

Strain-Japan R-XVI School District

Safe Return to School Plan



**Stand
with
Strain!**

**Safe Return to
School Plan
2021-2022
Strain-Japn R-XVI**

If you require this document in a different language, please contact the school office. Si necesita este documento en otro idioma, comuníquese con la oficina de la escuela.

2021-2022 School Year

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

Guidelines and protocols may also be revised as appropriate to reflect changes in conditions of the virus as it progresses.

The Strain-Japan R-XVI Board of Education will continually evaluate guidance from all agencies and consult with the Franklin County Health Department to ensure student and staff safety.

This plan will be evaluated every 6 months or more often as needed.

The district will consult the following stakeholder groups in the planning and the preparation of this plan

- Teachers and other staff
 - District Families
 - Students
- Board of Education

COVID-19 Guidelines & Protocols

- The safety and well-being of Strain-Japan R-XVI students and staff is our top priority in all decisions related to conducting school and providing quality education to all students we serve.
- The COVID-19 guidelines developed and presented below follow all applicable local, state, and federal guidelines and incorporate many best practices recommended by DHSS, CDC, and the Franklin County Health Department.

- The content in this document will be updated as additional guidance is provided by the state, local, and federal authorities. Please refer to this document often to stay informed about the most current guidelines and protocols our district will be following.

Vaccination

Covid-19 vaccination is the leading mitigation strategy to prevent individuals from getting infected by the virus and transmitting it to others. Achieving high levels of COVID-19 vaccination among eligible students and teachers, staff, and household members is one of the most critical strategies to help schools safely resume full operations. The available Covid-19 vaccines in the U.S. are safe and highly effective at preventing infection.

Masks

- All students and staff can wear masks during the school day, but it is not required.
- While it is not required, it is highly recommended that students wear masks when they are not able to maintain social distancing.
- The CDC has ordered that masks must be worn on the school bus.
- Masks should be cleaned frequently for sanitation purposes.

Close Contact Guidance

Guidance for Assessing Covid-19 Exposures and Defining Close-Contacts in a School Setting

The following guidance is based on the current recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Link to the CDC guidance documents used as references are available in the references section noted below. It is important to note that data to inform the definition of close contacts

are limited and are insufficient to precisely define the duration and time that constitutes a prolonged exposure. In addition, there will be situations where the possible exposures do not fit clearly into an obvious risk category. The final determination of close contact is up to the discretion of the Local Public Health Agency (LPHA) based on the findings of the case investigation and contact tracing conducted in collaboration with the school.

Defining Close Contacts:

The CDC defines a close contact to COVID-19 as an individual who has had close contact (within 3 feet) for more than 15 minutes. Brief interactions are less likely to result in transmission; however, symptoms and the type of interaction remain important. Factors to consider when defining close contacts may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The proximity of the case to possible contacts
- The duration of exposure (e.g., longer exposure time likely increases exposure risk)
- The symptoms of the case at time of exposure (e.g., coughing likely increases exposure risk)
- Type of interaction and/or activities (e.m., infected person coughs or sneezes directly into the face of an individual, direct physical contact (hugging or through sports/recess, ect.), shared eating or drinking utensils)

Research indicates that wearing masks may help those who are infected from spreading the infection to others. However, there is less information regarding whether masks offer protection for a contact exposed to a symptomatic or asymptomatic patient. Therefore, the determination of close contact should be made primarily on the basis of the CDC guidance (see above, which does not provide an exception for two individual wearing masks) with consideration of other case specific clinical factors in mind.

Isolation

Students, teachers, and staff who test positive or are symptomatic close contacts to a case should self-isolate and not return to school until the following criteria are met:

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared and
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
- COVID-19 symptoms have improved (for example, cough, shortness of breath)

Note that these recommendations do not apply to persons with severe COVID-19, who usually should be hospitalized, or with severely weakened immune systems (immunocompromised) because those persons are too sick to attend school. For those symptomatic exposed contacts, we may suggest a consult with the LPHA, if alternative diagnosis was established. For additional information see the CDC website for reference.

Alternative Methods of Instruction

- If school is closed for inclement weather or for any reason related to COVID-19, the district will follow the AMI plan.
- If a student is in quarantine by the Franklin County Health Department, students will be able to continue learning as stated in the AMI plan.
- Students receiving services through an Individual Education Plan or a 504 plan will continue to receive services through virtual means for the duration of their quarantine. Each quarantine situation will be evaluated and student needs addressed on an individual basis.

Good Hand Hygiene

Students will be encouraged to

- Wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided throughout the building.

Drinking Fountains

- Drinking fountains will be turned off.
- A bottle filling station is accessible.
- Students should bring a water bottle and clean it regularly.

Social Distancing

- It is recommended that students maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms.
- Social distancing will be observed to the extent possible by all faculty, staff, and students. Social distancing is more achievable in outdoor areas and larger facilities.
- Visual markers will be used to assist students and staff with social distancing.
- Teachers are encouraged to conduct class in our outdoor classroom or outside as much as is possible.
- Building extra outdoor playtime in your schedule is also encouraged.
- When this distance cannot be maintained, it is recommended that students and staff take other precautions such as masking.

Cleaning the Building

- The building will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.

Testing

- The SJS school district will again offer rapid testing for students and staff.
- Testing will be conducted at school by the Health Aide. Results are given in 15 minutes. These results are reported to the Local Health Department.

Social, Emotional, and Mental Health

- Students will engage in weekly guidance lessons promoting social, emotional, and mental well-being for all. Individual student mental health needs will be addressed through collaboration with the district's administration.
- The school counselor will utilize a research-based SEL program for grades K-8.
- The school counselor will communicate additional resources for parents, students and staff.

Accommodations

- Appropriate accommodation for children and staff with disabilities will be made concerning health and safety policies.
- Will be consistent with CDC and local health department guidelines
- Accommodations will be made as necessary or as mandated by the individual education plan and/or health plan.

Social Distancing

Social distancing is an effective way to prevent potential infection. School employees, students, parents, and visitors should practice staying 3-6 feet or more away from others when possible.

- Social distancing will be observed to the extent possible by all faculty, staff, and students. Social distancing is more achievable in outdoor areas and larger facilities.
- Visual markers will be used to assist students and staff with social distancing.
- Teachers are encouraged to conduct class in our outdoor classroom or outside as much as is possible.
- Building extra outdoor playtime in your schedule is also encouraged.

Return from Quarantine

- When students return from an extended period of quarantine they will have 5 days to complete any work that was assigned to them during quarantine.
- Upon return, any gaps in learning that are detected will be addressed during the first five days of returning to school. The student will receive interventions during Leopard Time and the specials period for the day.

Food Service

- Lunch shifts will be staggered to maximize social distancing.
- Students will wash their hands before eating and before engaging in other activities after eating.
- Food will not be shared.
- Gloves should be worn when handling used utensils and removing trash bags.
- The kitchen surfaces will be wiped down with disinfectant before food preparation begins.
- Hands should be washed after handling soiled dishes and before handling clean dishes.
- All kitchen staff must wear a mask and gloves during meal preparation and serving.
- All tables will be cleaned thoroughly between uses.
- All non-disposable food service items will be handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water. Individuals will wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.

Screening: To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the potential risk of exposure to other employees, all staff are required to complete a self-screening which includes a temperature reading and answering a set of questions related to COVID-19 symptoms including:

- Cough
- Shortness of Breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

- Feeling feverish or a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.4 R.
Known close contact with a person who has been confirmed to have COVID-19.

When someone is identified with any symptoms listed in the health screening, the following actions will occur:

- Staff members at school who display health symptoms that could suggest COVID-19 concerns will be checked by the nurse/health aide. If evaluation by the nurse/health aide suggests potential for COVID-19 infection, the staff member will be sent home immediately.
- Students at school who display health symptoms that could suggest COVID-19 concerns will be checked by the nurse/health aide. If evaluation by the nurse/health aide suggests potential for COVID-19 infection, the student will be isolated and masked (if appropriate for health) until picked up by a parent/guardian.
- Students with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher will be sent home.
- Individuals will be advised to contact a healthcare provider if they exhibit symptoms or answered “Yes” to any screening question. The healthcare provider will be able to determine whether the symptoms are a result of COVID-19 infection or if there are other health issues.
- Students and staff members excluded from the school environment due to COVID-19 concerns may return to school in accordance with guidelines found below provided by the health department. Please understand that guidelines may change over time.

Transportation

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to drop students off at school instead of using the bus service. Drop-off and pick-up systems will be organized to ensure social distancing to the greatest extent possible.
- Hand sanitizer will be available on school buses.
- Drivers will use personal protective equipment (PPE), such as masks, throughout routes.
- Per a federal order issued by the CDC, every student riding the bus will be required to wear a mask.

Athletics

- Student activities will be conducted as usual to the extent they are permissible under local, state, and federal guidelines.
- Water bottles will need to be used by all athletes during practices.
- Practice balls and supplies will be sanitized at the end of each practice and game by coaches.