



COVID-19 Risk Mitigation Plan
For the Safe Return to
In-Person Instruction & Continuity of
Services Plan

2021-2022 School Year

Revised

October 1, 2021

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The Pendergast School District reopened its schools to all students on March 22, 2021. The district's mitigation plan for safe return to school was put in place and followed based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) recommendations that were available at that time.

The following protocols are to be implemented across all District sites and meet all health and safety guidelines for the safe return to in-person learning to the extent possible as we meet the requirement to open to 100% in-person learning in compliance with recent legislation and Executive Orders. The District will adhere to its typical procedures to address the needs of students or staff with disabilities.

In addition, to support the health and safety of our community, the Pendergast Elementary School District will coordinate with State and local health officials to provide testing, testing information and vaccinations to our school community. Scheduled vaccination events will be communicated to the PESD community on the district website, Class Dojo and social media.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Ongoing revisions will take place no later than every six months, depending on updates and CDC guidance. As the District receives new information or guidance, or as required to meet new federal or state law requirements, the District may need to revise the Plan. If this occurs, we will promptly notify you of changes to the Plan. If at any time the data shows more than ten persons (combined staff and student count) on a campus who are positive for COVID, the site will revert to the spring 2021 mitigation measures for that site. E.g., spacing further for lunch utilizing the gym and outdoor areas, limiting the playground areas and face coverings in indoor settings).

As of October 11, due to high transmission and positivity rates in the district boundaries, masks will be required while indoors on the Pendergast Elementary School District property until further notice.

STAFFING ASSIGNMENTS

At the District level, Communications & Outreach Coordinator (COC) or designee will coordinate all messages to students, parents, staff, and the community regarding reopening, possible closure, and other COVID-19-related information. The COC or designee will ensure that each site has posters with messaging on hand-washing and covering of coughs and sneezes located throughout, along with posters at site entrances reminding individuals not to enter if sick.

The District Maintenance administration team will coordinate implementation of cleaning protocols, including ensuring that sufficient cleaning supplies are available to janitorial staff and, as appropriate,

students and staff.

At each school or site, a site administrator or designee will coordinate social distancing protocols, including ensuring that student and staff schedules, as well as facility set-up, allow for implementation of the protocols.

At each school or site, a site administrator, the school health office personnel, or other designee will coordinate and implement the protocols set forth in the **Step Two Protocols: Employees** section of this document for screening of staff. That individual will be responsible for:

- Communicating any reported case of COVID-19 among the school population to Human Resources, and
- Informing Human Resources if absences of staff on any given day are above 10%, if absences of students on any given day is above 15% or if there appears to be a cluster of respiratory-related illnesses.

The District's Special Education Director and 504 Coordinators will coordinate with site-based case managers to ensure that the needs of special education students and students with special needs are being met in the context of implementation of these safety protocols.

TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION

Training

All staff will be trained on implementation of these protocols. Training will include proper use of protective personal equipment (PPE) (if applicable), face coverings, and supplies; cleaning and disinfecting; and other measures. All trainings will be virtual and available on Safe Schools.

Communication

Prior to students returning to campus, parents will be sent a copy (or directed to review a copy on the District or school website) of the portions of these protocols that relate to students and visitors. As part of this process, the District will send communication to all parents that outlines the symptoms for which parents must screen each morning, as well as the expectation that students will not be sent to school or placed on the bus if they are exhibiting any symptoms. The District will require a signed acknowledgement from parents regarding these protocols.

Each school site will identify a person to be the designated COVID-19 point of contact, which will be communicated to parents prior to the first day of school. This person will be responsible for answering parent questions regarding implementation of COVID-19 protocols.

PROTOCOLS: STUDENTS ON CAMPUS

Protocols are established based on community monitoring that reveals low levels of community spread of COVID-19. These practices are put in place as part of a general scale-up of operations.

Daily Health Screenings

At Home

Inform students and parents that students must not come to school if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- fever of 100.4 degrees or higher, or chills;
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing;
- muscle aches;
- sore throat;
- headache;
- fatigue;
- congestion or runny nose;
- cough;
- vomiting;
- diarrhea; or
- new loss of taste or smell
- any other symptoms identified in the future as being COVID-19 related

Also, inform parents via registration documents, on the school website, and via email reminders that they should screen students for the above symptoms each morning, should self-report symptoms, and must keep students at home if any symptoms are present. Assure parents that students will have the opportunity to make up work missed due to symptoms of COVID-19.

Note: Schools will not give out attendance awards for the duration of the COVID-19 health crisis.

On the Bus

All buses will have clearly visible signage communicating to parents that students should not enter the school bus with any of the above symptoms.

A bus driver or aide will visually check each student prior to the student boarding the bus. If a student exhibits visible symptoms,¹ the following step will be taken:

- If the parent is at the bus stop, the student will return to their parent.

If the parent is not at the bus stop, the student will be provided with a mask and—if possible—will be socially distanced from other persons.

If a student has a chronic condition such as allergies or asthma, parents should inform staff of that condition. Once the parent informs staff of the condition, students with symptoms aligned with the condition (e.g., runny nose or cough, etc.) should be permitted to ride the bus.

At School

Upon arrival at school, each student will proceed directly to the student's first period classroom.

A staff member will visually check each student for symptoms prior to students entering the school. Any student with visible symptoms of runny nose, cough, shortness of breath, or vomiting, will be taken to the health office. Parents may be contacted for pick-up with the following exceptions:

- If the student has a runny nose and the nurse/health aide observes that there are no other symptoms, the nurse/health aide will contact the parent to inquire as to whether the student

¹ Visible symptoms include runny nose, cough, shortness of breath, or vomiting.

has had any other symptoms or there have been any COVID-19 exposures in the home. If not, the student may return to class.

- If the student has health information on file that confirms a diagnosis of asthma or other respiratory condition and the nurse/health aide observes that there are no other symptoms, the nurse/health aide will contact the parent to inquire as to whether the student has had any other symptoms or there have been any COVID-19 exposures in the home. If not, the student may return to class.

Enhanced Social Distancing

Basic Social Distancing Practices

- Staff members will Maintain the recommended 6 feet apart from others. The staff members will educate and remind students regularly to maintain at least three (3) feet of distance between individuals at all times possible.
- Students will remain with the same groupings throughout the day. middle school students may move from subject to subject, in the same groupings to the greatest extent possible. Staff members shall wipe down surfaces whenever possible.
- Students who receive specially designed instruction will receive their services according to their IEPs.
- Class sizes will be reduced as much as possible within the constraints of the number of students enrolled and the physical layout of the school.

Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

- Some parents may not allow their children to ride the bus under current conditions, leading to greater crowding at drop-off or pick-up locations. The District will review current layouts to consider potential expansion of these locations when possible.
- During drop-off or pick-up of students, parents will be required to stay in their vehicle, unless express permission from a site administrator is provided for good cause. In this case, the family will be asked to arrive at or leave school before or after assigned times for most students.
- Students will enter campus through different points of entry based on grade level to allow social distancing.

Bus Transportation Seating / Other Requirements

- Students choosing to utilize bus transportation shall be required to wear face covering (mask), in compliance with a federal order.
- Load buses from back to front at bus stops, and unload front to back when at school (to minimize students passing by other students).
- Whenever possible, allow siblings to sit together if they wish.
- Maximum bus ventilation should be provided, including open windows (weather permitting). Drivers should set ventilation to non-recirculating mode.

Classroom Layout

- Desks must be positioned **three 3 feet** apart unless that spacing is not possible due to the size of the classroom and the number of students assigned to it. **Furniture placement should not impede egress.**
- Desks must be positioned in the same direction rather than facing each other.
- Large tables for groups of students may not be used unless this is the only option.
- Students are not to be physically grouped to work together. Instead, teachers should use technology to facilitate group work and group learning where appropriate for the age, subject, and capabilities of the students.
- Students that require small group instruction may leave the classroom for an alternative setting. Staff shall wipe down the alternative area after use, whenever possible.

Communal Spaces

- Hallways may be marked with adhesive tape to direct students to stay on one side of the hallway for each direction of travel.
- Where possible given the school layout, certain hallways may be designated one-way.

Playgrounds and Playground Equipment

- Individual classes may be assigned specific time slots for students to be taken outside for physical movement, with social distancing to be maintained at all times.
- Separate classrooms should not mingle during outside activity time.
- Staff should be creative in employing techniques to maintain social distancing during unstructured time.
- **Teachers and students are to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds following playground activities.**
- Wipe down equipment as you leave the area whenever possible

Lunch Rooms

The cafeteria will be utilized during lunch, with increased safety measures, including the following:

- Students will be directed to a designated seat with as much distance as possible between students. Students should remain in their designated seat.
- If students line up for lunch service they will remain with their cohort
- Markings should be placed on the floor to indicate where students should stand to maintain social distancing to the extent possible. Alternatively, staff should serve each student at their designated seat.
- Lunch should be served on disposable food service items (trays, plates, etc.), if possible. If disposable items cannot be used, have food service staff collect items while wearing gloves.
- Students are prohibited from sharing lunch items with one another.

- Staff are responsible to clean and disinfect the cafeteria after every use.

Bathrooms

- Students should enter bathrooms in groups no larger than the number of stalls/urinals in the bathroom. Students should be directed to maintain social distancing while in the bathroom as much as possible.
- Posters will be displayed reminding students of proper handwashing techniques.

Front Office

- Sneeze guards will remain in all reception areas.
- Adhesive tape stickers indicating 6 feet distancing from the front desk and post signage directing visitors not to come closer than the tape markings.

Hand Washing

Students and staff should wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol at the following times:

- upon arrival at school (use hand sanitizer if there is no sink in the classroom),
- after being outside for physical activity,
- before and after lunch,
- prior to leaving school for home, and
- after sneezing, coughing, or blowing nose.

Face Coverings

Universal and correct use of masks is the top mitigation strategy for safe in-person learning as [recommended](#) by the [CDC](#). While not mandated by the state, we strongly encourage face coverings be worn by all staff, students, and all visitors while on any District property. As of October 11, 2021, face coverings (masks) are required while indoors in any District facility, at any District event. Face coverings are required to be worn in any District vehicle, including District busses or vehicles rented or leased by the District.

Note: The District will follow CDC Guidelines for the use and type of facemasks.

Students who are wearing face coverings/masks shall be allowed breaks to remove their face covering in a safe environment when outside in playground settings with distancing.

While wearing face coverings, the 504 and ADA processes will apply. The Superintendent may make other exceptions to wearing of a face covering while keeping in mind the health and safety of everyone involved. ***

Students may bring their own face coverings to and from school. Dress code policy applies to face coverings. When feasible, schools should also have a supply of face coverings available to provide students who cannot afford or do not have their own.

Note: Plastic face guards, which provide protection for the wearer, will not be required or provided unless the staff position has been identified as needing full PPE.

Student Belongings/Materials

- For younger grades and where possible, student belongings should be kept in individual bins or cubbies labeled with each student's name. For other students, belongings should stay with the student each day.
- Students should not share school supplies. However, if a school supply or piece of equipment must be shared by students (for instance, a pencil sharpener or blocks/toys), a staff member should wipe down the item with disinfectant after each use.

Trips and Activities

- Field trips may be scheduled if they align with the Mitigation plan and follow all safety requirements. All field trips must be pre-approved by the Superintendent until further notice.
- Teachers may use virtual learning opportunities (such as virtual tours of museums) to enhance students' educational experiences.
- Traditional in-person school-wide assemblies will not be held until further notice. As an alternative, virtual school-wide assemblies may be held with student groups remaining in their classrooms.
- No in-person large-scale school events such as "Back to School Night" or fall carnivals will be scheduled until further notice, unless the events can be reconfigured to maintain social distancing and is approved by the Superintendent.
- Small-scale activities like parent-teacher conferences may take place over the phone or other electronic means.
- No in-person extracurricular activities will be scheduled until further notice unless the activity can be conducted in compliance with the protocols in this document and is approved by the Superintendent.

Use Of Facilities

When district facilities are to be used by non-district personnel, the use of facility agreement will include a copy of the district's mitigation plan. Community users are required to follow the same mitigation plan as the district. For any community use of the facility all attendees should follow CDC social distancing guidelines while at the event, and it is highly recommended to wear face coverings when social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

Specialized Classes

Some classes, such as science labs, choir, band, PE, and others, may require alternative lesson plans to limit contact and the sharing of supplies, and to reduce the spread of respiratory droplets.

PROTOCOLS: EMPLOYEES

Protocols are established based on community monitoring that reveals low levels of community spread of COVID-19. These practices are put in place as part of a general scale-up of operations.

Exposure Assessment and PPE

District administration, in conjunction with relevant site supervisors and department supervisors will assess each work site to determine whether PPE is necessary for specific positions to limit the spread

of COVID-19. If a position is determined to require PPE, the District will provide the PPE to staff at no cost and train staff on its correct use.

Visitors to School

Visitors and volunteers on school grounds are prohibited during the COVID-19 health crisis. For contracted vendors not providing direct instruction or support to students, masks are required while on school grounds during school hours.

Daily Screening

Supporting yourself and one another

We are a team. Taking care of yourself and one another is important in maintaining a healthy work family. To that end:

- Do not report to work if you do not feel well or if you have been exposed by a family member. Report this to your supervisor.
- Be conscientious and understanding of your co-workers who may be dealing with child care issues, illness or loss of loved ones, financial insecurity, or other issues.
- Kindly and professionally address one another when social distancing practices are not followed. (e.g. "I want to be sure we all stay healthy, could you stand six feet away please?", "I know it is hard to remember, we all need to ..., etc.).
- Remember each employee has a different point of view, different background, and different experiences related to COVID-19. Do not make assumptions about what is driving another person's thinking or behaviors. Pause on judging and be open to understanding.
- Respect employees' privacy. Ensure confidentiality in compliance with the American Disabilities Act.
- Reach out to PESD's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for quick and timely resources. Contact HR for information on how to connect with the EAP.

Managing Your Illness:

Though employees may become ill due to a variety of colds, flues or other illnesses, COVID-19 has required organizations to respond to illnesses differently than in previous times. Employees must follow guidelines and reporting procedures.

- Stay home if you feel sick, have a family member that is positive and has exposed you or if you are having any symptoms of COVID-19. (<https://www.maricopa.gov/5512/Sick-or-Exposed-to-COVID-19#symptoms>).
- Contact your supervisor and HR immediately if you have been exposed or have COVID-19 symptoms.
- Follow all District procedures for reporting leave time.
- Follow HR directions for returning to work from an illness.
- Speak with your principal/supervisor and HR, if you have questions or concerns.
- Review Managing COVID Exposure and Illness document for additional guidance.

Handwashing

Employees should wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol at the following times, at minimum:

- upon arrival at school;
- after being outside for student physical activity;
- before and after lunch;
- after sneezing, coughing, or blowing nose; and
- after physical contact with other staff or students.

Enhanced Social Distancing

- Employees must maintain a distance of **at least 6 feet between individuals**, unless doing so is not possible or feasible (e.g. to perform essential job duties, to protect students).
- If an employee needs to touch a student or another staff member (e.g. toileting help, use of restraint, the employee should resume social distancing as soon as safely possible, wash their hands, and disinfect any surfaces they touched.

Employee Break Rooms

- Seating shall face in one direction
- Staff are prohibited from sharing lunch items with one another.
- Staff are responsible to clean and disinfect the breakroom space after every use.

Face Coverings or PPE

As of October 11, due to high transmission and positivity rates in the district boundaries, masks will be required while indoors on the Pendergast Elementary School District property until further notice. The face covering should cover both the nose and mouth and in compliance with District dress code policy.

The employee's work assignment will continue to be the primary factor in determining PPE requirements.

The following face covering guidance is strongly recommended:

- Employees not working alone shall wear face coverings.
- Employees who have been assigned duties that require a distance of less than six (6) feet apart and for more than ten (10) consecutive minutes shall wear face coverings.
- Employees who ride in vehicles with others (work assignments, traveling from work location to work location, traveling to lunch, etc.) shall wear face coverings.
- Employees assigned specific job duties, may also require additional PPE (gloves, face shield, face covering, etc.) provided by the District.

Note: Wearing a face covering does not replace the need to maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet whenever possible.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Prior to reopening, the District inspected water systems to ensure that they are safe for use after the prolonged shutdown. This will help to minimize the risk of waterborne pathogens that cause illnesses such as Legionnaires' Disease.

- Designated staff will conduct daily cleaning and disinfecting of all frequently touched surfaces in work areas, such as door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains, desks, and learning tools. The playground, sports equipment, and any other shared items (if they are being used) must be cleaned between uses by groups of students.
- All staff will be expected to clean and disinfect workspaces when they arrive at work and just before leaving work.
- Day schedules will be assigned to custodial staff for increased cleaning of surfaces and bathrooms throughout the day.
- Evening shift / daily cleaning tasks will include; student desk, chairs, counter tops, sinks, restrooms, trash, vacuum, and mop floors.
- All district facilities have been equipped with GPS, (Global Plasma Solutions). Global Plasma Solutions is a needle point bi-polar ionization product: that kills mold, viruses, and bacteria in the air. Through needlepoint bipolar ionization technology, it cleans the indoor air without producing neither harmful ozone nor other harmful byproducts. The district was able to utilize the existing HVAC system as the delivery method.

Cleaning and Disinfecting During School Day	
Custodial Staff	School Classified and Certified Staff
CHEMICAL: Rejuvinal #16, #25 & QT-TB	CHEMICAL: QT-TB (Ready-to-Use Chemical that Cleans/Deodorizes/Disinfects)
Wear proper PPE when cleaning and disinfecting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloves • Face Mask • Safety Goggles 	Wear proper PPE when cleaning and disinfecting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gloves ○ Face Mask ○ Safety Goggles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Store cleaning chemicals in a locked cabinet when students are in class. • Cleaning products should not be used near children.
Clean and disinfect high traffic areas hourly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doors • Drinking fountains • Restrooms (Maintenance will develop a schedule for increased, routine cleaning and disinfecting.)	Clean and disinfect high traffic work areas as needed.
Cafeteria tables will be cleaned and sanitized daily, after every use and prior to food being served.	Cleaning Electronics such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, laptops, headphones utilize an alcohol-based wipe containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect. (Paper towels rather than cloth rag shall be used with the chemical: Q&C Germicidal Disinfecting Wipes or QT-TB)

Trips and Activities

- Field trips that can comply with the protocols in this document will be permitted *only* if the area to be visited is at a Step 3 of community mitigation and with prior authorization of the Superintendent.
- Teachers should continue to use virtual learning opportunities (such as virtual tours of museums) to enhance students' educational experiences.
- School assemblies may be held in staggered groups to ensure that social distancing protocols can be maintained. Unless social distancing can be maintained with all students in the same room, school-wide assemblies must be held virtually with student groups remaining in their classrooms.

PROCEDURES FOR COVID-19 SYMPTOMS OR A POSITIVE TEST

If a person becomes sick with COVID-19 symptoms or reports a positive COVID-19 test, the procedures listed below should be followed:

1. Employees must immediately report the situation to their supervisor **ONLY**. Information will only be shared with those that have a legitimate need to know.
2. If an employee develops COVID-19 symptoms at work, the employee should be separated from others until the employee can safely leave the campus or school site. If an employee cannot safely self-transport, the employee should be asked to identify a family member or friend or another individual to transport them. If no such persons are available, the site administrator should identify other transportation options. If the employee appears to be in medical distress, 911 should be called.
3. If a student develops COVID-19 symptoms at school, the student should be separated from others, except that a staff member should be available to supervise the student. In such cases, the staff member must wear PPE or a face covering and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from the student at all times, unless there is an emergency. The student's parent/guardian or the emergency contact should be immediately notified and told to pick the student up from school. If the student appears to be in medical distress, 911 should be called.
4. Site personnel should determine whether other employees or students were in close contact with the symptomatic person (i.e. Within 3 - 6 feet and for 15 or more minutes without face coverings) and so notify the site Administration or direct supervisor for further instructions regarding notification of possible exposure to those individuals.
5. The identity of an individual who is symptomatic or who tests positive for COVID-19 shall be treated as confidential information and should not be disclosed to other employees, parents, students or others unless express permission or direction to do so is given by the Superintendent/designee.

If an employee has been fully vaccinated:

- You should still take steps to **protect yourself and others** in many situations, wearing a mask and staying at least 6 feet apart from others. Take these precautions whenever you are:
 - In public

- You should still avoid large-sized gatherings.
- If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should get tested and stay home and away from others.

CDC updates as of July 27, 2021

- Updated information for fully vaccinated people given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant currently circulating in the United States.
- Added a recommendation for fully vaccinated people to wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmissions.
- Added information that fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission, particularly if they are immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease from COVID-19, or if they have someone in their household who is immunocompromised, at increased risk of severe disease or not fully vaccinated.

Who needs to quarantine?

TRAVEL

The CDC and the Arizona Department of Health Services guidelines currently do not have any requirement to quarantine after travel.

Close Contact

Individuals in Close Contact with a Person Who Has COVID-19

Individuals who were in close contact with a person who has COVID-19 may return to on-site work or school 10 days after the date of the individual's last contact with the person with COVID-19 to whom the individual was exposed.

ARE YOU A CLOSE CONTACT OF SOMEONE WITH COVID-19?

- You were within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19, regardless of whether masks were worn, for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period* starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated, OR;
- You had physical contact with a person with COVID-19 while infectious.

Exception: In the K-12 school setting, CDC guidance states a student who was within 3-6 feet of an infected student is **not** considered a close contact if **both students** were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks at all times.

Steps to take

Stay home and monitor your health

- Stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19. **The District will use a digital calculator to determine the exact dates you should stay home and the date you are clear to return to work.**

Watch for fever (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath.

PROCEDURES FOR RETURN FROM QUARANTINE/ISOLATION

Individuals With COVID-19 and/or With COVID-19 Symptoms

Individuals with COVID-19 who had COVID-19 symptoms may return to on-site work or school under the following conditions:

1. The date determined by the district for you to quarantine has passed
AND
2. At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; **AND**
3. Other symptoms of COVID-19 have improved.

*Note: If the individual experienced a severe case of COVID-19, he/she may need to remain at home for a longer period. These individuals should consult a health care provider and HR before returning to school or work.