

COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN (CSP)

VERSION DATE: 9/25/2022

****DISCLAIMER****

THE CSP REMAINS IN ALIGNMENT WITH NH-DHHS AND CDC MEDICAL GUIDELINES.

THE PLAN WILL BE REFINED AS NEW CDC / NH DHHS IS RECEIVED



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Introduction

**Special Note:*

*Information identified within this plan with **bold red text highlighted in yellow** reflects changes from previous versions of the CSP.*

Kearsarge Regional School District (KRSD) reopened schools in the fall of 2020 under the conditions and expectations established by the KRSD Reopening Plan v.1 (version.1). The Board replaced this original version in the summer of 2021 with Reopening Plan 2.0.

Unlike Reopening Plan versions 1.0 and 2.0, the CSP represents COVID-19 safety planning parameters and guidelines for the district as we move away from a pandemic into an endemic environment impacted by COVID-19.

Executive Summary

The CSP, as well as Reopening Plan versions 1.0 and 2.0, recognized three core “pillars” through which all actions were reviewed:

- **Safety** - Creating opportunities for learning that account for the best available guidance from experts in the field focused upon the physical and Social Emotional needs of students and staff.
- **Equity** - Creating opportunities for learning that provide accessible learning environments for families and students impacted by a wide-range of resource availability.
- **Quality** - Creating opportunities for student learning that attempt to match or exceed the quality of instruction established through our normal professional practices.

After completing two years of school under the pandemic, and reflecting upon the educational, social emotional, and health / safety outcomes of the community, we believe that it is of paramount importance to our students and families to have access to in-person instruction in the Kearsarge schools. We recognize that, in order for our students to receive the highest quality instruction and greatest access to equity, our students must be physically present in our schools to the maximum extent health and safety make practicable. That noted, the continuing effects of COVID-19 upon the community, even if in an endemic condition, remain a threat to safety to students, staff, and community.

The KRSD CSP focuses the reader’s attention on the guidelines and expectations required for the community schools to mitigate effectively COVID-19 transmission and the resultant impact of COVID related illness on the learning environment. In so doing, the CSP continues to adhere to the three pillars described above.

Through the collaboration and contributions of a wide range of constituents, including teachers, nurses, custodial / facilities staff, administration, parents, and students working as part of the District’s Critical Decision Unit (CDU), the CSP was developed. The CSP utilized local, regional, and statewide data to support decision-making derived from the most current information available. Data used included information from the Center for Disease Control, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS), and the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHED). The plan best respects the scope of values and needs of staff, students, and families in our community. Nevertheless, the CDU

must reserve the right to recommend the KRSD School Board modify this plan as new information becomes available, or circumstances direct us to change our learning environment for the safety of all.

In-Person Learning Health and Safety Protocol

In order to provide an in-person instructional environment that reflects safety, equity, and quality considerations for both students and staff, the plan provides requirements for social distancing expectations, mask use, building accessibility, and health screening. Additional protocols are included for logistical and safety issues related to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Social Distancing, Mask Requirements, and Vaccination:

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) continues to inform communities that the best method of mitigating the impact of COVID-19 is a layered strategy involving social distancing, masking (under specific conditions), and vaccination.

The CSP outlines the following guidelines related to Social Distance, Masking, and Vaccination:

- 3' of spacing between individuals is an approved social distance between students in the schools under CSP. When practicable, administration is encouraged to strive for 6' of social distance between individuals. However, due to space limitations or need for specific interactions, administration may adjust the 3' social distance requirements, if they deem it necessary to do so.
- Administration and staff remain strongly encouraged to utilize outdoor settings for large group activities, assemblies, and gatherings when practicable, to increase quality ventilation and opportunities for social distancing.
- Masking is only required as a stipulation of an individual's early return from isolation (shortening 5 days of isolation from 10). The KRSD defines an individual's eligibility for an early return to the school campus based upon the ability of the student to meet and adhere to current NH-DHHS / CDC isolation guidelines.
- The District will continue to provide students and staff with timely access to source control masks for daily use, as well as KN95 masks, if requested.
- Building Administration will approve any requests for ADA approved accommodations for individuals unable to wear source control masks when the individual provides medical evidence of a disability indicating their need for an accommodation and it is determined a reasonable accommodation by the school's 504 or IEP team. However, the provision and District's acceptance of an ADA accommodation may result in loss of an individual's eligibility for early return from isolation, as the individual may be unable to meet and adhere to the requisite guidance from the CDC and NH-DHHS to qualify for the reduction of the isolation period.
- The KRSD does not provide or enforce the need for student or staff vaccinations for COVID-19. However, the District strongly encourages all eligible students and staff to vaccinate and remain current booster schedules to remain "Up to Date" per CDC and NH-DHHS guidance.

Limitations to Building Use and Accessibility:

Limited restrictions on building use and access continue under the CSP. These restrictions remain in place to minimize the potential unnecessary risk of student and staff COVID-19 exposure while on campus. The CSP includes the following guidelines:

- The District will allow vendors and service contractors into restricted areas within the facilities designated for drop off or by appointment.
- The District will post signs at the entrance of each of the schools identifying COVID-19 symptoms and restrictions for access to the building.
- The School administration will consider any use of facilities requests for non-school district related activities. Schools may allow use of district facilities and grounds with the prior approval of the building Principal. Any request for use of facilities must be accompanied by the requesting party's appropriate and timely completion of building use forms.

Health Screenings and Protocols:

Students and staff are required to self-assess for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to leaving home.

- Children should not come to school if they are exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- Staff will self-assess prior to entering school each day.
- Referral for in-school assessment of COVID-19 symptoms by nursing staff will follow protocols:
 - Teachers will receive annual refresher training to recognize the potential symptoms of COVID-19. They will also review how to report these to the school nurse.
 - Each school will establish a space where symptomatic individuals will report and be isolated from others.
 - Nurses assessment procedures, in such instances, will potentially engage in the following actions: review of symptoms, context research through parent contact, and (as determined by this check) a call to parents or guardians for dismissal.

Cleaning, Sanitization, and Ventilation

While there has been a de-emphasis on the efficacy of touch point cleaning as a mitigation strategy for reducing COVID-19 transmission, an established culture of cleaning continues to have a significant impact on the general health and safety of the learning environment. This adopted culture embraces the services of our custodial staff, staff members, and students to aid in a continuous attention to cleaning and sanitizing surfaces potentially impacted by COVID-19 and other bacteria and viruses affecting community health.

Ventilation and air circulation systems remain employed to minimize the effects of airborne contaminants. The CSP utilizes the following CDC / NH-DHHS cleaning, sanitization and ventilation guidelines:

- Custodial staff schedules will support and facilitate daytime sanitizing and proper disinfecting of common surfaces in high-traffic areas. Custodial Site Managers will achieve this outcome by incorporating training, adopting formal protocols, and purchasing necessary equipment and supplies.

- Tasks will be assigned to each custodian, including specific classrooms, bathrooms, handrails, doors, handles and other high-touch locations according to a checklist of areas which require frequent sanitizing throughout the day.
- High-traffic exposure areas within each building will be cleaned on a regular schedule.
- Custodian training on sanitizing, disinfecting, and cleaning procedures will be done prior to the start of the new school year and as new technology or products are introduced.
- Students may be asked to wipe down their desk surfaces prior to leaving the classroom. Custodial staff will assist in classroom cleaning during transitions at the elementary school level and for any spaces that require greater assistance.
- A trained COVID-19 Custodial Response Team will be used to react to, and intensively deep clean, any potentially impacted area utilizing electrostatic cleaning tools.
- Air quality will remain a prioritized method of addressing COVID-19 transmission. Ventilation systems will utilize DHHS / CDC recommended filtering. Run time of the units will allow for 7-10 air exchanges / hour.

Food Services:

Traditional lunch programs may remain modified to operate within social distancing guidelines of the CDC, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and state and local agencies. While the plan will vary by building and age level to accommodate the differences in available physical space and the developmental needs of students, the general aspects of the plan include:

- Students taking part in the food service program will continue to receive meals based on menu options for the day. Students will be charged accordingly.
- Every person will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer upon entering the cafeterias or lunch space.
- There will be no vending machines.
- Students may be required or requested to eat meals in their classroom or in alternate or outdoor spaces when available.
- Schools will strive to maintain 3' of social distance between students when individuals are eating if practicable.

Transportation:

Bus driver shortages will continue to affect the capacity of busing companies to provide drivers for charter activities, such as field trips, co-curricular activities, and athletics. This may lead to an inability for the buses to offer 3' of social distancing space for riders. As such, parents or guardians concerned by the lack of social distance available on buses are encouraged to seek out alternative means of transportation for their students.

- The Student Transportation of America (Bus Company) and the School Board Transportation Committee will explore practicable options to reduce bus population density through additional buses, reorganization of existing routes.
- The District recommends that all students and drivers continue to wear source control or DHHS/CDC approved face coverings at all times while on buses.
- Weather permitting and when practicable, all windows will remain open throughout the bus ride to provide fresh circulating air.

- For any field trips, athletic, or co-curricular related transportation, CSP health and safety guidelines will apply.
- Busing transportation will only be provided for students being picked up and returned to their primary residence. Alternative pick up and drop off sites will not be permitted.

Workforce Management

Staff members impacted by COVID-19 are required to confidentially work with the District Human Resources department to determine sick day utilization and dates of return.

Performance Evaluation:

- The provisions and expectations relative to performance evaluation and documentation are defined within the District's *Supervision and Evaluation Agreement*.

Working Conditions/Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA):

Working conditions and expectations are defined, established, and articulated under the currently adopted Collective Bargaining Agreements for KREA and PEAK.

Safety Protocols & Procedures:

- All staff will be trained on new or updated safety protocols and procedures related specifically to COVID-19 and the CSP prior to the start of school.
- The district will continue to utilize the Critical Decisions Unit (CDU) for the purpose of collaborative decision making related to COVID-19 during the 2022-23 school year.

Isolation Provisions

- In the event of a student's need for isolation related to COVID-19, faculty and staff will work to support the student during times of required absence.
- While differing classrooms and grade levels may be able to provide a range of potential instructional options for students in isolation, instruction for those in isolation is not to be considered or expected to be synchronized learning. Students engaged in remote participation or observation of instruction may be required to complete alternate activities or receive additional instruction to develop their knowledge and understanding or demonstrate their learning competency.
- The District does not support the use of remote student participation or observation to excuse student absences due to any issue outside of COVID-19 related isolation. The Building principal will consider and approve or deny any request for a student's use of remote participation or observation in instruction. Teachers seeking to gain approval must be obtain it prior to implementation.
- The District will continue to offer its students access to COVID-19 Tutors for the purpose of mitigating the effects of learning delay or lost instruction.

Recording of Instruction:

As a function of supporting or enhancing in-person learning, core instruction, instructional content, and related activities within the teacher's classroom may be video and audio recorded at the teacher's discretion. Recordings will be made by the teacher and will not be utilized for evaluative purposes. Notice of recording will be placed in the classrooms to remind those present of the potential of recording.

The teacher will provide access to currently enrolled students of the class for instructional purposes only. The teacher will delete all recordings of students engaged in instruction by end of the school year.

The District support strictly prohibits any or sharing of recordings for purposes beyond a student's personal instructional support. The District will see violation of this prohibition as cause for disciplinary or legal action.

Communication

Communication efforts related to the CSP will continue to provide staff, students, and parents with specific details related to the differences and similarities between the previous versions of the KRSD Reopening Plan and the new CSP.

The CSP will be posted on the district website..

COVID-19 Communication Plans:

- School and District communications to the community will continue to provide updates regarding the transmission of COVID-19 within the school community utilizing "Immediate" communication methods (preferably Blackboard messaging).
- Social media (Facebook) and website postings will be used to add layers of redundancy to communication of COVID-19 reports within the district.

CSP Development Contributors

This reopening plan reflects the combined efforts of the Critical Decision Unit (32 members) who continue to examine issues and provide recommendations within the following areas:

- Administration
- Operations
- Academics
- Whole Child Supports
- Special Education
- Technology and Distance Learning
- Workforce Management
- Communication Strategies
- Medical / Safety
- Facilities

Additionally, the plan is guided by the support of New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NH-DHHS), The Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Glossary

CDC: The Center for Disease Control and Prevention is one of the major operating components of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

CDU: The Critical Decision Unit. A Kearsarge committee of nurses, teachers, support staff, and building and district level administrators charged with making recommendations regarding issues of Health and Safety to the Kearsarge School Board.

COVID-19: The abbreviated name of the coronavirus disease v. 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, ‘CO’ stands for ‘corona,’ ‘VI’ for ‘virus,’ and ‘D’ for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as “2019 novel coronavirus” or “2019-nCoV.”

DHHS or NH-DHHS: The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is the largest agency in New Hampshire state government, responsible for the health, safety and well-being of the citizens of New Hampshire. DHHS provides services for individuals, children, families and seniors, and administers programs and services such as mental health, developmental disability, substance abuse, and public health.

Isolation: Isolation refers to the DHHS definition of requiring students or staff to remain at home after having been diagnosed with COVID-19.

SEL: Social-Emotional Learning. Social and emotional learning is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

Source Control (mask): Source Control refers to the use of CDC or DHHS approved facial wear to cover a person’s mouth and nose and to help reduce the spread of large respiratory droplets to others when the person talks, sneezes, or coughs. This can help reduce the spread of COVID-19, by someone who is infected but does not know it. Information pertaining to CDC approved source control masks may be located here: <https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2020/09/08/source-control/>