plan* on the district's website from August 15, 2022, until September 15, 2022. Of the feedback responses, 83.3% of the respondents were parents, 9.7% were teachers, and the remaining 7% were made up of support staff, students, district and school administrative staff, and community members.