

SMITH-GREEN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
COVID-19 RE-OPENING PLAN
2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR



With input from the CDC, Indiana Department of Health, guidance from IDOE, and in conversation with both the Whitley and Noble County Health Departments, Smith-Green Community Schools has created the following plan for the re-opening of Smith-Green Community Schools for the Fall semester 2021. It is understood that due to the continuously changing facts and guidance regarding COVID-19, this document may be adjusted and updated on a regular basis in response to current information and guidance.

By approving this plan, the Smith-Green Community Schools Board of School Trustees gives the Superintendent the authority to modify and amend this plan as reasonably necessitated by orders, laws, or other directives enacted or otherwise issued by local, state, and federal governmental authorities or officials.

Approved by the SGCS Board of School Trustees on July 26, 2021

Educational Operations

1. Calendar: SGCS will open for the fall semester on August 11, 2021 for students, with organizational day for teachers on August 9th and 10th, 2021, pursuant to the 2021-2022 school calendar that was previously approved by the SGCS school board. All classes will be in session on August 11, 2021 pursuant to student schedules.
2. Smith-Green Community Schools will operate a fully in-person schedule for the 2021-22 school year.
3. Smith-Green Community Schools will provide digital learning options for students who have a medical situation that prevents them from attending in-person. If a parent or guardian wishes to explore this option for their student, verification from an appropriate medical provider that the student is unable to attend school in person will be required.
4. Visitors to the Smith-Green Community Schools campus will be permitted, in accordance with normal operating procedures for each building or facility. Any visitors who feel ill, or who are displaying symptoms of COVID-19 should not enter any school facility.

Screening

1. Each student/parent or staff member shall be personally responsible to self-screen their own physical condition. Any student or staff member who feels ill or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend school.
2. If a student or staff member attends school and thereafter appears to be showing symptoms of COVID-19, they should report to the school nurse who may quarantine the individual if appropriate. If a quarantine is deemed to be necessary, the nurse or their staff will contact a parent or guardian to pick up the student, or send the staff person home. Once a student or employee is removed from the school environment, the individual will be permitted to return once they meet the requirements established by the Indiana Department of Health.
3. When appropriate, the school will inquire concerning COVID-19 symptoms for employees and students, including:
 - a. If a parent tells the school that a student is ill, the school will ask the parent whether the student is exhibiting symptoms of COVID -19.
 - b. If an employee calls in sick or appears ill, the school will inquire whether the employee is experiencing COVID -19 symptoms.
 - c. If a person is ill, the school may make inquiries about the symptoms exhibited. The school may exclude the person from school property if deemed appropriate; the individual will be permitted to return in accordance with guidance established by the Indiana Department of Health.
4. If a student or employee has recently had close contact with a person with a confirmed case of COVID -19, the school may exclude the person from the school building and recommend that they self-quarantine in accordance with the guidance provided from the Indiana Department of Health.
5. Per the current guidance provided by the CDC and Indiana Department of Health, an individual will not be required to quarantine when identified as a close contact if the individual has been fully vaccinated for COVID-19, or if the individual has recovered from a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the past 90 days.
6. The most up-to-date list of COVID-19 symptoms and quarantine requirements established by the CDC and IDOH can be found on the SGCS website, and also by visiting <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/2400.htm>.

Masks and Face Coverings

For the 2021-22 school year, the wearing of masks or other face coverings will be optional on the Smith-Green Community Schools campus. Individuals who have not yet been fully vaccinated for COVID-19 are strongly encouraged by the CDC and the Indiana Department of Health to wear a mask or face covering while in public spaces.

Currently, masks are still required on all school buses within the United States, per the CDC's federal health order. Once this order is revised or rescinded, mask use on SGCS school buses will be optional.

Physical distancing

It shall be the policy of SGCS to provide as much physical distancing as is possible in classrooms, hallways, cafeterias and at other school facilities. The recommended six feet may not be possible in many instances. At the recommendation of the Indiana Department of Health, classrooms shall be set up so that students are facing one direction whenever possible.

Student and Staff Illnesses

1. Students who are ill with Coronavirus, have a COVID -19 diagnosis, or who are ordered into quarantine by a physician, County Health Department, or SGCS Nurse clinic staff shall have excused absences. During the quarantine period the student shall be provided with learning opportunities when possible, and will have opportunities to make up all missed work upon their return to school.
2. Under Indiana Code, local health officers have the authority to order the closing of schools and forbid public gatherings and events when considered necessary to prevent and stop epidemics. Local health officers also have the authority to impose quarantines and exclude students from school in response to serious communicable diseases. As such, the administration of SGCS may require quarantines of staff and/or students, and may also shut down buildings, busses, or other facilities upon the recommendation or guidance of the Noble or Whitley County health department or the Indiana Department of Education, for such time as is appropriate for the protection of the community.

Bus Transportation

1. Per the current federal CDC order, all passengers on school buses in the United States are required to wear masks at all times on the bus. If this order is revised or removed, mask use on school buses at SGCS will be optional.
2. Assigned seats will be required as part of all SGCS bus transportation, as per regular operating procedures. Assigned seating allows for later review of where individuals were seated in the event of the need to contact trace due to a confirmed case of COVID-19.
3. Buses shall be sanitized daily after use.

Facilities

1. Additional cleaning and sanitizing of SGCS facilities will occur, in an effort to mitigate the spread of illness. This may include:
 - a. Additional purchases of cleaning supplies and equipment.
 - b. Consideration of staffing needs to effectively clean and sanitize all facilities.
 - c. Frequent sanitizing of high-touch surfaces.
 - d. Additional cleaning materials available for teacher use in classrooms.
 - e. Increased access to hand sanitizing stations for staff and students.
2. The rental of SGCS facilities by outside groups will be permitted. Any group who rents SGCS facilities may be required to provide a written plan that demonstrates how they will take reasonable steps to follow CDC and IDOH guidelines in regard to the mitigation of COVID-19.

Sanitation Issues

1. Water fountains will be disabled until further notice. Water bottle filling stations have been installed in various locations through the school building, which are available for student and staff use at any time. Students or staff needing hydration shall be responsible to provide their own water bottle, which shall not be shared with other persons. Students are permitted to keep a personal water bottle with them during the school day.
2. Hand sanitizers shall be available at all entry doors, at the cafeteria, and throughout the building. All persons should use hand sanitizers at the following times:
 - a. Upon entering the building in the morning.
 - b. Upon entering and exiting a classroom.
 - c. Before eating.
 - d. After using a restroom.
 - e. After blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing; and
 - f. After using shared equipment.

Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular Activities

All extra and co-curricular activities will develop COVID-19 mitigation plans to align with the recommendations of the IDOE, their professional organizations, and state and local health officials. These plans will be revised as necessary to ensure alignment with the current recommendations of these organizations.