

USD #343 Education Plan for 2021-22 School Year

Classroom Education: The top priority of USD #343 during the COVID-19 pandemic is to provide in-person, high quality instruction to all students as much as possible. Therefore, USD #343 will begin the school year with in-person learning at all attendance centers. All classrooms will maintain seating charts to be used for contact tracing if needed. Cohort groups of students should be used when possible. Schools are encouraged to use outdoor spaces for instructional purposes when possible.

Masks: As of June 1, 2021, USD #343 removed the mask mandate based on vaccination rates and infection rates for the school. During the 2021 summer programs, COVID-19 testing was used to monitor the presence of COVID-19 in participating individuals. Only one positive COVID-19 case occurred during our summer programs, however the recent surge of the Delta variant in surrounding communities is of concern. ***Masks are highly recommended for all individuals while inside of the school building or district facilities.** This recommendation may be altered if positive COVID-19 numbers increase in our community and/or school.

Reasonable safety measures will be in-place and may include, but may not be limited to, cleaning and sanitization plans, use of physical safeguards and barriers, and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Exceptions to any requirements may be granted as required by law, state, county, and/or local health officials, and on a case-by-case basis. We will continue to monitor national, state, and local government and health agency mandates, guidance, and recommendations as well.

USD #343 will continue to train students and staff in the proper wearing of personal protective equipment as needed, and we will post signage outlining the proper wearing of personal protective equipment as needed.

Remote/Virtual Learning: All public schools in Kansas are now limited to no more than 40 total hours of remote learning in a school year. This limit is outlined in Kansas House Bill 2134. Therefore, USD #343 will not use a plan that involves hybrid education, (combined in-class and at-home instruction). USD #343 students have the option of a full-time virtual school. This program will be provided through the Greenbush Service Center in cooperation with USD #343. Students choosing the virtual school option are not eligible to participate in USD #343 extracurricular activities. Parents interested in this option should contact the building principal.

Vaccinations: USD #343 encourages all staff and students eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine to be vaccinated prior to the start of school or as soon as possible. Our District will participate and partner with vaccination efforts in accordance with State and federal law for staff and eligible student groups. USD #343 will not refuse, withhold from, or deny a person any services, goods, facilities, advantages, privileges, licensing, educational opportunities, health care access, or employment opportunities based on the person's COVID-19 vaccination status. ***As previously mentioned, masking requirements for unvaccinated and/or vaccinated individuals may change due to local COVID-19 data.**

Social Distancing: Where possible, social distancing practices will be utilized. Efforts will be made to maintain classroom seating with a minimum of 3 feet of social distancing between students and between students and staff for the 2021-2022 school year. Considerations will be made to establish cohorts and grouping of students if needed.

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette: Handwashing and respiratory etiquette will continue to be taught to students with emphasis and practice protocols rehearsed more frequently in the primary

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grade levels. Signage will continue to be posted throughout our buildings as reminders of handwashing and respiratory etiquette. In addition, hand sanitizing stations and liquids will continue to be made available for use in all classrooms.

Playground and Recess: Masks do not need to be worn when outdoors. All playground equipment will be available for use. Staff and students should wash or sanitize their hands before and after recess.

Facilities: The custodial staff have been and will continue to follow specific cleaning protocols and procedures. We will continue to consider assignments/reassignments to applicable shifts in order to continually clean high traffic and high contact surfaces. Our district will continue to use cleaning solutions that are rated to eliminate the COVID-19 virus. We will continue to monitor ventilation efficiency and effectiveness for opportunities to continually improve air quality.

Contact tracing/quarantine: The USD #343 nursing staff will complete all contact tracing documentation and efforts to determine close contacts. The nursing staff will continue to work with school administration and will contact individuals who have been in close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID with a recommendation that those individuals follow current quarantine/self-isolation guidelines and recommendations. Our nursing staff will collaborate with both Jefferson and Douglas County health departments regarding current protocols and procedures regarding COVID-19 isolation and quarantine. Be advised that county isolation and quarantine requirements are determined and enforced by county health officials, not USD #343.

Close Contact Determination: Anyone who is not fully vaccinated and who is within 6 ft. of an infected individual for longer than 10 minutes is currently considered to be a close contact. Anyone who is not fully vaccinated and lives within the household of an infected individual is considered a close contact by health department guidelines. The typical quarantine time is 10 days following the last exposure from a positive individual. As mentioned, quarantine time is determined by your local health department. Fully vaccinated individuals are exempt from quarantine, unless they are exhibiting symptoms.

Communication of Cases: Information containing the number of positive COVID-19 cases and the number of quarantines will be posted on the District website under the COVID-19 tab. This information will be disaggregated by building. The information will be updated weekly. Parents and staff members will be notified in any instance in which they are directly involved as being a positive case or a close contact. USD #343 will collaborate with county health departments regarding this information.

COVID Screening and Testing: The USD #343 nursing staff will continue to monitor for symptoms, trends, and clusters, and request that students and staff seek medical services as appropriate. We encourage students and staff members to stay home if they are exhibiting symptoms that are related to COVID-19. USD #343 does have COVID-19 tests available for students and staff. Students, staff, and community members can also access COVID-19 diagnostic or screening tests through a variety of community partners and through the tests we have available within the district. ***KDHE will allow students and staff who are close contacts to remain in school and participate in extra-curricular activities if a negative COVID-19 test is daily during the quarantine period. Federal funding is available through KDHE to pay for staffing, supplies, equipment and other needed**

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resources. KDHE call this procedure “test to stay and test to play.” This would be an “opt-in” process and not a requirement.

Accommodations for children with disabilities: Our district will provide reasonable, necessary, and appropriate accommodations to its policies and practices for students with disabilities as determined by individual student needs and in accordance with an individual’s documented accommodations and/or individualized education plan (IEP). Parents or guardians of students requiring accommodations should contact the applicable building administrator(s) to request information on plans for students with disabilities

Coordination with State and local health officials: USD #343 personnel currently participate, and will continue to participate, with both Jefferson and Douglas County health departments and/or agencies on a frequent basis to review data, procedures, and determine next steps as needed.

Students' and staff social, emotional, mental health: USD #343 staff will monitor and address the social and emotional learning needs of our students. We will continue to partner with social workers and local mental health services with the goal of helping students and families overcome obstacles with connecting to school. USD #343 has provided staff with opportunities for social and emotional supports through our district’s participation with an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider.

Transportation: Department of Health and Human Service requires passengers and drivers to wear a mask on school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems, subject to the exclusions and exemptions in CDC’s order. Seating charts will be required for passengers due to the possibility of contact tracing. All vehicles used to transport students will be regularly cleaned, disinfected and sanitized.

Food Health services: Free meals will be made available for all eligible students during the 2021-2022 school year. Families may also be in contact with their child’s school for any other health or food service needs. The Food Service department will clean and sanitize all carts, utensils, and food surfaces. At this time, guests are not allowed to join students for meals.

Use of District Facilities: The use of district facilities will be considered on a weekly basis. This determination will be made by the principal of the appropriate building. Approval will depend on the currently COVID-19 data provided to the building/district. All district guidelines, including current masking policies will apply to individuals or groups using the facility. Outdoor facility use requests are currently allowed. These requests can also be made through the building principal.