



Caney Valley Public Schools

Return to Learn Plan

2020-21

Planning for and starting the 2020-21 school year is more unusual than the start of any school year in the past. The upcoming school year is likely to include short-term disruptions to instruction in response to COVID-19. This document provides a framework for our patrons for the 2020-21 school year. Plans inform decision-making, but the most effective planning is subject to change as new guidance is received. As of July 1st, Caney Valley Schools will open its doors for students on August 12th, 2020. However, the plan for the start of school may evolve as school begins in August.

Basic Framework

This framework is organized into two categories essential to planning for the Caney Valley Schools (CVS) 2020-21 school year. While there are other areas we will address with staff and students, the following categories are most valuable as school begins in the fall.

The categories are:

- School Operations Integrating public health strategies for the prevention of COVID-19 into schools
- Academics & Growth Ensuring continuity of learning; preparing for distance-learning options

School Operations

School operations is a broad category that encompasses every program, protocol and policy that shapes a school and its culture.

District leadership team - A team of representatives from across the district was convened to support planning and key decision making. The purpose of the team was and is to:

- 1) understand the needs of the district as informed by the experience of the 2019-20 school year;

- 2) utilize data and evidence to make decisions;
- 3) ensure all in the district are using common language and metrics for success; and
- 4) ensure unified communication, support and messaging throughout the district.

Communication plan - Regular and frequent communication with families and community is always essential. With this in mind, CVS will continue to develop a communication plan that builds on the opportunity to engage in meaningful two-way communication. Communication will continue throughout the summer and into next school year and include updates on reopening plans, how families can engage in the process and information on the health and safety of staff, students and the school community. CVS will use a variety of communication channels (i.e., text message, phone calls, facebook, websites and email alerts), and will continue to monitor the most effective strategy in reaching families and others outside the school and district. CVS utilized a parent survey in which over 340 patrons and 70 staff members provided feedback to help guide the creation of this document. The feedback and shared thoughts regarding our beginning of the year protocol is greatly appreciated. The administration's goal regarding communication will be that the communication is clear and consistent to eliminate confusion. Regular check-ins with the school community will be conducted to ensure everyone understands how the school will communicate criteria for heightened health and safety precautions and the instructional response that will follow. In the end, all decisions will be made in regard to what is best for all students.

Public Health Protocols - In developing this plan for reopening school, key guidance documents from federal, state and local entities, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) Return to Learn: A Framework for Opening Schools, and the OSDE's COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions. The district is using this framework to reopen schools in the fall of 2020 while prioritizing the health and safety of Oklahoma students, staff and families. Considerations in this document are not intended to replace our district's emergency or crisis safety plan and are not an exhaustive list of the health and safety needs to be considered.

Policies for screening staff, students and visitors prior to entry - School districts generally have the right to control and restrict access to campuses as specified in school and local school board policies. As school begins this fall, it is imperative that the CVS school community, families and staff recognize the importance of self-screening before coming to school and for all patrons to understand that individuals with symptoms **will not be allowed on campus until completion of the district criteria for re-entry**. Current CDC guidelines recommend screening students and employees for symptoms and history of exposure. CVS will utilize a questionnaire similar to what many hospitals and businesses have utilized. This questionnaire must be answered each day prior to entering a facility. Anyone answering yes to any of the following questions will not be allowed to enter the school facilities

School Questionnaire: In the last 24 hours:

- *Have you experienced a cough with no explanation?*
- *Have you experienced any shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?*
- *Have you experienced any chills or repeated shaking with chills?*
- *Have you experienced any loss of taste or smell?*
- *Have you experienced any fever or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100 degrees Fahrenheit?*

- *Have you experienced a known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19 if exposure to the active confirmed case occurred within the last 14 days*

CVS will allow for a screening policy that allows for self-screening at home. By allowing the student to enter the school facility the parent is ensuring that the child or children can answer no to all questions of the Corona-virus Diagnostic Screening.

Existing law provides that anyone with a communicable disease is prohibited from attending a private or public school, and Oklahoma State Department of Health rules acknowledge that an important part of a school health program is the prevention and control of communicable diseases. It is the duty of the parent or guardian, and the school, to exclude such person until the period of isolation or quarantine ordered for the case expires, or until permission has been given by local health officers. See 63 O.S. § 1-507.

The policy for CVS will stipulate that individuals exhibiting symptoms of coronavirus without other explanation will be prohibited from coming to school or sent home if exhibiting symptoms at school.

School Day - Research shows the greatest risk for virus transmission is in large groups where social distancing is not possible.

While it is important to regularly clean and disinfect shared items and high-touch surfaces, our district will determine how to reduce large crowds of students and staff. Student and staff groupings will remain as stable as possible by ensuring the same group of students remain together with the same staff as much as possible. The following strategies may be used if feasible:

- Modification of lunch periods to ensure fewer students are in close proximity to each other (ex. Lunch time classes may be required to sit together each day)
- Keep grades or, when possible, classes apart on the playground and/or stagger recess times.
- Teachers will utilize class time to allow students to use hand sanitizer at the beginning of each hour and for students to clean their area before they leave the room. This includes the library, gymnasium, computer lab, art rooms, etc.
- As necessary and weather permitting, we may use larger spaces such as gyms, cafeterias, libraries and outdoor areas as additional class space.
- Our district will utilize staff members, including support staff to assist with morning and after school supervision of students to keep groups separated to the extent possible.
- All buildings will limit outside visitors to essential for the conduct of business. Outside visitors will not be allowed to walk students to class.
- Classrooms will be rearranged to maximize social distancing. Desks will be spaced apart, to the extent possible, and point the same direction rather than students facing each other or working in groups. We will keep classroom doors open to improve circulation of fresh air that mitigates spread of the virus. Teachers or support staff will frequently wipe down high-touch surfaces like door handles and light switches. Students should ensure that they are prepared each day as school supplies will not be shared freely. Items that must be shared, such as computers and tablets, will be cleaned between use.
- We will pursue virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips, student assemblies, special performances and school wide parent meetings. For essential meetings, we will limit group sizes as much as possible.
- Visitors to the classroom will be discouraged. However, we are mindful that parents and families play a vital role in their child's education, and will involve guest speakers through virtual means as possible.

- Where students typically wait in line, we will place tape markings to indicate social distancing. We will keep each child's belongings separated from those of others to the extent possible.

Policies for social distancing and gatherings - The more people interact with others, and the longer the duration of that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. Students and staff are at highest risk when schools operate in traditional settings with full class sizes and in-person instructional activities and events. While there is clearly a significantly reduced risk of spread with virtual instruction, activities and events, this may not be a feasible option or appropriate for all students. When resuming in-person instruction in school buildings, our school will implement strategies to keep individuals apart. When in groups, individuals should be separated by at least six feet whenever possible. The CDC indicates the risk of virus transmission can be reduced by keeping cohorts of students together and not intermixing groups, although this option might be less feasible for secondary students. Additionally, CVS is prepared to close common areas where staff may gather or require staff to wear masks if the space does not allow for appropriate social distancing. For areas like cafeterias, auditoriums, gymnasiums and playgrounds, students may be divided into groups small enough to maintain social distancing and appropriate distancing marked with tape.

District use of personal protective equipment (PPE) - CVS recognizes that it will not be able to meet all of the criteria for social distancing on school transportation, classrooms, and main gathering areas. The CDC recommends the use of masks or cloth face coverings in many of these contexts. To the extent possible, the use of masks or face coverings for staff and students will be encouraged. Face coverings are particularly important when social distancing is difficult to accomplish, as it will be in many of our school settings. Although a face mask offers only limited protection for the individual wearing it, it does help prevent the spread of viral particles from asymptomatic individuals who do not know they have coronavirus. The district will not provide students with masks. The district will work with different agencies to assist parents obtain masks who can not afford masks for their children. All staff members will be supplied with two masks and one face shield to use. Teachers will not be required to wear masks while providing whole group instruction, but masks will be recommended during times of one on one instruction and when the teacher is out of their assigned classroom. Students will not be required to wear masks but are allowed to wear masks. However, if conditions within the district rise to the point that it is in the best interest of students and staff, the district may require students and staff members to wear a mask unless the student is under the age of 10 or has a medical condition which would preclude the student from wearing a mask. The following are CDC and school guidelines referencing masks:

- Common household materials used as masks can be effective in helping prevent the spread of COVID-19. Encourage employees to make or buy their own reusable face masks, or work with community volunteers to provide them to staff and students.
- Face coverings lose their purpose when the individual adjusts or otherwise touches the masks with their hands. As such, this may not be a viable option for elementary students and may be more appropriate for middle and high school students.
- Provide training on when use of PPE is necessary, how to apply and remove PPE safely, and how to properly dispose of or clean it.
- Be aware that hearing-impaired students may rely on lip-reading and be at a learning disadvantage if their teacher wears a mask.
- Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

- Recommended cloth face coverings are not N-95 masks. Those critical supplies should be reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders, as recommended by CDC guidance.
- Masks must not be distracting to other students. Masks must not contain pictures or words that reference alcohol, illicit drugs, or are intended to promote discrimination.

Promote culture of good hygiene practices – CVS will ensure the sufficient supply of other items necessary for mitigation efforts, such as hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and disinfectant wipes for classrooms, breakrooms and cafeterias. The district will ensure an ample supply of hand soap, paper towels and tissues within each building. Parents are encouraged to send students to school with PPE to help with mitigation efforts. The promotion of good hygiene practices including; coughing/sneezing etiquette, keeping hands away from the face and effectively washing their hands will be emphasized. Handwashing is critical in reducing exposure to coronavirus (or any virus, for that matter). Extra time will be provided during bathroom breaks, before entry to the building, before and after meals, before and after recess and between classes for students and staff to wash and/or sanitize their hands before transitioning to the next class or activity. A school culture of handwashing and hand sanitizing will be promoted and reinforced. Signs will be placed strategically throughout the building, such as above sinks or near the cafeteria, to encourage appropriate and periodic handwashing. In addition, signs will be placed in highly visible locations (e.g., entrances, restrooms) to promote protective measures such as handwashing, the use of masks and social distancing. CVS will utilize communication practices including, making regular announcements on PA systems and utilizing social media to share communications with students, staff and families.

School cleaning practices – CVS, along with facility maintenance, administration, and Watts Distributing will work together regarding the use of appropriate disinfectants. Cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces – such as doorknobs, bathrooms, countertops and handrails – at least once daily and between use as much as possible is essential to controlling the spread of the virus. A schedule for frequent wiping down of items with an appropriate cleaning solution such as: Door handles, faucets, light switches, desks, drinking fountains, computers or tablets and other shared items will be established. Where possible, reducing the sharing of school supplies will be implemented. Appropriate training to all staff, particularly janitorial staff, on improved cleaning routines will be provided.

Transportation - Transportation will be one of the most difficult obstacles to manage for the school year. Most models for social distancing on buses will not be viable. If parents are not comfortable with their child riding school transportation, it may be advisable for parents to transport their students to school if at all possible. This will allow more room on buses for those without other means of transportation. Parents should be prepared for an increased number of parent pickups, drop-offs and delays in student arrivals and departures and should adjust as necessary to ensure students are not tardy to school. School transportation protocols include:

- Opening school bus windows, whenever possible, to increase flow of fresh air.
- Require school bus drivers to attend in-service training before transporting students to ensure they understand new policies and procedures and how to effectively clean their buses.
- Include cleaning of high-use areas – including steering wheel, handles and seat backs – in pre and post-trip inspections.
- In the event of a rise in Covid-19 cases our district may require passengers to wear a mask while using school transportation

- Ensure transportation of students with disabilities or accommodations is in accordance with current Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and district policy.
- Bus drivers will be required to answer the School Questionnaire regarding health prior to boarding the bus at the beginning of each day.

School Meals - Flexibility provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has been critical in allowing creative delivery of food to students, CVS is committed to serving students breakfast and lunch each day. In the event the number of Covid-19 cases rise, meals may be served in classrooms rather than cafeterias. This would keep students from intermixing in an area where it may be difficult to social distance and there is an increased possibility for exposure and transmission of the virus. Students could pick up their lunch from the cafeteria and return to the classroom. In the event that school facilities are closed and a virtual platform is used for instruction, breakfast and lunch will be available at preset locations. As of July 8th, 2020 the USDA has agreed to school waivers to allow schools to provide breakfast and lunch to students who elect to utilize the virtual program or in the event of a school facility closure. However, the waiver is not as flexible as the summer waiver. Only students enrolled in PK-12th grade will be eligible for child nutrition services. In addition, only students eligible for a free lunch will receive the lunch for free. All other students will pay the reduced price or full price, depending on Free and Reduced Lunches eligibility. All CVS students receive a free breakfast, and this practice will continue. In order to ensure that all students are receiving the free and/or reduced (F&R) meal they are allowed, it is imperative that each parent fill out a new F&R application at the beginning of each school year.

Policies regarding school building use for non-school functions - Depending on the level of community spread within school district boundaries, CVS may consider closing buildings and other facilities to outside groups and activities to reduce the potential for spreading the virus. If outside groups are using the building, they will be charged by the school for appropriate cleaning and disinfecting after they leave. Existing agreements for the use of school facilities will be updated to include social distancing requirements, appropriate hygiene measures and cleaning and sanitizing requirements after the activity is complete. The school will work to ensure HVAC systems are working properly and increase the circulation of outdoor air as much as possible.

Positive case, or suspected case identified in the school – CVS will be prepared for the possibility that a student or staff member will test positive for COVID-19. Staff and families will need to follow the protocol designated in this document if they are exposed to COVID-19 or test positive for the virus. CVS has designated each specific building level principal as the person responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns and will be the point of contact with staff and families. The principal will contact the superintendent's office in the event of an active COVID-19 case within the building. In the event that a student or staff member tests positive for Covid-19 the superintendent will contact the Oklahoma State Department of Health and the local health department to begin the work with health officials on contact tracing.

If a staff member or student answers yes to one or more of the screening questions or begins exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day, they will be isolated, sent home immediately and encouraged to be tested. These individuals should not return until they have met CDC's criteria for being around others.

If a staff member or student has known close contact with an individual who has tested positive (e.g., someone in their household), they should stay home, self-monitor for symptoms and be tested. The individual should not return to the school until they have been tested and/or have completed a 14-day quarantine period.

If a staff member or student becomes symptomatic (Cough with no explanation, Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, Chills or repeated shaking with chills, Loss of taste or smell, or temperature equal to or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, CVS will follow these steps:

- Immediately isolate the individual if they are at school. Send the ill staff member home and call families to pick up sick children as quickly as possible. We will designate a room or area where an individual can be isolated if they cannot immediately leave the premises.
- All staff members will use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions when caring for sick people.
- CVS will not transport anyone with severe symptoms from COVID-19 to a healthcare facility in case of an emergency. The principal or designee will call 911 and request an ambulance.
- The superintendent or designee will contact the local county health department (918) 335-3005 first to report the case. If there is trouble reaching the county health department, the Oklahoma State Department of Health on-call epidemiologist at (405) 271- 4060 will be notified.
- The school will identify and close areas of the school building where the individual spent more than 30 minutes for the rest of the day if possible. Staff will disinfect the area at the end of the day with approved cleaners in accordance with CDC and Oklahoma State Department of Health guidelines.
- The school will work with health officials to determine if school closure is warranted and for additional measures the school must take to contain exposure.

Tiered response for potential school closures - CVS will use a tiered protocol for closure scenarios that may be needed based on local spread of COVID-19, which include short-term closures of a few days, mid-term closures of a few weeks, and/or longer term closures.

- The superintendent, in conjunction with the district administration team, the county and/or state health department, and the local board of education will determine the extent to which our school can safely provide person to person instruction within our facilities.
- In the event that CVS's campuses must be closed, instruction will still be provided to our students through our virtual learning platform. Teachers, and support staff will continue to work on site. Operations for child nutrition, counselling, custodial/ maintenance, and technology will continue. Food services will provide service through bagged meals at both the Ramona and Ochelata campuses.
- In the event of site closure, all staff members will still be required to report to work. Each employee will be screened prior to entrance into any school facility. Teachers will be required to stay within their room to accommodate social distancing. All staff will utilize masks and social distancing guidelines when not in their assigned room. No visitors, including relatives of staff members may enter the facilities when the campuses are not open for students.
- If schools are forced to close and move to distance learning, instruction will continue through Google Classroom and other virtual learning platforms. The district will provide additional hotspots within various locations throughout the district. Students will be allowed access to their school owned Chromebooks for distance learning. Students will be required to log a minimum of four hours per day to be recognized as "Present" for each school day. Any student not reaching the minimum re-

quired hours will be marked absent for each hour they are not logged in to instruction. Students not meeting the minimum hours for four consecutive days will be considered truant and will be referred to the Washington County Truancy Board to consider further action. Students will be required to complete assignments through Google Classroom in order to earn grades within each class.

Academic Growth

The unpredictability of COVID-19's infection trajectory means that our district has developed a plan for delivering instruction in three ways:

- Traditional (on-site delivery) – The CVS has planned for the majority of the school year, and possibly the entire year, to be on-site, as long as public health officials deem it safe to do so and our students, parents, and staff are prepared to implement appropriate health and safety measures.
- Distance learning (done remotely but as a continuation of learning that normally would take place on-site) – CVS will utilize a plan to offer distance learning, which can include online learning, with required student participation for the 2020-21 school year. The Distance Learning Plan will utilize the Google Classroom Platform for instruction and completion of assignments. Teachers may also utilize Google Meets, Zoom, and other distance learning programs to maintain student engagement during distance learning. This learning plan will be deployed in an emergency, such as a resurgence of COVID-19 or another circumstance in which students cannot receive on-site instruction in a school building.
- Blended learning (combines both on-site and distance learning) – Depending on the severity of the outbreak, and upon recommendation of the health department the district may choose to offer educational services through a blended model that utilizes both distance learning and on-site learning for at least a portion of the 2020-21 school year. A blended model may better accommodate social distancing by partially reopening school buildings to provide educational services.

The OSDE has emphasized that these considerations should be led by what is feasible, practical, acceptable and tailored to the needs of our communities. Keeping this in mind, CVS will utilize the options for instruction that include traditional on-site operations, modified and rolling closures and disruptions, and/or longer term distance learning. As of the publication of this document, CVS is expected to meet the statutory requirements of 180 days or 1,080 hours for the school year. By making contingency plans before the school year begins, the requirement for this mandate can be met. The CVS school board will be asked to consider adopting policies for contingency-based planning. These measures will include authorizing the district superintendent to make calendar adjustments as needed, ensuring equitable resource allocation to all students for distance learning and defining attendance and absence requirements for students. Attendance and absence requirements for staff will be conducted on a case by case level. Consider staggering the day's students are in school buildings. When using the blended model, CVS will stagger student attendance in buildings. Reducing the total number of people in a building at the same time could allow for enhanced social distancing through smaller class sizes and a reduced number of students on buses and in congregate areas. The following strategy was selected by the CVS community survey as the preferred method for organizing student schedules in the event of the necessity to limit on site instruction: Two-day rotation – Students report to school two full days a week, such as Tuesday and Thursday or Monday and Wednesday, and do distance learning for the remainder of the week.

This rotation may not be appropriate for students with disabilities, English learners or other students with significant needs. Our district will always be cognizant of students' physical and social-emotional needs, and families with multiple children, who might be impacted by a rotating calendar strategy.

Policies for virtual instruction - The goal of CVS is to plan for integration of school wide virtual learning days into the school curriculum for the 2020-21 school year. Given the expectation of short-term or long-term disruptions to on-site instruction as a result of COVID-19, CVS must be prepared to ensure the academic progress of our students, and their ability access academic content and instruction. In accordance, the following will be implemented into the Caney Valley Distance Learning Model:

- When the Washington County Covid-19 numbers are in the zero to low range, our school will participate in on-site instruction. Any time the Washington County Covid-19 numbers are in the moderate range the school will decide if a blended schedule will be necessary to perform the required instruction. If the numbers increase to the high range or the district determines it is not in the best interest of the district to bring students to campus, the district may proceed to utilizing the virtual platform for instruction.
- Notification for the method of instruction will be given through the district web site, facebook page, and the SOCS Caney Valley School app.
- Attendance will be calculated based on two criteria. The students' completion of assignment in the required time frame (90% of work completed prior to the due date), and communication with the teacher (At least one google meeting, and/or email with the teacher of record during the assignment period).
- Caney Valley will provide instructional technology and equipment, including devices and connectivity to centralized locations free of charge to all students to ensure access to virtual instruction.
- Equitable instruction will be provided for students where virtual learning is not appropriate or for those who do not have access to virtual resources. Instructional materials will be provided to students free of charge. Students will be counted in attendance if they turn in 90% of assignment on or before the date due, and have had communication with the teacher through email or telephone.
- All grades/courses are designed in a manner that facilitates and appropriately aligns with the Oklahoma Academic Standards. For the 2020-21 school year and beyond, teachers will focus on the Essential Standards for each grade level/subject. This will focus the intensity of instruction on what is needed for each student to be successful at the next level.

Student Attendance - Attendance is vital part of the school culture. Research has proven that students who miss extended amounts of school are less likely to be proficient in coursework, and less likely to graduation with their peers. If possible, students are encouraged to attend school in the traditional face to face format. However, CVS will provide the opportunity to students who are high risk or have family members who are high risk to not be penalized for the inability to attend physically. Attendance for students who choose the virtual platform will be calculated based on two criteria. The students' completion of assignment in the required time frame (90% of work completed prior to the due date), and communication with the teacher (At least one google meeting, and/or email with the teacher of record during the assignment period). Students who do not meet the attendance requirement will be considered absent unexcused. Unexcused absences contribute to truancy and may incur related truancy actions. Our district will work so that parents and students understand the importance of staying home when sick. CVS will now longer recognize perfect attendance as a school award due to changes in attendance requirements.

Past school policy allowed students with a fever to return to school 24 hours after the reduction of the fever. New guidance is requiring students and staff to stay home for three days after the reduction of the temperature below 100 degree Fahrenheit.