

Ware Shoals School District 51

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

Description of maintaining health and safety.

Ware Shoals School District 51 will continue to monitor CDC and DHEC guidance on current COVID-19 prevention strategies to ensure a safe learning environment for our students and staff. Our district strives to model a, “Plan, Prepare and Respond” approach to ensure an effective Continuity of Services Plan throughout the duration of the pandemic.

Greenwood County continues to see a decline in the number of positive COVID-19 cases reported. In fact, as of June 11, 2021, the county has reported an incident rate of less than 12.7 per 100,000 individuals (which is rated as low by SCDEHC). Our district recognizes the importance of working with local emergency management coordinators and health officials to acquire accurate and real-time data when making important safety and instructional delivery decisions.

We are thankful for the partnerships we have established with local health care providers. Our staff and eligible students continue to be afforded numerous opportunities to receive vaccinations. Many health care providers have opened their doors to allow our teachers who have been identified as being a potential close contact to receive rapid testing. We also depend on our medical experts to communicate breaking research on how to mitigate the spread and transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

Universal and correct wearing of masks

On May 11, Governor McMaster issued an Executive Order to provide a mask opt out process for families. Ware Shoals School District 51 respects the core beliefs and values of the community we serve. Parents will have the option of sending their children to school with a face mask if they decide it is in the best interest of their child to do. Our district will adhere to current DHEC quarantine guidelines.

Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing

Ware Shoals School District 51 will continue to monitor the current health trends of our community and will modify facilities to allow for physical distancing should the need arise. Our current low incident rates provides the opportunity to operate in a traditional setting.

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette are effective daily practices to limit transmission of the COVID-19 virus. Students in the younger grades will receive explicit instruction on handwashing techniques when they return to school. Students will be provided instruction on the importance of key practices like washing your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds upon the reopening of school. Hand sanitizer stations will also be strategically placed through each campus.

Cleaning and maintain healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Ware Shoals School District 51 will continue to implement effective cleaning practices to ensure the health and well-being of our students and staff. Cleaning inspections will continue to occur every month.

with feedback and suggestions provided to our custodians. We recognize the importance of everyone contributing to the cleanliness of our buildings. Our district will provide access to spray bottles, rags and disinfectant wipes to staff to clean surfaces routinely touched or shared between students should we experience an increase in positive cases.

Our district has procured hydrostatic sprayers and disinfecting machines. This equipment will be readily accessible should we notice an increase in illness. Our district is also working diligently to replace our aging HVAC systems across the district to improve ventilation and air quality in our buildings.

Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine

We are proud of the tireless efforts of our school nurses during the 2020-21 academic year. Their work in contact tracing was incredible and significantly lowered the chances for spread in our district. School nurses will continue to maintain accurate record keeping of positive cases. Our district will closely follow DHEC's quarantine and isolation guidance to ensure the well-being of our students and staff.

Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies and practices

Ware Shoals School District 51's Office of Special Services remains committed to providing individuals with disabilities a free and appropriate education. Additional accommodations for children with disabilities will be looked at on a case by case basis to ensure a safe and equal access to educational services. We recognize that adjustments on a child's IEP or 504 may be needed and necessary steps will be taken to ensure compliance with state and federal laws.

Coordination with state and local health officials

Ware Shoals School District 51 leans heavily on the expertise and support of our state and local health officials. Positive relationships have been established with local emergency management coordinators, DHEC regional directors and hospital system directors. Daily reports of positive cases have been provided by our local emergency management coordinator and will begin again should an increase in confirmed cases occur. During the peak of the pandemic, our regional DHEC director has participated in weekly conference calls with nearby superintendents to inform school leaders of changes to safety protocols and of any newly developed preventative measures. Our regional hospitals continue to be available to provide testing and treatment services for those who may have contracted the COVID-19 virus.

Continuity of Services

Recent COVID-19 data indicate a continued decline in the number of positive COVID-19 cases in our area. Ware Shoals School District 51 anticipates operating in a traditional face-to-face instructional model when students return from summer break and plans for all services to be fully functional.

Periodic Review

Ware Shoals School District 51 commits to review and, as appropriate, revise our *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* at least every six months. The district will seek public input and consider feedback when determining if the plan should be revised. The plan will be published on our district website for the convenience of our stakeholders.

Public Input

In accordance with the ARP Act, Ware Shoals School District 51 will seek input from the public before publishing a finalized plan. A draft will be presented during a School Board meeting for public comment and posted on our website for community review. Feedback collected from these presentations will be used to create a final version.