

**Rankin School District #98**

**2022-2023 School Year**

***“one Team, one Heart, one Legacy - #DiscovertheRankinDifference!”***

7/25/22

Plan subject to change

Our School Plan for the 2022-2023 school year is fluid and should be considered “subject to change” as the District will continually be monitoring, evaluating, and assessing our plan as we respond and adjust to the ongoing happenings related to the pandemic.

For questions related to this plan and for ease of communication, please email Dr. Matt Gordon, [mgordon@rankin98.org](mailto:mgordon@rankin98.org).

FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS OF PLAN

Our District’s Mission of “Empowering all students to reach their maximum potential and become productive, respectful, responsible, and well-rounded citizens” is combined with our Vision of “Building the foundation of the future by engaging youth through rigorous and diverse educational opportunities.” In accomplishing the District’s Mission and furthering our Vision throughout the last two years, an extraordinary amount of communication, flexibility, character, teamwork, and resilience was needed as we have become stronger together!

Let’s continue working together for what is best for our students. In regards to communication, it is imperative that staff and parents make the District aware of any COVID-19 health situations. Please be prepared for the District to ask specific questions regarding symptoms related to absences. The District, while protecting the identity of students and staff, will always strive to keep everyone informed as best as possible. **one Team, one Heart, one Legacy #DiscovertheRankinDifference!**

PHILOSOPHY

The safety and well-being of our students and staff remains the District’s top priority. Further, the District has prioritized providing In-Person Learning that closely resembles, as much as possible, a return to teaching and learning in pre-pandemic conditions.

The District understands that vaccination is not currently required. We respect, value, and care for all of our students and staff regardless of their vaccination status.

Vaccination information can be accessed here [TCHD Vaccine Link](https://www.tazewellhealth.org/399/COVID-19-VACCINES). Information about an individual’s vaccination status can be helpful when making decisions for students and staff related to COVID-19 for this school year. Thus, please be aware that the District may inquire about vaccination statuses and vaccination documentation seeking this information from students/parents and staff in a voluntary manner. Showing proof of vaccination documentation is not mandated under current guidance; however, mitigation measures maydiffer for those who provide proof of vaccination as set forth in Federal and State guidance. If an individual or parent wishes to avoid application of certain mitigation measures required for unvaccinated individuals, proof of vaccination maybe necessary. The District realizes that this practice may not be ideal and/ or popular with some; however, this information is helpful as the District continues to provide In-Person Learning, which, along with safety, is a top-priority of the District.

Please note that our approach to mitigation measures should be considered multi-tiered. The District’s Mitigation Levels are different procedures and strategies within the levels designed to mitigate the spread of the virus based on the data and conditions in our school and within the county our school resides in. We certainly commit to keeping everyone regularly updated regarding our plan throughout this entire school year, including when/if the need exists to change the Mitigation Level in our District.

RESPONSIBILITY OF RANKIN COMMUNITY

Protecting everyone from COVID-19 and other illnesses is everyone’s responsibility and relates to the following:

* + Students and staff must stay home when they have signs of any infectious illness and contact the school for a review before return. Also, it’s preferred that all students and staff experiencing signs of any infectious illness contact their healthcare provider for further evaluation.
  + Special attention is required for students and staff when experiencing:
    - Fever - The District is considering greater than 100.4 as the threshold for fever.
    - Other symptoms of COVID-19 - The known COVID-19 symptoms can be found [HERE](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html).
    - Suspecting a positive case of COVID-19
    - Awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test
    - Receiving a positive result of a COVID-19 test
    - Students/parents and staff experiencing the above need to notify the school as a determination for a plan forward will be made.
  + The District will expect all staff and students to attend school only when healthy.

MITIGATION LEVELS

Mitigation Level determinations will be based on the data and conditions in our school and within the county our school resides in. Each Mitigation Level has additional mitigation strategies to assist in keeping the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses to a minimum. Unless notified otherwise, the 22-23 school year will begin at Mitigation Level 1 described as (Baseline for 22-23 during Global Pandemic).

STRATEGIES FOR MITIGATING RISKS AT ALL LEVELS

* + - * Social Distancing - While it is important that our students interact with each other on a daily basis, the social distancing concept will be continued in attempt to avoid the spread of the virus. The District will strive for some physical distancing throughout our classrooms and building.
      * The adjusted approach for the last two school years of school-wide cleaning and disinfecting procedures during the school day (i.e. cleaning of high-touch areas during the school day) will continue this year until further notice.
      * Regular handwashing and respiratory etiquette will be promoted regularly.
      * Accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities who have special needs.
      * The last two school year’s adjusted pick-up plan for the end of the school day for students (i.e. multiple doors and pickup points) will continue this year until further notice.

STRATEGIES FOR MITIGATING RISKS AT LEVELS I, II, & III

* Mitigation Levels I (Baseline for 22-23 during Global Pandemic)
* Screening - students and staff self-monitor daily for COVID-19 symptoms.
* Face coverings (Indoors and Outdoors) unless directed otherwise (i.e. positive case days 6-10) are as follows regardless of vaccination status:
* For students (age 2 and older), it’s the decision of the parents
* For non-students (adults), it’s each individual’s decision
* Contact Tracing & Exclusions - Depending on each individual situation, some contact tracing may occur. Generally, temporary exclusions for students or staff will not occur for those who are asymptomatic regardless of vaccination status.

* Mitigation Level II (Moderate for 22-23 during Global Pandemic)
  + Screening - students and staff self-monitor daily for COVID-19 symptoms.
  + Face coverings (Indoors and Outdoors) unless directed otherwise (i.e. positive case days 6-10) are as follows regardless of vaccination status:
  + For students (age 2 and older), it’s the decision of the parents
  + For non-students (adults), it’s each individual’s decision
* Contact Tracing & Exclusions - Depending on each individual situation, some contact tracing may occur. Generally, temporary exclusions for students or staff will not occur for those who are asymptomatic regardless of vaccination status.
* Consideration of utilizing water fountains only for refillable bottles will occur.
  + No visitors, unless approved by Administration for educational purposes.
  + Students will not use locker rooms and will not change for P.E.
  + An increase in morning before school stations will be considered.
* Mitigation Level III (Substantial for 22-23 during Global Pandemic)
  + Screening - students and staff daily COVID-19 symptom checks at school are implemented (i.e. morning temperature checks and daily monitoring admission/symptom tickets).
  + Face coverings (Indoors and Outdoors) unless directed otherwise (i.e. positive case days 6-10) are as follows regardless of vaccination status:
  + For students (age 2 and older), it’s the decision of the parents
  + For non-students (adults), it’s each individual’s decision
* Contact Tracing & Exclusions- Depending on each individual situation, some contact tracing may occur. Generally, temporary exclusions for students or staff will not occur for those who are asymptomatic regardless of vaccination status.
  + Consideration of utilizing water fountains only for refillable bottles will occur.
  + No visitors, unless approved by Administration for student services.
  + Students will not use locker rooms and will not change for P.E.
  + Students congregating during unstructured times will be limited to the extent possible.
  + An increase in the number of morning before school stations may occur to allow for additional spacing.
  + Passing periods may be tiered to allow for more distancing in hallways.
  + Field trips, assemblies, and some programs may be canceled or postponed.
  + Consideration of a Special Board Meeting will occur to review if additional plan guidance for the remainder of the school year is needed.

DISTRICT’S REVIEW PROCEDURES (medical)

NURSE AND/OR ADMINISTRATIVE CLINICAL JUDGMENT

The District nurse’s clinical judgment and/or Administrative judgment is included in the District’s protocols for COVID-19.  The District includes this notice to help everyone understand that specific situations may cause the District to provide additional restrictions, adjustments, and/or attendance restrictions for certain situations.

SYMPTOMATIC INDIVIDUALS

A process to determine whether unvaccinated/vaccinated symptomatic individuals, untested, should be subject to a temporary exclusion will be utilized. Vaccination status may be requested and considered in these cases. Proof of vaccination status may be requested in these cases. In addition, the following two steps will be utilized:

Step 1:

Check for the following symptoms, which indicate possible COVID-19 illness that puts persons at risk for spreading the illness to others:

* Fever (100.4°F or higher)
* New onset of moderate to severe headache
* Shortness of breath
* New cough, sore throat, vomiting, and/or diarrhea
* New loss of sense of taste or smell
* Fatigue from unknown cause
* Muscle or body aches from unknown cause

Step 2:

If the individual has any of the above symptoms and/or potential exposure to COVID-19, a temporary exclusion may be implemented on a case by case basis based on all factors involved and/or via nurse or administrative clinical judgment.

Potential exposure by a person is defined as:

* Had close contact with a person with confirmed COVID-19;
* Traveled to or lived in an area where the local, Tribal, territorial, or state health department is reporting large numbers of COVID-19 cases;
* Live in areas of high community transmission while the school remains open.

UNVACCINATED/VACCINATED PERSON – MAKING A DETERMINATION

The District (Nurse or Administration) will review the information gained from the 2-step process. After considering all available information, a determination will be made and all efforts will be made to contact and/or consult with families. Typically, the District would choose from any of the following options:

* A COVID-19 test is administered and the results are evaluated
* Temporary exclusion for COVID-19 positive or probable case. Length of temporary exclusion determined on a case by case basis.
* Exclusion based on existing school illness management policy (until symptom-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications and have had no diarrhea or vomiting in the previous 24 hours).  Other illnesses besides COVID-19 have specific criteria for when a student or staff member can return to school [IDPH Guidance](https://www.rankin98.org/vnews/display.v/SEC/COVID-19%7CIDPH%20Communicable%20Disease%20in%20Schools%20Guidance).
* Request medical evaluation or additional medical information from a healthcare provider
* Determine the student does not need to be immediately excluded and monitor closely

UNVACCINATED/VACCINATED PERSON - POSITIVE TEST

* Staff or students who tests positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, should isolate for 5 days after onset of symptoms, or 5 days from specimen collection date if no symptoms are present.
* Staff or students who test positive for COVID-19 and have no symptoms or their symptoms are resolving can be released from isolation after 5 days. To calculate the 5-day isolation period, day 0 is the first day of symptoms or specimen collection date if asymptomatic. If they continue to have fever or other symptoms have not improved after 5 days of isolation, they should wait to end isolation until they are fever-free, without fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours and their other symptoms have improved.
* For staff or students returning in this situation, generally, for days 6-10, versus remaining at home, masks (indoors and outdoors) are required for these few days.

COVID-TESTING @ RANKIN

COVID-19 Testing at Rankin will be utilized when the District and staff or family members are mutual in agreement with the testing. The District has purchased rapid antigen COVID-19 tests from Achieve Health Management (AHM). Please understand that the District will ONLY utilize the Anterior Nares specimen collection process, which is just inside the nose and not intrusive. Further, it’s imperative that everyone understand that NO STUDENT WILL BE FORCED TO TEST! In order to test, we must have signed parent permission in writing for each and every test. Signed permission can be emailed to Nicole Washkowiak, District Nurse at [nwashkowiak@rankin98.org](mailto:nwashkowiak@rankin98.org).  Currently and until further notice, the costs of any District administered tests will not be passed onto to staff members or families. Please note that the District does not guarantee that COVID-19 tests are always available, and the District simply wants everyone to be aware that the District does retain the right to pass on the costs of tests to staff and students ONLY after proper, advanced notice (i.e. currently, the District is covering the costs of the tests and would only pass on costs after providing notice before a test is administered – no gotcha type situations would occur). Please feel free to contact Dr. Matt Gordon at [mgordon@rankin98.org](mailto:mgordon@rankin98.org) or Nicole Washkowiak at [nwashkowiak@rankin98.org](mailto:nwashkowiak@rankin98.org) if you have any questions. You can also call the school at 309-346-3182 as well.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS

The District realizes this pandemic has created various challenges and adversity for our students. In conjunction with our staff, our Social Worker will be providing a variety of different supports (check-ins, one on one support, and group support). Beginning August 15th, all parents are encouraged to contact our Social Worker, Sarah Grako, at [sgrako@rankin98.org](mailto:sgrako@rankin98.org), to make her aware of any social/emotional wellness concerns that you may have for your children.

VISITORS

Visitors will follow the guidance associated with the Mitigation Level the District is operating under unless directed otherwise.