

Carson City School District Safe School Reopening Plan and Path Forward for Distance Education for 2021-2022 School Year

July 14, 2021

Revised: January 11, 2022

Introduction:

Following one year of schools operating within a Hybrid Schedule due to the worldwide Pandemic, Carson City School District (CCSD) now presents a plan to reopen schools for the 2022 academic year. With this document, Carson City School District intends to provide the information and guidance needed to help the community, families, students, and staff understand the aspects of the reopening and operation of District schools under current public health conditions.

Carson City School District's reopening school plan proposes full in-person instruction, five days per week for the 2021-2022 school year. All programs and services offered by the District will be available to students and families. Students in grades 1-12 may apply for full remote (off campus) education through Pioneer Academy. Pioneer Academy meets the Nevada Department of Education approved Path Forward Program of Distance Education. In addition, any students who may be quarantined due to COVID-19 or who must remain at home for any health-related reason during the 2021-2022 school year will have access to academic content for short term absences (approximately two weeks or less). Access to school curriculum and classroom activities will be through District provided technology including support for internet connectivity. Only if and when governmental authorities' close schools or limit school operations, a combination of distance education and in-person instruction, or a Hybrid Model may be implemented in response to a universal, public health threat or condition.

This plan is the result of input from a variety of sources including citizens, parents, staff, public agencies, and community partners. The Carson City School District's Safe School Reopening Plan was first presented at a workshop for the public held on June 22, 2021 and was considered for additional public comment and approval by the Carson City Board of Trustees on July 13, 2021. After receiving feedback from the Department of Education in November of 2021, the plan has been revised.

First Day of School for Students: Schools will reopen for the 2021-2022 school year on **August 16, 2021** for students in grades K-12. It is recommended that the first day of school for Pre-K students is **August 23, 2021**. The 2022-23 academic calendar can be found at http://p3cdn4static.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_801527/File/Superintendent/Calendars/2022-2023%20Calendar%20-%20DRAFT%20-%20Option%20D.pdf

Communication:

It is the goal of the Carson City School District to provide students, families, staff, and community partners with the information needed to understand the processes and changes associated with the reopening of schools for the 2021-2022 school year. The District will utilize local media outlets through press releases, district and school websites, text messaging, email, social-media, and automated telephone-calls to educators, families, students, community members, and other key stakeholders in the dissemination of pertinent safe school opening information. All information concerning the opening of school will be available in both English and Spanish.

The District will provide consistent and accurate communication to staff and students regarding health and wellness considerations and expectations using a variety of methods. Signs or posters are placed in highly visible locations (e.g., school entrances, classrooms, and restrooms) that promote everyday personal protective wellness measures such as social-distancing, handwashing, and other preventative measures, and describe how to diminish the spread of contagions. Regular announcements using the public address system and flat-panel, hallway monitors at schools will help to remind students and staff of tips to reduce the spread of illnesses.

Free, family-friendly materials will also be available in school lobbies for students, families, and staff. All health-related messages will be available in both English and Spanish. The District will provide current, informational, health and wellness related resources dealing with COVID-19 on the District's web page. The District will also create opportunities for staff training and support regarding illness and pandemic responses tailored to different staff in varying roles or assignments.

Emergency Management:

The District will respond to new COVID-19 cases and/or outbreaks in schools in accordance with the Outbreak Response Plan developed in partnership with the Quad County Health Coalition. New case reports identified in schools will be submitted to the local health department. The District's Visitor Management System will facilitate contact-tracing efforts with volunteers and non-school visitors.

In the event of an emergency, district and school leaders will use the District's Communication Plan and its electronic communication system to contact stakeholders. The District and schools will provide guidance to staff and families to maintain operational integrity. Carson City School District has a robust communication plan and electronic means by which to notify families, staff, and students. The District's communication plan can be found at https://carsoncityschools.com/news/communication_plan.

In the event of an emergency, the district will use all available resources to inform and update stakeholders. The District has an established Safety Services Department that uses a decision-making model based on FEMA's Incident Command System. Carson City School District has the capacity, resources and networking with other public agencies to continue operational services and systems in case of an emergency. The District's safety protocols can be found at <https://carsoncityschools.com/cms/one.aspx?pageId=1267533>

Reopening School Buildings and Grounds

All school buildings and grounds will be open to the public for the start of the 2021-2022 school year. The Governor has returned authority to local school officials to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. As such, Carson City School District will re-open schools, offices, and grounds for instructional, administrative, and extracurricular activities under the following conditions:

- 1) The school year will proceed according to the approved 2021-2022 School Year Calendar.
- 2) School will be in session five (5) days per week for in-person, on campus learning.
- 3) Full-time remote learning will be available by application through Pioneer Academy.
- 4) Students experiencing short-term absences (usually less than two (2) weeks in duration) will have access to remote learning through their school and teacher. The District will provide all enrolled students with Chromebooks and will assist families with internet connectivity on an as needed basis.
- 5) The wearing of facemasks is not required for the 2021-2022 School Year. The following situations should be considered:
 - a. Carson City School District highly encourages the use of facemasks for unvaccinated persons over the age of 2 years of age. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html> The District has a supply of available facemasks to staff, students, and volunteers who desire to wear a facemask in District buildings and vehicles.
 - b. If a localized outbreak of COVID-19 or a variant of COVID-19 occurs, the temporary use of facemasks may be employed as part of a multi-layered effort to end the outbreak.
 - c. COVID-19 vaccinations are available at no cost to all staff, volunteers, and age-appropriate students. A COVID-19 vaccination is not required to enroll in, attend school, or to be employed by the District.
 - d. The District provides information to parents and families regarding vaccine opportunities within our community:
 - i. The District provides information on vaccine clinics at the beginning of the school year for staff, students and families;
 - ii. The District collaborates with Carson City Health and Human Services to schedule vaccine clinics throughout the school year;
 - iii. The District collaborates with Nevada Health Centers to offer vaccine clinics throughout the year at the CCSD school-based health center located at 618 W. Musser Street;
 - iv. The District provides this information via the CCSD website (www.carsoncityschools.com), local media outlets and Parent Square; and
 - v. The District monitors vaccine rates via Web IZ.
 - e. Staff, volunteers, students, and families may voluntarily wear facemasks in any district building or vehicle.
 - f. Medical exemptions for staff regarding the wearing of facemasks will be approved by Human Resources in accordance with OSHA.

- 6) Guidance and recommendations from the National Center of Disease Control (CDC) and local health authorities encourage the vaccination of age-appropriate persons against the COVID-19 virus and its variants.
- 7) Good hygiene and continued sanitation practices instituted in the previous school year including awareness of social distancing practices will be encouraged.
- 8) Reducing the likelihood of an outbreak:
 - a. The CCSD adheres to the guidance provided by the Nevada Division of Health and Human Services [[2021-22-School-COVID-Guidance_Final_8.4.pdf \(nv.gov\)](#)] to include: use of face masks, social distancing, COVID-19 testing, proper ventilation, cleaning and disinfecting, hand washing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick, case reporting, contact tracing and quarantine;
 - b. The District tests student athletes that travel out of county in accordance with Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA) guidelines;
 - c. The District has procured 5,000 Abbott BinaxNow Rapid Tests for use at our schools;
 - d. School health offices are equipped to provide testing for students and staff that present symptoms at school; and
 - e. The District has contracted with a third party vendor to support our efforts.

Approximate School Schedules for Start and Dismissal Times

Elementary	Middle School	Pioneer High	Carson High School
8:25 AM	7:45 AM	7:35 AM	7:40 AM
3:15 PM	2:25 PM	2:15 PM	2:05 PM

Each site will develop its own master schedule to make the best use of available services and resources. Elementary schools will have the flexibility to work within this schedule to assign time for specialist teachers to assist with school operations and engage the curriculum. Middle schools will likely teach a straight six or seven period day where core subjects and electives are offered. Each middle school will have the ability to vary their class schedule according to staff availability and school resources. The District's high schools typically use the block schedule.

Special Populations

- The Carson City School District has implemented the following support and resources to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities, as outlined in the CDC COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 Schools:
 - The District works with the families of all students with disabilities to understand the unique needs of each student;
 - IEP meetings are held for all students with disabilities to address each student's specific needs;
 - As a result of these meetings, programming, accommodations and modifications are made in order to improve the safety and health of our students;

- Additional PPE is provided to staff who serve students who are medically fragile or in need of a higher level of protection;
- A variety of face masks are provided to staff when interacting with students in a variety of settings (classroom instruction, hallways, playground);
- A variety of behavioral techniques such as modeling, picture schedules, timers, visual cues and positive reinforcement are implemented to help students adjust to changes in routine; and
- Waivers are in place for staff to support transportation, classrooms, lunch, programming and restrooms when social distancing is not appropriate to meet students' needs.
- Families with students that have Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are also encouraged to contact the Student Support Office with questions or concerns (775) 283-2350
- English Language Learners can contact the EL Department at 283-1521
- Families with questions about Nutrition Services can call 283-2150
- Families with questions about Transportation can call 283-1950

Grading Systems:

- Grading at the elementary level will use the Standards-Based model
- Grading at the secondary level will use the traditional A-F system

Student Attendance

All students in the State of Nevada ages 7 -18 are required to attend school. As families return to school for the 2021-2022 school year, school attendance and participation is critical to discover areas of learning loss associated with the pandemic. As such, student attendance this year is critical to help students continue growing academically. The following guidance is provided to help support families.

- a) Schools will use a consistent method for recording and maintaining student school records.
- b) Students who are unable to attend school due to short-term absences (approximately 2 weeks or less) due to quarantine, illness, or injury should expect to receive regular communication from a teacher, substitute teacher, or paraprofessional during a short-term absence. If a student's lack of access to a telephone or phone service results in an inability to be contacted, a licensed teacher or licensed substitute teacher will record attempted contact once per week.
- c) All schools will provide students access to remote learning and participate in distance education as is appropriate during a short-term absence (approximately two weeks or less). Such access will include district-provided technology and assistance with internet access.
- d) All schools will ensure that licensed teachers and/or licensed substitute teachers are accessible to students through the internet or by telephone during the regularly scheduled instructional hours.
- e) Students who are English Learners, have Individualized Education Plans, and/or students with 504 Plans are to receive the expected services and academic support as defined in any academic plan established for that student.

- f) The District will provide professional learning regarding high-quality distance education and health and safety requirements related to preventing the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses to all district employees.
- g) The District will continue to provide nutrition services to all qualifying students.

School District Operations

Student and staff safety is of utmost importance. A multi-layered approach to building cleaning and disinfecting is planned to keep buildings clean and people healthy. This process includes enhanced and frequent disinfecting of surfaces, the flushing of fresh air through filtered HVAC systems, an increased volume of fresh air through the system, scheduled and supervised handwashing with soap and water, and the availability of hand sanitizer and disinfectant in every classroom.

Cleaning and Sanitation:

Custodial and sanitizing services, along with increased ventilation processes, will occur according to heightened operational protocols. A building management system that adheres to fresh air standards and proper indoor air quality enhances all the buildings in the District. The District has taken steps to contract with an HVAC Specialist to perform a HVAC Readiness and Pre-Occupancy Assessment so that staff, students, and families can return to the schools with confidence. This activity has been performed on HVAC, filtration, ventilation and domestic water systems. A final engineering report was produced and summarizes the general recommendations of OSHA, CDC and ASHRAE. The District has upgraded air filtrations systems to at least a MERV-11 filter for all air-handling equipment. System filters are changed 3 times per year.

Carson City School District's standard Clean, Healthy, Educational, Environments (CHEE) Process cleaning program requires staff to disinfect touchpoints, table surfaces, and restrooms EVERY NIGHT. Custodians began an enhanced disinfectant program, electrostatic disinfectant misting, in nurses' offices every night since January 2020 and will continue using this system each night during the 2022 school year. The electrostatic disinfecting process is performed 3 nights a week in common areas of the schools like hallways, cafeterias, and main entryways. Classrooms will be electrostatic disinfected twice a week and the CHEE process engaged twice a week. Bio layers will be stripped from classroom surfaces and cleaned with soap weekly so that the disinfecting process is thoroughly employed. The District has also employed the use of Sani-Carts which are micro-fogging systems used to disinfect large areas and have been very effective in treating known infected areas.

At the end of each school day, students and staff will clear the floor of debris and regular school materials (pencils, crayons, paper, books, etc.) and store them properly or discard them as trash. Trash bins and soiled cleaning materials are to be placed in the halls outside of the classroom for removal or disposal. These activities provide extra time for custodians to clean and sanitize the building.

The District has purchased personal protective equipment, hand washing materials, and cleaning supplies available to staff. Liquid/foam sanitizer stations are placed at every building in the main

entrance. In addition, wall mount dispensers will be positioned throughout the building and classrooms. Hand pump dispensers are also provided in the office areas.

Teachers also have access to a non-toxic, food safe spray sanitizer that can be used on desktops and other surfaces during the day. The product works quickly and has a minimal dwell time, so the process can occur between classes.

Social Distancing

To promote full in-person learning, the Carson City School District adheres to the guidance provided by the Nevada Division of Health and Human Services (https://nvhealthresponse.nv.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2021-22-School-COVID-Guidance_Final_8.4.pdf). Classroom desks are spaced a minimum of three feet apart and “way finding” instructions are posted on floors and walls to encourage social distancing in hallways and common areas. As noted earlier, other prevention strategies are also in place. These include the wearing of face masks, at-home health assessments, improved ventilation and cleaning protocols, regular handwashing, and staying at home when sick with symptoms of infectious illness.

Nutrition Services:

Carson City School District will continue providing nutrition services during the school year. Students attending school in person will be served meals according to school schedules. Social-distancing practices are encouraged as practicable.

All students attending school in person and on-campus will eat free of charge for the 2021-2022 school year.

Each meal served in the Carson City School District is structured around strict calorie, sodium, and fat guidelines set by the US government in the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010.

- Each school meal is served with a fruit and/or vegetable serving as defined by MyPlate (formally known as the Food Pyramid).
- All grains served are either whole grain or enriched grains that contain more vitamins, minerals, and fiber than refined counterparts.
- Student favorite foods are served to encourage meal-time eating. Examples are: The District’s pizzas are made with whole grain crust, low sodium pizza sauce, and low fat cheese. Chicken nuggets are breaded with whole grain flour and baked, not fried.
- Skim or low-fat milk is offered at each meal

Transportation:

Student and staff health and well-being is also of concern on our school buses. Many students rely on district transportation and the nature of riding buses makes social distancing very challenging. The plan for reopening schools is to transport students at approximately 66% of occupancy for each bus.

Transportation for students with IEPs will continue as currently organized.

School walk zones will not be altered at this time. Through the online registration process parents should identify if their student requires transportation. Seats will be assigned to qualifying students. Siblings may sit together. School bus ridership will be strictly enforced. Families living inside of the official walk zones should not expect to have their children transported to school. The District may be required to alter walking zones or make other adjustments to maintain expected social-distancing restrictions. Electrostatic and micro-fogging is done daily on the buses.

Student Health:

Wellness

Prior to engaging in any in-person school activity, families are expected to complete an at-home health assessment of their children which is available on our website:

(<https://www.carsoncityschools.com/cms/One.aspx?portalId=801611&pageId=66583630>) .

The District's wellness protocols are outlined below and also available on our website:

<https://www.carsoncityschools.com/cms/One.aspx?portalId=801611&p>

- Any students, staff, or volunteer with a temperature, flu-like or cold symptoms, or in general are feeling un-well should not come into the school.
- It is not practical to reliably check the temperature of every student, staff member, or volunteer as they enter the school building. Once at school, if a student or staff member presents with symptoms of an illness, CCSD will follow wellness protocols for intervention:
 - Students who develop flu-like symptoms during the school day will be isolated in a designated area;
 - Testing for students and staff who become symptomatic during the school day or have been identified through contact tracing as a close contact of a confirmed positive COVID case will be available;
 - Parents will be expected to pick up their students immediately;
 - Students sent home will not be allowed to return to school until they have been symptom free without the use of fever reducing medications for 24 hours; and
 - Nurses will coordinate with families the need to deliver medications to the school.

Social and Emotional Health of Students

Goal 4 of the CCSD Strategic Plan, Empower Carson City 2022, is to promote optimal wellness for all students. Specifically, Objective 4.1 advances social and emotional wellness: Adopt, implement and support a sense of community, wellness and belonging using best practices as part of an empirically supported social emotional learning program. This includes:

- 1. School-Wide Supports:**
 - a.** The District has social workers at every school and counselors at all secondary schools who support our students directly and also provide assistance and coaching to teachers and other staff that work with our students.
 - b.** Students are provided with a safe environment within their schools and classrooms that include predictable routines and positive expectations.
 - c.** School/home connections are fostered at the classroom, school and district levels.
 - d.** Students are engaged in learning via a variety of modalities and are provided with positive and supportive feedback.
- 2. Progress Monitoring:**
 - a.** Teachers monitor student progress to ensure that students are making progress.
 - b.** Learning Loss plans are put in place at each school to address academic deficiencies that resulted from the pandemic.
 - c.** Data is collected at the classroom, school and district level to monitor student progress.
- 3. Tiered Systems of Academic and Behavioral interventions:**
 - a.** The District has adopted MTSS (multi-tiered systems of support), an evidenced-based three-tiered framework to improve and integrate supports for all students:
 - i.** Tier I includes practices and systems that establish a foundation of regular, proactive social and emotional support for all students (schoolwide) while preventing unwanted behaviors.
 - ii.** Tier II practices and systems support students who are at risk for developing more serious academic and behavioral issues with early intervention strategies.
 - iii.** Tier III provides intensive, individual support to improve behavioral and academic outcomes:
 - Included in this Tier is on-going trauma support for students who may have experienced losses within their families due to the pandemic.
 - iv.** Additional strategies for keeping students on track, including specific strategies for English learners and students with disabilities, are provided in Tiers II and III.

Other Hygiene and Safety Precautions

- Hand-washing will be encouraged throughout the day and expected before and after meals.
- Hand Sanitizer is provided throughout the buildings. Students and staff may have their own containers.
- Large school events may be scheduled but are not encouraged on a regular basis.
- Extra and co-curricular activities will occur according to guidance from the NIAA.
- Non-essential travel like non-league competitions or non-essential staff trainings requiring out of the area travel is not endorsed.
- Signage: Visual signs reminding students and staff about personal hygiene practices will be placed in schools according to administrative needs.

Human Resources:

Employees who have medical conditions and/or circumstances that may prevent them from returning to work at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year should consult with their medical advisor as soon as possible. The staff member should also contact Human Resources to discuss his/her employment concerns. The number for the Human Resources Department is 283-2130.

Currently, the federal government is not providing leave benefits to employees for missed work days associated with COVID-19. Any quarantine or missed workdays associated with COVID-19 will require use of the employee's sick leave. Before leaving for work, all employees should:

- Monitor individual health and symptoms (fever, shortness of breath, etc.)
- Maximize physical distance from others to the extent practicable
- Take any and all precautions necessary to protect themselves
- Consider non-essential travel from a wellness perspective
- Continue to practice good hygiene
- Stay at home when unwell

All District staff should anticipate the possibility of experiencing potential modifications to their usual and customary duties and assignments.

Resources to Support the Social, Emotional and Mental Health of Staff:

- Recognizing the need to support staff during this pandemic, the following resources were reviewed with all supervisors to help them support staff throughout the District:
 - [Employees: How to Cope with Job Stress and Build Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic \(cdc.gov\)](#)
 - [What Workers and Employers Can Do to Manage Workplace Fatigue during COVID-19 | CDC](#)
 - The Employee Assistance Program provides links to specific information on COVID-19 along with mental health resources such as grief and loss counseling, managing stress, depression, anxiety and family issues.
 - Services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
 - There is no out-of-pocket cost to employees, dependents and eligible household members
 - Benefits are voluntary and confidential
 - EAP brochures were provided to all staff, which includes the link to services: www.EAPHelplink.com; Code: POOLPACTEAP

Timeline:

Activity	Dates
Initial Reopening Plan Developed and Submitted to NDE; consultation with community	June - August, 2021
Plan posted on District website	August, 2021 to present
Feedback on CCSD plan received from NDE	November 12, 2021
Stakeholder feedback gathered	November 30, 2021 to January 10, 2022
Revised plan provided to public via Board meeting and District website	January 11-13, 2022
Revised plan provided to public parents via Parent Square	January 11-13, 2022
Press release with link to revised plan sent to media outlets	January 11-13, 2022
Plan submitted to NDE	January 14, 2022
Evidence of consultation collected	July, 2021 through February, 2022
Sixth month plan review	June, 2022
Share updated plan with community	June – July, 2022
Revised Plan Effective	First day 2022/23 School Year: August 22, 2022

Conclusion:

Carson City Schools reopened for the first day of school for students in grades K-12 on **August 16, 2021**. Pre-K students will return to school on **August 23, 2021**. The academic calendar for 2022-2023 is available at

http://p3cdn4static.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_801527/File/Superintendent/Calendars/2022-2023%20Calendar%20-%20DRAFT%20-%20Option%20D.pdf

Carson City School District is committed to providing high-quality, accessible learning opportunities to all students – without regard to means, ability, or at-home support, while taking significant precautions toward preserving the health and safety of students, staff, and the community.

This reopening plan was reviewed and discussed at a public workshop on June 23, 2021 at 6:00 PM, prior to a regular meeting of the Carson City School Board. Staff has taken suggestions and input from the public, parents, students, public agencies, tribal authorities, and community partners in preparation of the final document that was presented to the Board of Trustees at the July 13, 2021 School Board meeting for consideration and action. The final approved version of the reopening plan was submitted to the Nevada Department of Education in July of 2021. In November of 2021, NDE provided feedback on the plan, which are incorporated into this revised plan.

During the 2021-2022 school year, District Officials will continue to watch for changes in governmental recommendations associated with COVID-19, its variants, or related health conditions. As changes occur in the public health that warrant further action, the Superintendent will report these changes to the Board of Trustees and recommend potential changes to the school operations as necessary.

The educational plan represented here is subject to change.