

Van-Far R1 School District

COVID-19 Guidelines and Protocols



2020-2021 Regular School Year

The guidelines and protocols outlined in this document are subject to revision as needed to reflect local, state, and federal guidance.

Guidelines and protocols may also be revised as appropriate to reflect the needs of local conditions.

Commentary regarding COVID-19 guidelines and protocols

- The Van-Far R1 School District is committed to providing a quality education to all students, while also ensuring their safety and well-being.
- The COVID-19 guidelines developed and presented below follow all applicable local, state, and federal guidelines and incorporate many best practices advocated by school associations and groups.
- Parents/guardians with questions or concerns are asked to call the Van-Far R1 School District at 573-594-6111 to discuss and address those concerns.

General information for students and faculty/staff

- Students and faculty have the option of wearing protective masks.
 - Homemade masks are acceptable but must meet school dress code guidelines.
 - Student requests for masks are subject to approval from parents/guardians.
 - Masks must be in clean, sanitary condition.
 - Students may not share masks, or provide masks to other students at school.
- Students will be guided to wash hands multiple times per day.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided at multiple locations throughout buildings/buses.
- Drinking fountains will be removed from service, except for those with bottle filling capabilities.
 - Students may bring personal water bottles from home but bottles must be a clear bottle with a solid cap.
- Social distancing will be observed to the extent possible by all faculty, staff, and students. Social distancing is more achievable in hallways, outdoor areas, larger facilities.
- Student activities and athletics will be conducted as usual to the extent they are permissible under local, state, and federal guidance.
- Students with diagnosed medical conditions that are related to COVID-19 susceptibility, or that request virtual instruction for other reasons, will be provided opportunities for distance learning and other accommodations as appropriate and practicable.
- Faculty/staff with diagnosed medical conditions that are related to COVID-19 susceptibility will be provided accommodations as appropriate and practicable.

Understanding and recognizing COVID-19

- Faculty and staff will be trained to recognize symptoms that may be associated with COVID-19. Training will include, but not be limited to, online modules provided by the Missouri United School Insurance Council. The CDC lists the following as possible symptoms of COVID-19
 - A fever of 100 degrees or higher.
 - Cough.
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills.
 - Muscle pain.
 - Headache.
 - Sore throat.
 - Newly emerged loss of taste or smell.

General health information for students and faculty/staff

- Parents and students, as well as staff members, are encouraged to self-screen for potential COVID-19 symptoms before coming to school. **Anyone with symptoms of illness should stay home.**
- Students at school who display health symptoms that could suggest COVID-19 concerns will be checked by the nurse. If evaluation by the nurse suggests potential for COVID-19 infection, the student will be placed in a separate room near the nurse's office, and masked (if appropriate for health) until picked up by a parent/guardian.
- Students with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will be sent home.
- A student excluded from the school environment due to COVID-19 concerns may return to school in accordance with guidelines provided by the health department. Please understand that guidelines may change over time. At the time of this publication, the guidelines are as follows:
 - Students not tested for COVID-19 may return if the following conditions are met:
 - No fever for 72 hours without use of medicine that reduces fever.
Students will be required to report to the nurse for a temperature screen upon their return.
 - Other symptoms have improved (cough or shortness of breath).
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
 - Students with symptoms, but that tested negative for COVID-19, may return if the following conditions are met:
 - No fever without use of medicine that reduces fever.
 - Other symptoms have improved (cough or shortness of breath).

- They have received 2 negative COVID-19 tests in a row, with at least 24 hours between tests.
- Students that have tested positive for COVID-19 may return if the following conditions are met:
 - 14 days have passed without symptoms.
 - They have received 2 negative COVID-19 tests in a row, with at least 24 hours between tests.
 - Released and given written approval to return by a healthcare provider.
- Other scenarios regarding student health will be handled according to guidance and consultation from the Audrain County Health Department.

Transportation information

- **Parents/guardians are encouraged to drop students off at school instead of using bus service.** Drop-off and pick-up systems will be organized to ensure social distancing to the greatest extent possible.
- Students riding the bus, from the same household, will be required to sit together, filling from back to front (when possible and appropriate).
- Drop offs and pick ups will be limited to registered locations.
- Buses will be sanitized each day.
- Hand sanitizer will be available on school buses.
- Drivers are encouraged to use personal protective equipment (PPE), such as masks, throughout routes. Other protective measures may be taken, such as clear dividers between driver and first seat.
- Students with diagnosed medical conditions that are related to COVID-19 susceptibility will be provided other transportation accommodations as appropriate and practicable.

Arrival at school

- PK-6 students will go directly to classrooms upon arrival. Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria; seating capacity will be expanded by allowing students to eat breakfast in designated areas outside the cafeteria.
- 7-12 students may go through the breakfast line using appropriate social distancing. Only students eating breakfast will be allowed in the cafeteria.
- 7-12 students will report directly to classrooms as they arrive or after finishing breakfast. Students will not be allowed to congregate in hallways or other areas.
- Parents/visitors will be permitted to visit building offices, but will not have access to any other areas in the building. Parents/visitors will be screened for COVID-19 related symptoms prior to entry.

During the school day

- PK-6 students will remain with their class all day. Cooperative activities with other classrooms will be limited.
- PK-6 students will remain with their class in designated areas during recess.
- Sharing of student supplies (art, other) will be minimized and/or eliminated. Students may be asked to bring personal supplies (art boxes with supplies, etc.).
- Equipment used by more than one student will be sanitized between uses.
- Dressing out for physical education will be optional, although appropriate footwear for activities will be required.
- No field trips, assemblies, or visiting presenters will be allowed at this time.
- Cadet teaching will be allowed in the JH/HS building, but not at elementary schools.
- Teachers will be expected to wear a mask when working within 6 feet of students.

At lunch

- Lunch shifts will be staggered as possible to minimize the number of students gathered.
- Lunch shifts may be added in order to minimize the number of students gathered.
- All lunches will be plated or boxed. Self-serve options (salad bar, etc.) will not be available.
- PK-6 students will eat lunch with their class.
- JH and HS students may be assigned to eat in designated areas outside the cafeteria in order to provide as much social distancing as possible.
- All tables will be cleaned thoroughly between uses.

Other information

- Regular school year attendance policies will be adjusted in order to remove any incentive for students to attend school while sick.

MSHSAA Athletics/Activities:

- District will follow as closely as possible to guidance released by MSHSAA
 - [https://www.mshsaa.org/resources/PDF/2020-2021 MSHSAA Guidelines-Recommendations for Opening Sports and Activities.pdf](https://www.mshsaa.org/resources/PDF/2020-2021%20MSHSAA%20Guidelines-Recommendations%20for%20Opening%20Sports%20and%20Activities.pdf)

Guidelines and protocols considered but **NOT ADOPTED**

- Temperature screenings
 - Many young people are asymptomatic and may not run a fever with COVID-19. Temperature screenings are not considered determinate and are not advised by the local health department.
- Plastic shields placed on tables/desks
 - Hygiene, especially with younger students, is a major concern.
 - Behavior issues (throwing items over the shield, etc.) are a concern.
- Staggered hallway passing times for JH and HS students
 - Changing classes already requires co-mingling of students. Different passing times would provide minimal benefit.
- Students attending school on alternate days, alternate times, staggered school start times.
 - Creates significant hardship for families, especially those with younger children, or who are economically disadvantaged.
 - Limited benefit is gained if students still co-mingle at activities, athletics, or in social occasions.
- Limiting buses to one student per seat, or limiting students to every other seat
 - The rural nature of the school district makes it necessary for many bus routes to be quite long. It is very difficult to run second loads, or double routes, when bus routes are 45 minutes or longer.
 - This protocol reduces bus capacity by 50% or more and the district is unable to provide the buses and drivers necessary to implement.