

Jim Thorpe Area School District Health and Safety Plan

2023-24 School Year

This was developed in collaboration with our partners at:



Reviews and Submissions

Reviews and Submissions	Date
Initial Effective Date	7/14/21
Date Approved by the Jim Thorpe Area School District Board of Directors	7/14/21
Date and Modifications of Last Revision	7/15/21: Original plan submission changed to reflect school board revision amendment to mask wearing requirements
Submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education	7/19/21
Posted on the Jim Thorpe Area School District website	7/19/21 https://www.jimthorpesd.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=13913596
PA Department of Health Masking Mandate	9/7/21: Attached
Date and Modifications of Last Revision	10/13/21: Motioned by Mr. Garritano, Seconded by Mr. Montemuro, We will quarantine sick individuals showing symptoms of COVID 19, we will not quarantine healthy individuals. This includes students, teachers and staff. Nurse will determine the symptoms.
Quarantine Plan Update	1/9/22: Attached
Date and Modification of Last Revision	8/10/22
Date and Modification of Last Revision	1/11/23 - Reviewed with no changes made to the plan
Date and Modification of Last Revision	8/16//23 - Reviewed with the following changes made to the plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● change in school year ● change in team member names ● removed Seamless Summer Option and added CEP from Food Service section ● the district no longer submits COVID cases to the PA DOH as that requirement has been removed.
Date and Modification of Last Revision	1/24/24 - Reviewed with no changes made to the plan

Health and Safety Plan Review Team

Name	Role, Position	Organization
Robert Presley	Superintendent, Pandemic Coordinator	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Dennis McGinley	School Board President	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Orell Gaynor	Director of Technology & Information Services	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Katherine Doll	Coordinator of Academic Resources	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Lori Lienhard	Director of Security	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Charlie Dresher	Director of Building & Grounds	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Sandra Michalik	Director of Special Education	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Thomas Lesisko	Principal, Jim Thorpe Area High School	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Holly Mordaunt	Principal, Penn-Kidder Campus	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Jeff White	Principal, L.B. Morris School	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Dustin McAndrew	Athletic Director	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Lisa Lienhard	School Nurse, Jim Thorpe Area High School	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Rhonda Hope	School Nurse, L.B. Morris School	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Mary Louise Lauer	School Nurse, Penn-Kidder Campus	Jim Thorpe Area School District
Rebecca Farina	Director of Nutrition, Jim Thorpe Area School District	Nutrition, Inc
Dr. Keith Vrablik	Doctor	Lehigh Valley Health Network
David Maxted	Director of Sports Medicine Programs	Lehigh Valley Health Network

American Rescue Plan (ARP) Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Requirements

How will the LEA, to the greatest extent practicable, support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning?

Throughout the pandemic, the Jim Thorpe Area School District has consistently utilized the most recent guidance from the federal government through the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the state government through the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH), and local guidance through our health partners at Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) to inform our decisions for health and safety planning. Adherence to this research-based guidance served the students, staff and community of the Jim Thorpe Area School District well throughout the 2021-22 school year, and as such, the district will continue to rely upon the federal, state and local guidance from these agencies to implement the necessary and appropriate prevention and mitigation protocols in response to the level of community spread in Carbon County and in our local communities.

The district's primary goal has been and continues to be to maximize the amount of in-person learning for our students in the safest manner possible for our students, staff and families. As such, the Jim Thorpe Area School District will prioritize and implement a traditional five days a week, in-person instructional model during the 2023-24 school year. A remote learning model, the Olympian Learning Connection (OLC), will be offered in partnership with the Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21 (CLIU) as an option for students and parents.

This health and safety plan was developed in consultation with local health agencies, and informed by the guidance of the CDC and PA DOH. This plan is unique to the needs of the Jim Thorpe Area School District, and as such, will be monitored, revised and updated as local health conditions dictate and as federal, state and local guidance evolves.

How will the LEA ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services?

Academics

The Jim Thorpe Area School District operated a 2023 summer school program to address learning loss mitigation and credit recovery for students in grades K-12. In addition, the district operated an Extended School Year (ESY) program for students with special education needs who will most benefit from participation in the program. The district participates in the SHINE after-school program for students in grades 5-8 which engages students in STEM activities that focus on improving academic skills in literacy and math, social skills, and knowledge of STEM.

Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, the district will continue to address both students' academic needs and behavioral needs. The academic needs will be addressed through the district's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), which will target interventions in the content areas of English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. The behavioral needs will be supported by the district's Positive Behavior Support Programs (PBSP). As with both the academic needs and the behavioral needs, the district is cognizant to ensure that all regular education programs and all special education programs meet the specialized needs of students with social, emotional, or mental health needs as well. Additionally, a variety of technological platforms and resources will be used to support student learning through the districts' Project OLE one-to-one computing initiative, which provides every K-6 student with an iPad and every 7-12 student with a MacBook Air laptop computer.

An assessment and analytics platform, Performance Matters, was implemented in the 2021-22 school year, and the district will continue to implement it during the 2023-2024. Its integration with the district's student information system, PowerSchool, will allow administrators, counselors, and teachers to more easily identify learning loss and provide more immediate and targeted interventions to those students most in need.

Food Services

Summer school and kindergarten camp students were served breakfast and lunch when in the building for those programs. The district was approved for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), so all students will be provided free breakfast and lunch during the 2023-2024 school year.

Transportation Services

Students utilizing district transportation will NOT be required to wear masks during the 2023-2024 school year. This is in accordance to the [CDC order on public transportation](#) as it pertains to mandatory mask wearing. Masks will be provided for students should one be needed. "Public transportation" includes riding a school bus to and from school, field trips, sporting events, etc. Students will be physically distanced when possible, but buses may operate at normal operating capacity. Whenever possible, windows will be open on the school bus or van to increase airflow ventilation.

Health Services

Vaccination clinics may be held at the district whenever the opportunities arise.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Students and families of the Jim Thorpe Area School District will have access to behavioral health supports, including school counselors, school psychologists, a social worker, and third-party providers as needed upon request. The district is also implementing a trauma-informed care program for students in partnership with Resilient Lehigh Valley and the local police departments. The district's existing Safe2Say reporting tool and Student Assistance Program (SAP) continue to be accessible by students to alert the appropriate district personnel to potential concerns and needs of students.

Employees of the Jim Thorpe Area School District have access to a variety of social, emotional and mental health supports, which include the districts' employee assistance program (EAP), and resources through their employee health benefits, as well as community resources. Employees should contact

Nicole Heydt, the district’s Benefits Coordinator, for details about the offerings available to employees, as well as any workplace leave rights available as a result of COVID-related absences.

Use the table below to explain how the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

ARP ESSER Component	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
<p>Universal and correct wearing of <u>masks</u>;</p>	<p><u>CDC guidelines</u> state that universal and correct wearing of masks are an effective COVID-19 mitigation measure and are highly recommended for unvaccinated persons.</p> <p>Masks are optional for all staff, students, and visitors regardless of vaccination status during the 2023-2024 school year.</p> <p>All students and staff will be permitted to wear a mask or appropriate face covering inside school property if they so choose for purposes of COVID mitigation, but are not required to do so.</p> <p>Visitors are not required to wear a mask or face covering in school buildings or on school property.</p> <p>As per the <u>CDC’s order concerning public transportation</u>, masks or appropriate approved face coverings are no longer required to be worn by the driver, monitor, nor students no matter their vaccination status when using school transportation, including school buses and vans.</p> <p>For athletics and activities, the district will follow the guidelines and protocols in regards to mask wearing as outlined by our health partner LVHN, District 11, PIAA, and the Schuylkill League. Should there be any conflict in guidance, priority for adherence will be given to LVHN as the medical authority.</p> <p>Updated CDC and PA DOH recommendations, state orders, and/or local health data may result in modifications to the district’s face covering practices. Modifications will be made in coordination with our local health partners.</p>
<p>Modifying facilities to allow for <u>physical distancing</u> (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);</p>	<p>Students and employees will be encouraged to maintain physical distance to the maximum extent feasible and appropriate in accordance with any <u>CDC guidelines on physical distancing</u>.</p>

	<p>Strategies such as modified classroom layouts, desk spacing, staggered arrival/dismissals, use of multiple entrances/exits, and removal of non-essential classroom furniture may be used if circumstances change and these precautions become necessary/required.</p> <p>The use of student cohorts in the K-8 school schedule to minimize transmission may be implemented if circumstances change and these precautions become necessary/required.</p>
<p><u>Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;</u></p>	<p>There will be ongoing communication and collaboration with families regarding elements of the local health and safety plan including ways <u>families can practice safe hygiene at home</u>.</p> <p>The district will post visual signs in high-traffic locations that promote good hygiene.</p> <p>Frequent hand washing with students and employees will be encouraged throughout all schools. Teachers will teach and reinforce proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette to their students.</p> <p>The district will ensure access to adequate supplies including soap and <u>hand sanitizer</u>. Students and staff may bring individual bottles of hand sanitizer.</p>
<p><u>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving <u>ventilation</u>;</u></p>	<p>The Jim Thorpe Area School District recognizes that having facilities that are well-ventilated, regularly cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected is an essential and vital component for risk mitigation of COVID-19.</p> <p>Cleaning, Disinfecting and Sanitizing Procedures The custodial staff will clean, disinfect and sanitize each classroom, learning space, office, restroom, hallway, cafeteria, touchpoints and other high traffic congregate areas as per <u>CDC recommendations</u> and the district's maintenance plan.</p> <p>Maintenance staff will use approved disinfectant and cleaning processes that ensure adequate dwell time. The cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces and horizontal surfaces, focusing on common gathering and public areas is imperative. The district will ensure safe and</p>

	<p>proper usage/storage of cleaning and disinfecting products by storing them securely away from students.</p> <p>Ventilation HVAC systems will be routinely maintained with regular filter replacements by certified staff to maintain adequate ventilation as per district guidelines. There will be enhanced ventilation of all buildings through increasing the amount of outside air into the HVAC systems.</p>
<p><u>Contact tracing</u> in combination with <u>isolation</u> and <u>quarantine</u>, in collaboration with the state and local health departments;</p>	<p>The Jim Thorpe Area School District will continue to follow all PA DOH mandates and consider all PA DOH recommendations. Although not required by the PA DOH anymore, it is highly recommended that individuals with confirmed cases of COVID-19 quarantine for 5 days and/or wear a mask while on school property.</p> <p>As per the PA DOH’s recommendation, the district will no longer notify the PA DOH through PDE’s “Future Ready Comprehensive Planning Portal” of any confirmed cases of COVID-19. The district will continue this practice if the PA DOH’s requirements change.</p> <p>The district will work collaboratively with the PA DOH staff on matters related to risk assessment, isolation and quarantine recommendations, and other infection control recommendations.</p> <p>Updated guidance and/or recommendations by the CDC and/or the PA DOH may result in modifications to case investigation, contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine procedures.</p>
<p><u>Diagnostic</u> and screening testing;</p>	<p>Staff and students will be provided with COVID-19 screening information for their reference. All individuals should closely monitor their own symptoms and should stay home if symptomatic.</p> <p>It is critically important for employees and students to stay home regardless of whether their symptoms are indicative of COVID, influenza, or other infections that are more commonly transmitted through close personal contact.</p> <p>Employees are required to report a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 to their immediate supervisor and the Pandemic Coordinator immediately.</p>

	<p>Parents are required to report a positive diagnosis of a student case of COVID-19 to the school nurse and/or school principal.</p>
<p>(g) Efforts to provide <u>vaccinations to school communities</u>;</p>	<p>The Jim Thorpe Area School District will continue to coordinate with CLIU#21 and the PA DOH in collaboration with LVHN, our community health partner, to provide opportunities for students, staff, families, and community members to obtain their COVID-19 vaccinations at the schools, if necessary.</p> <p>Information on additional vaccination opportunities will be disseminated to district staff, students, and families via the district website and emergency notification and announcement system.</p>
<p>Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and</p>	<p>The Jim Thorpe Area School District will implement an individualized approach for each student with disabilities consistent with the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.</p> <p>Students with disabilities will have access to the same programs and opportunities as non-disabled peers, as well as accommodations detailed within their IEP or 504 plan based on their individual needs.</p> <p>The district will also consider adaptations to prevention strategies while maintaining efforts to protect students, teachers, and staff from COVID-19.</p> <p>For questions or further information regarding appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety protocols, please contact Sandra Michalik, Director of Special Education at smichalik@jtasd.org.</p>
<p>Coordination with state and local health officials.</p>	<p>The Jim Thorpe Area School District will collaborate with state and local health officials as needed through known contacts as well as through our continued participation in the established Emergency Preparedness Council through the Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21.</p> <p>The district will work collaboratively with the PA DOH staff on matters related to risk assessment, isolation and quarantine recommendations, and other infection control recommendations.</p>

Resources

- [CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Schools](#)
- [PDE Resources for School Communities During COVID-19](#)
- [Roadmap for Education Leaders](#)
- [Accelerated Learning Thorough an Integrated System of Support](#)
- [PA Department of Health COVID-19 website](#)
- [COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring Dashboard: PA DOH](#)

Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors for the **Jim Thorpe Area School District** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **January 24, 2024**.


The plan was approved by a vote of:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Affirmed on: **January 24, 2024**

By:



(Signature of Board President)

Mr. Dennis McGinley