# JACKSON ELEMENTARY SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTON AND CONTINUITY OF SERVICES PLAN

SEMIANNUAL REVIEW NOVEMBER 2023

# Jackson Elementary School District Safe Return to School and Continuity of Services Plan

Date of Original Adoption: May 5, 2020

Dates Reviewed: August 19, 2020; June 1, 2021; July 21, 2021; August 19, 2021; October 15, 2021; December 15, 2021; June 15, 2022; November 16, 2022; May 17,

2023; November 15, 2023

Date Plan was Last Revised: November 15, 2023 Next Regularly Scheduled Month for Consideration: May 2024 (if required)

#### March 2020 - November 2023

 The Jackson Elementary School District was ordered to close to in-person instruction on March 15, 2020, under an executive order issued by then-Governor Bullock. Districts were provided a two-week period of time during which they could remain fully closed to instruction of any kind while developing a plan for remote instruction required by the Governor.

Although our school district was authorized to remain closed, we quickly mobilized and began remote instruction during the timeframe when we were authorized to remain closed. Thereafter, our school district continued pursuant to a reopening plan approved by the Governor beginning March 30, 2020.

2. On April 22, 2020, then-Governor Bullock lifted his Stay at Home Order, and Announced a Plan to Begin Phased Reopening of Montana. As part of that plan, effective May 7, 2020, all schools were provided the option to return to inclassroom teaching at the discretion of local school boards.

Our school district finished the 2019-20 school year through remote/offsite instruction.

- 3. Our school district developed a plan for reopening to in-person instruction, with contingencies, and we implemented that plan for the 2020-21 school year. The reopening plan, details regarding which are provided below, included adoption of various model policies provided by the Montana School Boards Association under its 1900 Series, including model policies aligned with the Centers for Disease Control guidance regarding mitigation strategies to limit exposure to and transmission of COVID-19 in school settings.
- 4. Our school district reopened to in-classroom instruction during the 2020-21 school year, and was fortunate to remain open for in-person instruction for 95% of the school year. During the school year, there was a temporary closure of all inclassroom teaching pursuant to quarantine or isolation orders issued by our county department of health. Our temporary closure to in-classroom teaching was for

nine school days from March 16, 2021 - March 26, 2021. During the 2020-21 school year, our modes of operation included:

- i. In-person
- ii. Offsite

Our school district finished the 2020-21 school year strong, having provided high quality learning opportunities to the students in our community in safe and effective learning environments.

- 5. In June 2021, our school district crafted this Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan. In August 2021, the board of trustees declared their own unforeseen emergency to last through June 30, 2022, in accordance with sections 20-9-801 through 20-9-806, MCA, due to community and school health concerns related to COVID-19. During the 2021-22 school year, our modes of operation were:
  - i. In-person
  - ii. Offsite

Our district provided offsite instruction for students issued with quarantine or isolation orders or who chose to self-quarantine or self-isolate.

During the school year, there was a temporary closure of all in-classroom teaching pursuant to quarantine or isolation orders issued by our county department of health. Our temporary closure to in-classroom teaching was for two school days, January 21 (Friday) and January 24, 2022 (Monday).

6. In March 2022, the requirement for mandatory face coverings was lifted when the transmission level in the county declined to the moderate level. Monitoring of the county transmission level occurred daily throughout the remainder of the school year using the CDC COVID Data Tracker website. The county transmission level remained low or moderate for the remainder of the school year, and face coverings were optional as personal protective equipment.

In June 2022, the board of trustees declared their own unforeseen emergency to last through June 30, 2023, in accordance with sections 20-9-801 through 20-9-806, MCA, due to community and school health concerns related to COVID-19.

7. In August 2022, the County Health Department provided our rural teaching staff with the latest updated CDC guidance regarding COVID-19 testing, isolation, quarantining, social distancing, and masking. This guidance helped staff to better understand the potential risks, proper protection actions to take, and what actions to take if sick or test positive for the virus.

For the 2022-2023 school year, our modes of operation were:

- i. In-person
- i. ii. Offsite

Our district provided offsite instruction for students who chose to self-quarantine or self-isolate.

- 8. In November, the board of trustees aligned policy 1905 with the guidance provided to our teaching staff in August, as well as CDC recommendations.
- On February 10, 2023, President Biden temporarily extended the declared national emergency for COVID-19. At that time, he concluded his announcement with a statement that the anticipated termination of the national emergency concerning COVID-19 pandemic would end on May 11, 2023.
- 10. Policies 1900-1912 were intended to govern during the declared emergency related to COVID-19 declared by the President, Congress, Montana Legislature, Governor, Montana Department of Health and Human Services, County Health Department, and board of trustees. With the termination of the national emergency concerning COVID-19, in April 2023, the board of trustees voted to terminate their declared emergency and temporary emergency policies numbered 1900-1912, and work with necessary stakeholders to enact their motion.
- 11. For the 2023-2024 school year, our mode of operation has been:
  - i. In-person

There have been no temporary closures due to quarantine or isolation orders.

12. We embraced a fundamental principle of providing extensive transparency to our community throughout the above timeframe. We publicly noticed, held meetings regarding, and provided extensive opportunities for our community to provide us with feedback regarding the school district's plans and we carefully considered such feedback in developing and refining the school district's plans throughout the last 45 months.

### Safe Return to School and Continuity of Services Plan Contents:

#### March 2020 - November 2023

Part I: Documentation of Meaningful Consultation in Developing and Refining the School District's Plan from March 2020 Through November 2023:

We noticed, held, and invited public comment on our evolving plans for a safe return to school and continuity of services on the following dates since March 2020:

- 1. March 18, 2020
- 2. March 26, 2020
- 3. May 5, 2020
- 4. July 15, 2020
- 5. August 19, 2020
- 6. January 20, 2021
- 7. March 17, 2021
- 8. June 1, 2021
- 9. July 21, 2021
- 10. August 19, 2021
- 11. September 15, 2021
- 12. October 15, 2021
- 13. November 17, 2021
- 14. December 15, 2021
- 15. January 19, 2022
- 16. February 16, 2022
- 17. March 16, 2022
- 18. April 20, 2022
- 19. May 18, 2022
- 20. June 15, 2022
- 21. August 17, 2022
- 22. September 21, 2022
- 23. October 19, 2022
- 24. November 16, 2022
- 25. January 18, 2023
- 26. February 14, 2023
- 27. March 15, 2023
- 28. April 19, 2023
- 29. May 17, 2023
- 30. June 21, 2023
- 31. June 26, 2023
- 32. July 19, 2023
- 33. August 16, 2023
- 34. September 20, 2023
- 35. October 18, 2023
- 36. November 15, 2023

To the extent present in or served by our school district, our invitation for public input included a general opportunity for the public to provide input and was provided to everyone interested, including:

 Students; families, including those with children in foster care; community members; county administrators (Superintendent of County Schools, county health nurse); teacher (we do not have a union), other educators, school staff; and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities (parents).

- 2. We are a very small rural school district with no diverse student groups. Furthermore, we do not have any tribes, civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations), English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care; migratory students, children who are incarcerated, or other underserved students present in or served by the school district.
- 3. Beginning in July 2021, a standing agenda item, "Consideration of Changes to Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan", has been added as a means for the board of trustees to invite monthly stakeholder discussion. This will be in effect throughout the 2021-24 school years.

## Part II: Contents of the School District's Plan for Safe Return to In-Person **Instruction and Continuity of Services:**

1. A description of how the school district will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff:

Following the lifting of the Stay-at-Home Order and subsequent reopening of the state on April 22, 2020, Jackson Elementary School District utilized the Montana Public Education Center Roadmap for Safely Reopening Montana's Public Schools Using Emergency School District Policies and accompanying MTSBA Model Emergency Policies. Utilizing these resources supported our school district's continued service to students with transparency and accountability while ensuring the operations of the school district reflected the circumstances in our community.

The policies ensured our board of trustees and school leaders honored the following priorities: quality instruction to students; a healthy and safe setting for students, staff, and the community; needed support of teachers and staff; and responsible financial and operational procedures. The policies provided an actionable plan for completing the 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23 school fiscal years in a manner that met these priorities and secured school district funding while providing an operational platform for considering long term innovations in the delivery of education services.

Jackson Elementary School District implemented policy options that facilitated collaboration between the board of trustees, staff, employees, parents, students, health officials, and community as we established protocols aligned with CDC guidance addressing how instruction was to be delivered to students; how gatherings and events would take place on school property; how the health and safety of staff and students would be protected and preserved while school was open; and how financial and operational functions of the school district would continue during the period of public health emergency.

Jackson Elementary School District reviewed, considered, and addressed numerous areas of operation in our reopening process. On the topic of school district policy and procedures, the school district considered emergency policies and procedures, adoption and amendment of policies, suspension of policies, and administrative procedures. To support students' academic, mental, social and emotional success, the school district considered alternative grading, counseling, extended school year, student instruction proficiency determinations and declarations, support for particularly vulnerable students, access to internet for students, food preparation, summer school and additional student instruction resources. To ensure the health and safety of students, teachers, and staff, the school district considered cleaning and disinfection, community use of facilities, county board of health orders, diagnosis and confidentiality, hand washing and related hygiene protocols, telework, school closure orders, stay at home orders, symptom monitoring and isolation, travel quarantines, visitors, volunteers, vulnerable individuals, masks and personal protective equipment, and physical distancing.

Following the Roadmap for Safely Reopening Montana's Public Schools Using Emergency School District Policies ensured Jackson Elementary School District has remained in compliance with guidance and best practices provided by federal, state, or local health officials. Our school district has continued to adapt and adjust our policies as new and updated guidance and best practices have become available.

Further, the policies provide options for consideration through input from our board of trustees, administrative team, employees, parents, students, health officials, and community as collaborative partners as we have worked our way through ever evolving changes due to the pandemic. By considering all possible perspectives and factors when making the decisions to adopt or adjust a policy, or to implement a policy, we focused on the health and safety of our students, staff, and community for delivery of learning and services to our students. The policies have enabled us to adjust our procedures and practices during different phases in compliance with guidance and best practices provided by federal, state, and local agencies.

Jackson Elementary School District followed their temporary emergency policies for most of the 2022-23 school year (9½ months). The district will continue to follow the policies noted below for the remainder of the 2022-23 school year (2½ months). We will engage in a semiannual reevaluation process of this Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan to continue to ensure the health, safety and well-being of our students, teachers, staff, and community throughout the 2021-24 school years.

2. The extent to which the school district has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC:

Topic School Description of Policy Pol			
	District		Adopted and
	Policy		Revised
	Reference		Date(s)
Collaboration with State, local or territorial health departments: student health and safety – student immunization and communicable diseases.	3413; 3417	Please note that House Bill 702 passed the 2021 Legislature and was signed into law effective May 14, 2021. New Section 1 of that law provides that it is an unlawful discriminatory practice for a governmental entity to refuse, withhold from, or deny to a person any local or state services, goods, facilities, advantages, privileges, licensing, educational opportunities, health care access, or employment opportunities based on the person's vaccination status. The law also provides it is unlawful for an employer to refuse employment to a person, to bar a person from employment, or to discriminate against a person in compensation or in a term, condition, or privilege of employment based on the person's vaccination status. Finally, House Bill 702 provides it is unlawful for a public accommodation to exclude, limit, segregate, refuse to serve, or otherwise discriminate against a person based on the person's vaccination status.	
		based on the person's vaccination status.  3413: Upon initial enrollment, an immunization status form shall be completed by the student's parent or guardian. The certificate shall be made a part of the student's permanent record.	1. 07/15/2012 2. 10/17/2016 3. 08/18/2021 4. 08/16/2023
		3417: In all proceedings related to this policy, the district will respect a student's right to privacy. Although the district is required to provide educational services to all school-age children who reside within its boundaries, it may deny attendance at school to any child diagnosed as having a communicable disease that could make a child's attendance harmful to the welfare of other students. The district will rely on advice of the public health and medical communities in assessing the risk of transmission of various communicable diseases to determine how best to protect the health of both students and staff. The district will manage common communicable diseases in accordance with Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services guidelines and communicable diseases control rules. The district may temporarily exclude from school attendance a student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease that is readily transmitted in a school setting. The district may notify parents of other children attending a school that their children have been exposed to a communicable disease without identifying the particular student who has the disease.	1. 08/18/2021
Staff absences, conduct, health, and	5130; 5223; 5230; 5321	<b>5130:</b> Through its overall safety program and various policies pertaining to school personnel, the	1. 02/18/2009

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safety –staff health; personal conduct; prevention of disease transmission; leaves of absence.		board will promote the safety of employees during working hours and assist them in the maintenance of good health. The board will encourage all its employees to maintain optimum health through the practice of good health habits.		
		<b>5223:</b> School district employees will abide by all district policies, state and federal laws in the course of their employment. Where applicable, employees will abide by and honor the professional educator code of conduct. All employees are expected to maintain high standards of honesty, integrity, professionalism, decorum, and impartiality in the conduct of District business.	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	08/18/2021 11/17/2021
		<b>5230:</b> All district personnel shall be advised of routine procedures to follow in handling body fluids. These procedures shall provide simple and effective precautions against transmission of diseases to persons exposed to the blood or body fluids of another. These procedures shall be standard health and safety practices. No distinction shall be made between body fluids from individuals with a known disease or infection and from individuals without symptoms or with an undiagnosed disease.	1.	08/18/2021
		<b>5321:</b> Certified employees will be granted personal and emergency leave according to the terms of their contract. Classified employees will be granted sick leave benefits in accordance with § 2-18-618, MCA.	1.	07/15/2002
Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies: student instruction – Section 504; student instruction innovations; online and distance learning; digital academy; enrollment and	2050; 2162; 2162P; 2168; 2170; 3121	2050: The board of trustees authorizes offsite and online instruction of students in a manner that satisfies the aggregate number of instructional hours outlined in the school district's adopted or revised calendar. Offsite and online delivery methods shall include a complete range of educational services offered by the school district and shall comply with the requirements of applicable statutes. Students completing course work through an offsite or online instructional setting shall be treated in and have their hours of instruction calculated in the same manner as students attending an onsite institutional setting.	1. 2. 3.	06/01/2021 11/17/2021 08/16/2023
attendance records.		The board of trustees authorizes proficiency-based ANB calculation in situations when a student demonstrates proficiency in a course area as determined by the board of trustees using district assessments consistent with the school district's adopted Plan of Action or other measures approved by the board of trustees.		
		2162: It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of	1.	07/15/2002

		Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services. For those students who need or are believed to need special instruction and/or related services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the district shall establish and implement a system of procedural safeguards.	
		2162P: If the parent or legal guardian of a student who qualifies under Section 504 for special instruction or related services disagrees with a decision of the district with respect to: (1) the identification of the child as qualifying for Section 504; (2) the district's evaluation of the child; and/or (3) the educational placement of the child, the parents of the student are entitled to certain procedural safeguards. The student shall remain in his/her current placement until the matter has been resolved through the process set in the policy.	1. 07/15/2021
		<b>2168:</b> The district may receive and/or provide distance, online, and technology delivered learning programs to provide a greater variety of learning experiences within the student's educational program.	1. 11/20/2007 2. 03/20/2019 3. 11/17/2021 4. 05/18/2022 5. 08/16/2023
		2170: The district recognizes that the district and students may have a need for greater flexibility in the educational program due to funding, teacher availability, individual learning styles, health conditions, employment responsibilities, lack of success in traditional school environments or a desire for students to accelerate their learning. The district acknowledges that online learning solutions offered by the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) may fulfill these needs.	1. 11/17/2010 2. 05/18/2022 3. 08/16/2023
		<b>3121:</b> The district may only include, for ANB purposes, any student who participates in pupil instruction as defined by Section 2-1-101(17), MCA, and for whom ANB may be claimed under Title 20.	1. 07/15/2002 2. 02/20/2008 3. 09/20/2017 4. 11/17/2021 5. 05/18/2022 6. 08/16/2023
Coordination with State and local health officials: district operations, student health and safety – district policies and	1310; 2221; 3413; 3417; 4330; 5223; 5230; 5321; 8301	<b>1310:</b> The district's policies are adopted, implemented, and enforced in accordance with the supervisory authority vested with the board of trustees in accordance with Article X, section 8 of the Montana Constitution and related statutes, regulations and court decisions.	1. 07/15/2002 2. 06/18/2014 3. 02/18/2015 4. 06/01/2021
procedures; school emergencies and closures; student immunization; communicable		<b>2221:</b> The board of trustees is authorized to declare that a state of emergency exists within the community. A declaration issued by the board of trustees is distinct from any declaration in effect or previously issued by local, state or federal	1. 07/15/2002 2. 02/16/2006 3. 06/01/2021

diseases; community use of facilities; personal conduct; prevention of disease transmission; leaves of absence; district safety.	authorities. An emergency declaration issued by the board of trustees authorizes the district to take extraordinary measures to protect students and staff while delivering education services in a manner authorized by law. The method and location of instruction and related educational services shall be implemented in a manner that services the needs of students, their families, and staff and preserves the district's full entitlement funding.	
	<b>3413:</b> The board requires all students to present evidence of their having been immunized against certain diseases.	1. 07/15/2002 2. 10/17/2016 3. 08/18/2021 4. 08/16/2023
	3417: The school district will manage common communicable diseases in accordance with Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services guidelines and communicable diseases control rules. When information is received by a staff member or a volunteer that a student is afflicted with a serious communicable disease, the staff member or volunteer will promptly notify local health authorities to determine appropriate measures to be taken to protect student and staff health and safety. The staff member, after consultation with and on advice of public health officials, will determine which additional staff members, if any, have need to know of the affected student's condition.	1. 08/18/2021
	<b>4330:</b> School facilities are available to the community for educational, civic, cultural, and other noncommercial uses consistent with the public interest, when such use will not interfere with the school program or school-sponsored activities.	1. 07/15/2002 2. 08/18/2018
	<b>5223:</b> School district employees will abide by all district policies, state and federal laws in the course of their employment. Where applicable, employees will abide by and honor the professional educator code of conduct. All employees are expected to maintain high standards of honesty, integrity, professionalism, decorum, and impartiality in the conduct of district business.	1. 07/15/2002 2. 03/20/2019 3. 11/20/2019 4. 08/18/2021 5. 11/17/2021 6. 05/18/2022
	<b>5230:</b> All district personnel shall be advised of routine procedures to follow in handling body fluids. These procedures shall provide simple and effective precautions against transmission of diseases to persons exposed to the blood or body fluids of another. These procedures shall be standard health and safety practices. No distinction shall be made between body fluids from individuals with a known disease or infection and	1. 08/18/2021

		from individuals without symptoms or with an		
		undiagnosed disease.  5321: Certified employees will be granted personal and emergency leave according to the terms of their contract. Classified employees will be granted sick leave benefits in accordance with § 2-18-618, MCA.		07/15/2002 05/18/2022
		<b>8301:</b> The district recognizes that safety and health standards should be incorporated into all aspects of the operation of the district. The board of trustees has identified local hazards that exist within the boundaries of its school district. The board shall develop safety and health standards which comply with the Montana Safety Culture Act to ensure a safe school setting and to comply with regulations governing schools in Montana.	2. 3. 4. 5.	07/15/2013 12/11/2013 10/17/2016 11/20/2019 08/18/2021 08/16/2023
Services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs: student instruction – student instruction innovations; online and distance learning; special education; digital academy;	2050; 2161; 2170; 2168; 3121	2050: The board of trustees authorizes offsite and online instruction of students in a manner that satisfies the aggregate number of instructional hours outlined in the school district's adopted or revised calendar. Offsite and online delivery methods shall include a complete range of educational services offered by the school district and shall comply with the requirements of applicable statutes. Students completing course work through an offsite or online instructional setting shall be treated in and have their hours of instruction calculated in the same manner as students attending an onsite institutional setting.	1. 2. 3.	06/01/2021 11/17/2021 08/16/2023
enrollment and attendance records.		The board of trustees authorizes proficiency-based ANB calculation in situations when a student demonstrates proficiency in a course area as determined by the board of trustees using district assessments consistent with the school district's adopted Plan of Action or other measures approved by the board of trustees.		
		2161: The district shall provide a free appropriate public education and necessary related services to all children with disabilities residing within the district, as required under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (hereinafter "IDEA") and implementing provisions in Montana law, and the Americans With Disabilities Act.	1.	07/15/2002
		<b>2168:</b> The district may receive and/or provide distance, online, and technology delivered learning programs to provide a greater variety of learning experiences within the student's educational program.		11/20/2007 03/20/2019 11/17/2021 05/18/2022 08/16/2023
		<b>2170:</b> The district recognizes that the district and students may have a need for greater flexibility in	1. 2.	11/17/2010 05/18/2022

the educational program due to funding, teacher availability, individual learning styles, health conditions, employment responsibilities, lack of success in traditional school environments or a desire for students to accelerate their learning. The district acknowledges that online learning solutions offered by the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) may fulfill these needs.	3.	08/16/2023
<b>3121:</b> The district may only include, for ANB purposes, any student who participates in pupil instruction as defined by Section 2-1-101(17), MCA, and for whom ANB may be claimed under Title 20.	2. 3. 4.	07/15/2002 02/20/2008 09/20/2017 11/17/2021 05/18/2022 08/16/2023

#### June 2021

## Part III – Updated Compliance for the School District's Previously Adopted Plan for the Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services:

Section 2001(i)(3) of the ARP Act states that a school district that developed a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services prior to the date of enactment of the ARP Act will be deemed to have met the requirement to develop a plan under section 2001(i)(1) as long as the plan meets the statutory requirements (*i.e.*, is publicly available on the LEA's website and was developed after the LEA sought and took into account public comment).

The school district's plan meets the requirements of Section 2001(i)(1) and (i)(2) of the ARP Act. The school district's plan is available on the Office of Public Instruction's website, as well as a MTSBA-hosted website and, as noted above, was developed through a process that included extensive public comment. Further, we have, as part of the organization of the school district's plan for purposes of the ARP Act, revised the school district's plan at a meeting held on June 1, 2021, that included not just a notice of opportunity for public input but which specifically invited meaningful consultation with and input from:

Students; families, including those with children in foster care; community members; county administrators (Superintendent of County Schools, county health nurse); teacher (we do not have a union), other educators, school staff; and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities (parents). We are a very small rural school district with no diverse student groups. Furthermore, we do not have any tribes, civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations), English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, or other underserved students present in or served by the school district.

We considered the input of all affected parties and carefully deliberated regarding the best possible means by which our school district could provide safe effective learning environments for each of our students.

# June 2021 - September 30, 2024 Part IV - Schedule for Future Review and Updates:

Consideration of this Safe Return to Schools and Continuity of Services Plan has been added as a standing agenda item on each regular meeting of the board of trustees since July 2021 and will remain so throughout the 2021-24 school years. The agenda item shall, at a minimum, include notice of any changes to the plan recommended by the administration with an invitation for input, notice of opportunity for public input, and consultation with, to the extent present or served by the school district:

Students; families, including those with children in foster care; community members; county administrators (Superintendent of County Schools, county health nurse); teacher (we do not have a union), other educators, school staff; and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities (parents). We are a very small rural school district with no diverse student groups. Furthermore, we do not have any tribes, civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations), English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, or other underserved students present in or served by the school district.

Jackson Elementary School District will continue to follow their policies while engaging in a semiannual reevaluation process to continue to ensure the health, safety and well-being of our students, teacher, staff, and community throughout the 2021-24 school years. The next scheduled review will be May 2024 (if required).