

Summary of December 2020 Proposed Revisions to the Enid Public Schools Educational Re-Entry Plan

As is stated in the introduction of our Enid Public Schools Educational Re-Entry Plan, we have continually reassessed as conditions have changed and recommendations are updated. With that reassessment, comes the need to be flexible and to consider revisions to the previously adopted district plan.

Throughout the fall semester we have diligently followed the color coded OSDE COVID-19 Alert Map to guide our actions and the access to our facilities. During that time, and in partnership with the Garfield County Health Department, it has been necessary to temporarily quarantine single students, groups of students, employees, a classroom, or a campus, depending on the level of COVID exposure. We appreciate everyone's flexibility and support as we make the best possible health choices for our EPS family. In conjunction with daily health measures, our system for quarantine, isolation, and contact tracing, has been very successful in mitigating the spread of the COVID-19 virus in our schools. While the Garfield County numbers have climbed in the recent weeks, the numbers within our schools have remained manageable. When the numbers in a particular classroom or school have risen to an unacceptable level, we have taken the necessary steps to keep students and staff safe by quarantining those affected while allowing the education of others to continue.

Over the first 14 weeks of school, we learned that we can successfully have school if we follow our mitigation procedures and the health department's recommendations on quarantine and isolation. All of our decisions up to this point have been based on the recommendations of the Garfield County and State Health Departments and for that reason, we feel it appropriate to rely on their recommendations (and the newly revised CDC guidelines) for quarantining individual students, classrooms, or school campuses as opposed to closing the entire district based on the OSDE COVID-19 Alert Map. That map does not take into account anything other than the number of positive cases per 100,000 residents in the county. It gives no consideration as to how EPS is specifically affected at the time of its weekly release. The academic, social emotional, and physical needs of our students are of utmost importance and although our teachers have done an amazing job with virtual learning, we also understand that there is no substitute for in-person instruction. We know that many of our students rely on our schools for meals that they may not get if they are not physically in the building. Although EPS has continued to offer meals across the district, we know that approximately 4,000 fewer **meals a day** have been served during virtual learning than when we are conducting in-person instruction. This equates to many students going hungry and is another reason that in-person instruction is warranted. Additionally, we also know that the child abuse numbers significantly increase when students are not on campus where teachers, counselors, and other employees can catch signs of abuse and report them immediately.

In reaching out to other 6A school districts around the state, we learned that of the twenty-one districts surveyed, more than 50% are conducting in-person instruction either fully or with an A/B schedule and all but 2 are continuing extracurricular activities such as athletics, band, and music. Enid and Ponca City are currently the only 6A districts not competing until after winter break. And under current board guidelines, if EPS does not return to in-person instruction, extracurricular activities can also not continue. Currently 8 6A districts are in virtual learning, but are continuing with varsity athletics, and other extracurricular activities for students.

With many districts participating in extracurricular activities, EPS students are currently at a disadvantage when compared to their peers - as they are unable to practice, compete, perform, and potentially have access to college scholarships.

With these factors in mind, the EPS administration is recommending the following revisions to our EPS Plan for the Spring 2021 semester. Rather than making decisions weekly in the Spring 2021 semester based on countywide COVID-19 data, EPS will use the following two criteria to make decisions:

- 1) Do we have enough faculty/staff to safely and effectively operate the campus? If so, then we continue with in-person instruction and activities.
- 2) Is the campus under the threshold of less than 30% of students, faculty, and staff negatively affected by COVID-19 (positive cases and quarantines combined)? If so, then we continue with in-person instruction and activities.

If the answer to either question is “no,” then the administration will close that particular campus for the appropriate time needed for students and staff to return safely, while the rest of the district continues per normal. Athletics and Extracurricular Activities will continue to be conducted with the implementation of proper attendance and safety protocols.

This more diagnostic approach will allow us to be more targeted and precise in our decision-making, providing more uninterrupted instruction and support to students.

While this changes the determining factor for campus and district closure, there are many pieces of our plan that will remain in place as they have been since August.

- We will continue to quarantine, isolate, and contact trace based on CDC and health department guidelines.
- We will continue to require masks for all students, staff, and visitors.
- We will continue to offer a complete virtual option for students/parents who prefer not to participate in brick and mortar instruction.
- We will continue to provide blended and distance learning for students in isolation or quarantine.
- For more detailed information, see the EPS Re-entry plan at www.enidpublicschools.org/reentryplan2020.

Immediate changes regarding Extracurricular Activities would include:

- Starting Tuesday, December 15th 2020, all EPS Winter Sports varsity and junior varsity teams will be allowed to practice and compete.
 - Winter Sports (Wrestling, Swimming & Basketball)
- Starting Monday January 5th 2021, all EPS athletics and activities (grades 6-12) will be allowed to practice and compete.
 - All sports and activities grades 6th - 12th.