

River Valley 8/16/21: RETURN TO LEARN PLAN 2021-2022

In-person learning has been shown to provide the greatest benefit to students, and ensuring this can happen consistently and safely during the upcoming school year has been deemed a priority for Berrien County Schools.

The *2021-2022 Return to Learn Plan* provides detailed guidance to ensure that COVID-19 prevention and mitigation measures are implemented in a way that fosters optimal learning environments while simultaneously ensuring health and safety for students and staff in Berrien County. This plan was collaboratively developed by Berrien County Superintendents with the support of the Berrien County Health Department to ensure that all Berrien County School Districts have an aligned and detailed plan for a successful return to the classroom this fall.

Please Note: This plan may change and evolve as knowledge changes surrounding current and potential variants and availability of vaccination for younger age groups.

Supporting Documents:

➤ [BCHD Interim Guidance for Schools \(Released July 12, 2021; Updated 8-9-2021\)](#)

Indicators for Community Transmission:



* The Berrien County Health Department (BCHD) determines the community transmission level using multiple factors. To learn more about the determination levels please visit the <https://www.berriencounty.org/1689/COVID-19-Cases-and-Data>

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Communities and organizations should update COVID-19 prevention strategies based on:

The infographic consists of five white boxes on a green background. Each box contains an icon and a title. 1. 'Community spread' shows a group of eight stylized human figures, with two in red and six in grey. 2. 'Health system capacity' shows a red square with a white cross. 3. 'Vaccination coverage' shows two orange adhesive bandages. 4. 'Early detection of COVID-19 increases' shows three red, spiky virus particles and a yellow arrow pointing upwards. 5. 'Populations at risk' shows a group of eight stylized human figures, with four in green and four in grey, each with a yellow warning triangle on their chest.

High vaccination + Low community spread = Less need for masking and other prevention strategies

CDC.GOV bit.ly/MMWR72721 MMWR

Based upon the community transmission level, as determined by the BCHD, (River Valley Schools), in consultation with BCHD, will determine the number of mitigation strategies to implement to foster optimal learning environments while simultaneously ensuring the health and safety for students and staff.

The transmission level will be determined at the end of the day of Friday of each week. Any adjustments to mitigation strategies will be implemented on the following Monday and remain in place through the following Sunday.

The district will comply with any and all local, state and federal mandates/orders.

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Recommended Prevention/Mitigation Strategies:

| Low Transmission Mitigation Strategies | Moderate Transmission Mitigation Strategies | Substantial Transmission Mitigation Strategies | High Transmission Mitigation Strategies |
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| Instructional Format | | | |
| In person | In person | In-person instruction - individual schools or classrooms may be moved to remote instruction | Impact to whole buildings/district may be experienced; may transition to remote instruction for a classroom, buildings or district as need determines. Continue to prioritize in-person as able to with guidance from public health. |
| Athletics | | | |
| Athletic practices and competitions will be permitted. MHSAA guidelines will be followed. | Athletic practices and competitions will be permitted, and additional health and safety protocols put into place. MHSAA guidelines will be followed. | Competitions may be paused; practices focus on skills building with increased social distancing required. MHSAA guidelines will be followed. | Competitions may be paused; practices focus on skills building with increased social distancing required. MHSAA guidelines will be followed. |
| Athletic testing <u>will not be required</u> unless mandated by a local or state agency and/or a sanctioning body. | | | |
| Cleaning & Disinfecting | | | |
| The district will follow regular cleaning and disinfection procedures. | The district will follow regular cleaning and disinfection procedures. Additional cleaning | The district will follow regular cleaning and disinfection procedures. Additional cleaning | The district will follow regular cleaning and disinfection procedures. Additional cleaning |

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| | and disinfecting procedures will be implemented. | and disinfecting procedures will be implemented in classrooms during the day | and disinfecting procedures will be implemented in classrooms during the day |
| Cohorting | | | |
| Mixing of students will occur. | Mixing of students may be restricted in some areas, activities, classrooms, and/or buildings | Mixing of students may be restricted in some areas, activities, classrooms, and/or buildings | Mixing of students may be restricted or may not be allowed in some areas, activities, classrooms, and/or buildings |
| COVID Testing | | | |
| COVID testing of students or staff <u>will not be required</u> unless mandated by a local or state agency and/or a sanctioning body. | | | |
| Extracurriculars & Field Trips * County discussion needed | | | |
| Extracurricular activities may occur as scheduled | Short-term dismissals and suspension of extracurricular activities and field trips may be expected | Short-term dismissals and suspension of extracurricular activities and field trips may be expected | Short-term dismissals and suspension of extracurricular activities and field trips may be expected |
| Face Covering (Masks) *County Discussion Needed | | | |
| Staff, students, volunteers, and visitors will not be required to wear face masks. Face coverings are optional. Face masks recommended. | Staff, students, volunteers, and visitors will not be required to wear face masks. Face coverings are optional. Face masks recommended. | Staff, students, volunteers, and visitors may be required to wear face coverings in all areas and for all activities Face masks strongly recommended | Staff, students, volunteers, and visitors may be required to wear face coverings in all areas and for all activities Face masks strongly recommended |

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| Food Service | | | |
| Normal food service operations | Normal food service operations. Additional health and safety protocols will be put in place. | Normal food service operations. Additional health and safety protocols will be put in place. | Normal food service operations. Additional health and safety protocols will be put in place. |
| Meal pick-up services will be provided if a building or the district moves to remote instruction. | | | |
| Gatherings and Facility Use * | | | |
| No restrictions on gatherings or use of facilities | Restrictions on gathering size and/or use of facilities may be implemented. Outside agency use of facilities may be limited | Restrictions on gathering size and/or use of facilities may be implemented. Outside agency use of facilities may be limited | Restrictions on gathering size and/or use of facilities may be implemented. Outside agency use of facilities may be limited |
| Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette | | | |
| Hand Hygiene/Hand Sanitation and Respiratory Etiquette is expected ² | Hand Hygiene/Hand Sanitation and Respiratory Etiquette are expected, and additional opportunities for proper hand washing will be available throughout the day. Hand sanitizing will be encouraged when students leave or enter the classroom and other designated areas ² . | Hand Hygiene/Hand Sanitation and Respiratory Etiquette are expected and additional opportunities for proper hand washing will be available throughout the day. Hand sanitizing will be required when students leave or enter the classroom and other designated areas ² . | Hand Hygiene/Hand Sanitation and Respiratory Etiquette is expected, and additional opportunities for proper hand washing will be available throughout the day. Hand sanitizing will be required when students leave or enter the classroom and other designated areas ² . |

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| Isolation and Quarantine (Staff & Students) | | | |
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| <p>Work with BCHD & RESA to support robust case investigation and contact tracing. Provide educational support for students and families who are impacted by isolation and quarantine. Isolation and quarantine will adhere to local public health requirements and operating procedures. Close contact identification will be supported by the school for classroom and athletic-based close contact identification.</p> <p>NOTES: Close contact exclusion will be determined by current school operations and policies currently in place for masking and social distancing. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → No masking required. Close contact with 6 ft of a positive individual will be quarantined for 10 days from the last date of contact. Fully vaccinated individuals do not quarantine unless symptomatic. → Face masks required. Close contacts within 3 ft of a positive individual will be quarantined for 10 days from the last date of contact. Individuals 3 to 6 ft may continue to attend school as long as they do not have symptoms. Fully vaccinated individuals do not quarantine unless symptomatic. | | | |
| Meetings and Conferences | | | |
| In-district/out-of-district meetings and conferences will be permitted. | In-district/out-of-district meetings and conferences will be permitted. | In-district/out-of-district meetings and conferences may be limited and may be suspended. | In-district/out-of-district meetings and conferences may be limited and may be suspended. |
| Offices | | | |
| District and building offices will be open for normal school business. Visitors and guests are allowed in buildings. | District and building offices will be open for normal school business. Visitors and guests are allowed in buildings. | District and building offices will be open for normal school business. Prioritize visits to minimize office visitor traffic. Additional health and safety protocols may be put in place. Visitors and guests may be limited. | District and building offices will be open for normal school business. Prioritize visits to minimize office visitor traffic. Additional health and safety protocols may be put in place. Visitors and guests may be limited. |
| Remote/Virtual Learning | | | |

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| <p>Students that the health department quarantines may gain access to live remote learning opportunities after the student is absent for more than 3 consecutive days. The building principal may also approve access to synchronous learning support under special circumstances related to a documented medical diagnosis, medical procedure, or mental health crisis.</p> | <p>Students that the health department quarantines may gain access to live remote learning opportunities after the student is absent for more than 3 consecutive days. The building principal may also approve access to synchronous learning support under special circumstances related to a documented medical diagnosis, medical procedure, or mental health crisis.</p> | <p>If a classroom or school is closed, all students impacted by the closure will be provided remote learning opportunities throughout the closure. Students that are quarantined by the health department may gain access to live remote learning opportunities after the student is absent for more than 3 consecutive days. The building principal may also approve access to synchronous learning support under special circumstances related to a documented medical diagnosis, medical procedure, or mental health crisis.</p> | <p>If a classroom or school is closed, all students impacted by the closure will be provided remote learning opportunities throughout the closure. Students that the health department quarantines may gain access to live remote learning opportunities after the student is absent for more than 3 consecutive days. The building principal may also approve access to synchronous learning support under special circumstances related to a documented medical diagnosis, medical procedure, or mental health crisis.</p> |
| Social Distancing | | | |
| <p>Social distancing measures may be in place.</p> | <p>Additional Social Distancing measures may be measured. Adjustments to school procedures, schedules, activities, etc., may be made to adjust to the social distancing requirements.</p> | <p>Additional Social Distancing measures may be implemented. Adjustments to school procedures, schedules, activities, etc., may be made to adjust to the social distancing requirements.</p> | <p>Additional Social Distancing measures may be required. Adjustments to school procedures, schedules, activities, etc., may be made to adjust to the social distancing requirements.</p> |
| Staff Health Screening | | | |

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| <p>Staff members should conduct a daily wellness self-check prior to reporting to work. DO NOT REPORT TO WORK IF YOU ARE SICK.</p> | <p>Staff members should conduct a daily wellness self-check prior to reporting to work. DO NOT REPORT TO WORK IF YOU ARE SICK</p> | <p>Staff members will be required to complete district established protocols.</p> | <p>Staff members will be required to complete district established protocols.</p> |
| Student Health Screening | | | |
| <p>Parents/guardians should conduct a daily student wellness check prior to sending a student to school. DO NOT SEND A STUDENT TO SCHOOL IF THEY ARE SICK.</p> <p>See student illness section.</p> | <p>Parents/guardians should conduct a daily student wellness check prior to sending a student to school. DO NOT SEND A STUDENT TO SCHOOL IF THEY ARE SICK.</p> <p>See student illness section.</p> | <p>Parents/guardians should conduct a daily student wellness check prior to sending a student to school. DO NOT SEND A STUDENT TO SCHOOL IF THEY ARE SICK.</p> <p>See student illness section.</p> | <p>Parents/guardians should conduct a daily student wellness check prior to sending a student to school. DO NOT SEND A STUDENT TO SCHOOL IF THEY ARE SICK.</p> <p>See student illness section.</p> |
| Student Illness | | | |
| <p>Parents/Guardians are not to send children to school who are ill per 8450 Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases</p> <p>Students exhibiting the following symptoms shall remain home or excluded from school until the student is symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (<i>temp over 100.4</i>) or feeling feverish/chills • Cough • Sore throat • Runny or stuffy nose (congestion) | <p>Parents/Guardians are not to send children to school who are ill per 8450 Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases</p> <p>Students exhibiting the following symptoms shall remain home or excluded from school until the student is symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (<i>temp over 100.4</i>) or feeling feverish/chills • Cough • Sore throat • Runny or stuffy nose (congestion) | <p>Parents/Guardians are not to send children to school who are ill per 8450 Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases</p> <p>Students exhibiting the following symptoms shall remain home or excluded from school until the student is symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (<i>temp over 100.4</i>) or feeling feverish/chills • Cough • Sore throat • Runny or stuffy nose (congestion) | <p>Parents/Guardians are not to send children to school who are ill per 8450 Control of Casual Contact Communicable Diseases</p> <p>Students exhibiting the following symptoms shall remain home or excluded from school until the student is symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (<i>temp over 100.4</i>) or feeling feverish/chills • Cough • Sore throat • Runny or stuffy nose (congestion) |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Muscle or body aches ● Headaches ● Fatigue (tiredness) ● Vomiting and diarrhea <p>Students exhibiting the following symptoms which are strong indicators of COVID-19 shall remain home or excluded from school for 10 days unless a negative COVID-19 test result or a doctor's note stating the student may return to school is provided to school authorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing ● New loss of taste or smell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Muscle or body aches ● Headaches ● Fatigue (tiredness) ● Vomiting and diarrhea <p>Students exhibiting the following symptoms which are strong indicators of COVID-19 shall remain home or excluded from school for 10 days unless a negative COVID-19 test result or a doctor's note stating the student may return to school is provided to school authorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing ● New loss of taste or smell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Muscle or body aches ● Headaches ● Fatigue (tiredness) ● Vomiting and diarrhea <p>Students exhibiting the following symptoms which are strong indicators of COVID-19 shall remain home or excluded from school for 10 days unless a negative COVID-19 test result or a doctor's note stating the student may return to school is provided to school authorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing ● New loss of taste or smell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Muscle or body aches ● Headaches ● Fatigue (tiredness) ● Vomiting and diarrhea <p>Students exhibiting the following symptoms which are strong indicators of COVID-19 shall remain home or excluded from school for 10 days unless a negative COVID-19 test result or a doctor's note stating the student may return to school is provided to school authorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing ● New loss of taste or smell |
| Transportation | | | |
| <p>Normal Transportation Operations.</p> <p><i>*Adhere to CDC order for facemask requirements</i></p> | <p>Normal Transportation Operations. Additional health and safety protocols will be put in place. Additional cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be implemented.</p> <p><i>*Adhere to CDC order for facemask requirements</i></p> | <p>Normal Transportation Operations. Additional health and safety protocols will be put in place. Additional cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be implemented.</p> <p><i>*Adhere to CDC order for facemask requirements</i></p> | <p>Normal Transportation Operations. Additional health and safety protocols will be put in place. Additional cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be implemented.</p> <p><i>*Adhere to CDC order for facemask requirements</i></p> |
| Vaccinations | | | |
| <p>No matter which color indicator Berrien County is in, the district encourages staff and students to become vaccinated. The district is NOT requiring staff or students to be vaccinated.</p> | | | |

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² - Handwashing and proper covering of the mouth/nose area when coughing/sneezing will be taught in all grades at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year. Hand washing/hand sanitizing and proper covering of the mouth/nose area when coughing/sneezing will be encouraged at all times.