

READY FOR LEARNING

2022-2023

Arkansas School for the Deaf



Safe. Ready. Engaged.

A forward-thinking plan for opening school.

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INTRODUCTION

As we consider the 2022-2023 school year, our reality in Arkansas has more normalized. While COVID cases has significantly decreased, there are still daily cases being reported in Arkansas. As we begin to return to a more comfortable routine, we also come with more knowledge in how to keep each other safe from many illnesses.

Per the ADE March 14, 2022 COVID guidelines, as knowledge and resources have evolved during the Pandemic, the response to COVID-19 has been modified to balance the educational and physical well-being in public schools. Contact tracing and quarantines for students who are identified as probable close contacts remain best practice as mitigation strategies, but there is no directive for districts to do so. Isolation is still important for individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or for those who are symptomatic.

As updated information and guidance is made available by the Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Department of Health, the teachers at Arkansas School for the Deaf will continue to adapt quickly to the new reality - leading the way in demonstrating creativity, dedication, and above all, concern for our students' wellbeing.

While the new school year brings another set of unanticipated challenges, I assure you, we will focus on teaching and learning in the classroom. We love our students and the traditions and experiences that bring us all together each year.

Our plan took a village to create, and it will take a village to implement. We are all in this together to return to learning SAFE, READY and ENGAGED.

Dr. Janet Dickinson

Superintendent



KEEPING EVERYONE SAFE

When opening school, we continue to do everything we can to keep our students, staff, and families safe.



We have researched extensively the guidance of the most highly respected entities, including:

1. *Arkansas Department of Health*
2. *Arkansas Department of Education*
3. *CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools*

OUR 2022-2023 PLAN IS ALIGNED WITH THE BEST THINKING IN SAFETY FOR SCHOOLS. BASED ON A REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH, THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS CONTINUE TO BE IMPORTANT:

1. Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces, as often as possible
2. Wash Hands, as often as possible
3. Social Distance & Reduce Contact in Transitions – to the greatest extent possible
4. Follow the Stoplight System for Masks
5. Use Outdoor Spaces - as often as possible



SCHOOL CALENDAR & SCHEDULE

For the 2022-2023 School Year, we will follow a traditional schedule.

ASD will have classes on campus from Monday – Friday. Students will travel to school on **Sunday**. All students will ride the BUS home on **FRIDAY** afternoon.

TEACHING & LEARNING

At ASD, we believe deaf and hard of hearing children learn best in the classroom. Therefore, our 2022-2023 Ready for Learning Plan is based on students returning to campus for on-site instruction. However, in the case of a COVID outbreak, ASD classes will be accessible to students who are quarantined at home.

During the pandemic, we learned how to maximize learning through technology. We also learned the value of giving students access to online learning opportunities. ASD's instructional approach will carry forward the lessons learned during the pandemic. We will continue to use technology to engage and enhance learning for our students.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO PARENTS



1. BEFORE SENDING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL

- Look for signs of ILLNESS.
- KEEP them home when they are sick.

2. BE PREPARED TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD- QUICKLY

- Make sure the school has your BEST CONTACT information.
- If your child becomes ill at school, come IMMEDIATELY to pick up your child.
- Please know that ASD will NOT be able to transport sick students home for you.

GENERAL INFORMATION



VACCINATIONS

Covid-19 vaccines are the most effective strategy to protect people from getting sick and to reduce the risk of people spreading covid-19. Students who are ages 5 and older are now eligible to receive the vaccination. If you need any information regarding covid-19 vaccines contact health services nursing staff at 501-772-6008.

FACIAL COVERINGS

Wearing cloth face coverings has been shown to be one of the most effective ways to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. At ASD, we follow the Stoplight System. (See page 9). Students and staff will continue to wear masks in the health center.

SOCIAL DISTANCING & OTHER MEASURES TO MINIMIZE CONTACT

To prevent the spread of the coronavirus, and other illnesses, ASD staff and students are encouraged to stay THREE feet apart. For common areas, the following measures will be in place:

WASHING HANDS

According to the CDC guidelines, regular handwashing is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of germs to others. At ASD, all staff, and students will be encouraged to wash their hands at the following times:



- Arrival to the facility and after breaks
- Before and after eating, helping feed children, and preparing food or drinks
- Coming in contact with bodily fluid, using the restroom or helping a student
- After playing outdoors
- After being in a public place and touching surfaces frequently touched by other people
- Before touching eyes, nose, or mouth

Ventilation/Air Circulation

Evidence suggests that improved air circulation is beneficial in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Whenever possible, windows will be opened to improve air flow by allowing outside air to circulate in the building, and thereby lower the concentration of viral particles.

COVID-19 Exposure & Testing

How will I be Informed of Possible Exposure at ASD:

Through contact tracing, our nursing staff, in collaboration with Arkansas Department of Education and Arkansas Department of Health will assess and inform all persons who may be at risk. If there is a possibility that a student has been exposed to COVID-19, the child's parents will be notified directly.

What Happens If a Student or Staff Member Has Been In Close Contact With Someone Outside of ASD Who Tested Positive For COVID-19?

- Students and staff members will be notified if they have been identified as probable close contact. They will be encouraged to monitor for symptoms. They are not required to be quarantined.

For questions, call or text our Director of Health Services, Vicki Crump at: 501-658-0971.

What Happens If A Student or Staff Member Has COVID-19 Symptoms

If a student or staff member has a temperature higher than 100.4 or develops COVID-19 symptoms, they will not be able to stay at ASD. Instead, they will be referred for evaluation by their healthcare provider and possible testing.

For students staying in the dorm, it is critical that we are able to quickly address any possible exposure to protect our students and staff. Students will be referred to our school doctor at Children's Hospital for evaluation, and possible COVID19 testing. For dorm students, parents will sign a permission form for COVID19 testing during the registration process. If the school physician, deems COVID-19 testing is necessary, ASD Nursing Staff is trained through the Department of Health to administer a rapid response test on campus.

Students or staff that test POSITIVE for COVID will need to isolate at home for at least 5 days. If there are no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can return to school.

After testing positive, staff and students are encouraged to continue to wear a mask around others through the 10th day of isolation at school. If person has a fever, they will need to continue to stay home for 24 hours after fever has resolved without fever reducing agents.

Returning to School after Testing for COVID-19

A student or staff member with COVID-19 symptoms will need to be tested.

- If NEGATIVE, the test results will have to be conveyed to Vicki Crump, Director of ASD Health
- If POSITIVE for COVID-19, the student or staff member will be isolated for 5 days.



STOPLIGHT SYSTEM

- An Approach for Masks in Schools -

Earlier this week, the Board of Trustees meeting adopted the **Stoplight Mask System** for ASD. This system has been adopted by other schools across the nation. For a description, see below:

Stoplight System:

- **RED:** A red banner indicates that ASD is at a substantial or high risk of community transmission. Generally this would mean that multiple COVID cases have been identified in a building/department with significant exposure to staff and students.
 - Face masks will be required during the school day in indoor spaces and on all student buses, and the masks will be strongly encouraged at extracurricular events and outside sporting activities.
- **YELLOW:** A yellow banner indicates that ASD is at a moderate risk of community transmission. Generally this would mean that an isolated case has been identified in a building/department with limited exposure to staff and students.
 - Masks will be strongly encouraged (but not required) during the school day, on buses and at extracurricular events.
- **GREEN:** A green banner indicates that ASD is at a low-risk. Generally, this would mean that no COVID cases have been identified in a building/department.
 - Face masks will be optional.

The stoplight level will be determined by the Superintendent in consultation with Vicki Crump, Director of Health Services. It will be communicated through our Carousel tv systems across campus, as well as through other means – such as school messenger.

Please note the following:

1. Students need to bring a mask to school every day.
2. Vaccination clinics will continue to be offered for staff and students
3. Masks will be required in the Infirmary
4. All other precautions, including social distancing and cleaning, will continue to be followed.



SCHOOL
NURSE



HEALTH SERVICES

CONTACT INFORMATION

VICKI CRUMP, RN

Director of ASD's Health Services

Phone (Text or Voice): 501-658-0971

Health Services goal for ASD's "Ready for Learning" Plan is to keep students and staff healthy and safe during this pandemic.

ASD Health Services adheres to COVID 19 guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Arkansas Department of Health, and the Arkansas Department of Education. Following these basic principles can help keep our students, teachers, and staff safe at school and help stop the spread of this disease.

New Home for Health Center:

This year, our nurses have moved to a beautiful newly renovated infirmary on the campus of the School for the Blind.

PPE in Health Services

- Health Services staff will utilize PPE per CDC and ADH guidelines. When providing direct care, the school nurse will wear the required PPE when performing procedures. (N-95 masks, gloves, gowns, etc)
- Everyone entering Health Services must be wearing a mask and use hand sanitizer.

What Happens When A Student Becomes Sick

1. ASD Staff will notify health services immediately of any students who become ill, or any absences of students due to any suspected illness relating to COVID-19.
2. The student will be evaluated by our Health Services Team for COVID-19 symptoms.

3. If the student presents with symptoms of COVID-19 symptoms, the school's physician, Dr. Eduardo Ochoa, will be notified for direction to perform a rapid response COVID-19 test on campus.
4. Parents will be notified.
5. TESTING & CARE

DAY STUDENTS:

- Parents will come to the school for immediate pick-up.
- They will be encouraged to take the student for COVID-19 testing or have test performed at ASD.
- Student must be cleared by a physician before returning to school.

DORM STUDENTS:

- Dorm students will have a rapid response COVID-19 testing administered at ASD (*Parents will have given permission during the registration process*)
- After testing results, students will return to ASD isolation suite until picked up by parent/guardian.
- All meals for students in isolation will be delivered to Shibley Hall by cafeteria staff.

Training

Our Director of Health Services will follow the Department of Health guidelines for a positive case of COVID-19 in the school. Since our ASD Nurses have been trained in contact tracing by John Hopkins, they will be asked to assist in contact tracing.