



# ICHABOD CRANE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## 2022-2023 School Operating Plan

**Recognizing the changing landscape including ever-changing guidance from regulatory agencies around health and safety protocols as related to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the current positivity rates and variants, the District is committed to modification of this plan as needed and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools, in order to remain compliant with all legal and regulatory requirements.**

### Introduction

Schools are an important part of the infrastructure of communities as they provide safe, supportive learning environments for students and children and enable parents and caregivers to be at work. As we enter a new phase of the pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) along with New York State Education Department (NYSED) and (NYDOH) Department of Health released updated guidance in mid-August providing added flexibility for schools. The CDC issued the [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning](#). Shortly thereafter, a [joint memo](#) was released from NYSED and NYDOH, which encouraged school districts to utilize the CDC guidance as a resource for COVID-19 mitigating strategies.

The current CDC and State guidance requires a person who is positive for COVID-19 to follow the CDC's isolation period of 5-days from date of onset of symptoms or date of last exposure if nonsymptomatic and mask for days 6-10 upon return to school.

All other items within the CDC and State guidance documents are recommendations, and we encourage everyone to adhere to them in order to help keep our buildings a safe learning environment for all. We will continue existing COVID-19 mitigation strategies, including cleaning and disinfection and increased ventilation in classrooms. Students and staff are also strongly encouraged to continue to practice healthy hygiene and to stay home when sick.

The school district has designated the Superintendent, Suzanne Guntlow as their COVID-19 Safety Coordinator. The school district has designated Michelle Warner, Nurse Coordinator, as the COVID-19 Resource Person.

## Communication/Family and Community Engagement

Communication between the district and students, parents, and staff as well as fostering family engagement is of utmost importance. Ichabod Crane Central School District has developed a communication plan for students, parents or legal guardians of students, staff, and visitors that includes applicable instructions, training, signage, and a consistent means to provide individuals with information via web pages, text and email groups, and/or social media groups or posts. The following information outlines our plans and protocols for communication and community engagement.

- The district will post and maintain all school opening plans on the district website (<https://www.ichabodcrane.org/district/school-reopening-updates/>) and have hard copies available at each school in the languages spoken by families. The opening plan will be posted on the website as
- both a downloadable PDF and a direct embed.
- Regular updates and communications with students, parents/guardians, staff and visitors via the district's website ([www.ichabodcrane.org](http://www.ichabodcrane.org)) and automated messaging (email, text messages, and phone calls when applicable).
- All students, faculty, staff, and visitors will be encouraged through verbal and written communication (e.g. signage) to adhere to CDC and NYS guidance.
- The district will have a designated COVID-19 Resource Person for COVID-19-related questions. This coordinator is Michelle Warner, Nurse Coordinator. She can be reached at the [mwarner@ichabodcrane.org](mailto:mwarner@ichabodcrane.org) or by phone at 518-758-7575 X4093 during the hours of 7:25 am to 2:25 pm, Monday through Friday.

## Health and Safety

**Please note the school is no longer required nor is it recommended by the CDC or NYSDOH to contact trace. Therefore we will no longer be notifying families if their student has a potential exposure to COVID-19.**

The following are the district's adopted health and safety protocols.

### **Mask Use in Schools**

- Masks are no longer required at school or on school buses/vans. The only instance when a mask is strongly recommended is when an individual tests positive for COVID, they are **required** to follow the CDC's isolation protocol and are strongly recommended to wear a mask for days 6-10 upon return to school.
- The State Health Department and the CDC recommends students, staff, and teachers wear masks when:
  - People who have known or suspected exposure to COVID -19 should wear a well fitting mask or respirator around others for ten days from last exposure, regardless of vaccination status or history of prior infection.
  - They are moderately-to-severely immunocompromised and have discussed the need to mask with their healthcare provider(s).
- Individuals are welcome to wear a mask if they choose to do so. Our school community has shown great resilience over the past two years, and we expect everyone to continue to practice civility and

tolerance surrounding these individual choices.

## Health Checks

- We recommend that parents/guardians take their child's temperature and perform a health self-assessment before leaving home every day.
- We recommend that all staff take their temperature and perform a health self-assessment before leaving home each day.
- Any student or staff member that has a temperature of 100.0° Fahrenheit or higher or displays one of the symptoms of COVID-19 according to the CDC are not permitted to come to school.
- Any student or staff member displaying symptoms will be isolated from others and evaluated by the school nurse. Point of care COVID-19 testing will be administered as needed and where consent has been previously provided. Parents/Guardians will be contacted. See *Screening and Point of Care (POC) Testing* below.

## Point of Care (POC) Testing

Point of Care testing enables the school nurses to test students or staff who develop symptoms while in school to determine if it is related to COVID-19.

- The Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases Cooperative Agreement (ELC) provides financial support and technical assistance to the nation's health departments to support efforts to detect, prevent, and respond to emerging infectious diseases. ELC Funds will provide testing equipment and kits.
- POC testing will be completed utilizing a molecular test. This test involves a gentle swab of the nasal passage and results are available within 15-30 minutes.
- District Nurses will be trained on proper testing procedures.
- Parent Consent will be required for both screening and Point of Care (POC) testing.
- Any POC positive test results will be reported to the local Department of Health as required.

## Screening Testing

The CDC no longer recommends routine screening testing in K-12 schools. Screening testing identifies infected people, including those with or without symptoms who may be contagious, so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission. Schools may consider implementing screening testing for high risk activities, at key times of the year, and when returning from breaks. This would only be implemented depending upon local community transmissions rates under the guidance of the local health department.

## Athletics

- The district will continue to follow NYS and local health department guidance for Athletics.
- Please refer to the Ichaod Crane Athletics website for the most up to date information on the status of our sports seasons.

## Food Services

Meals will be served to all students in the cafeterias in each building. There are some important changes for families to be aware of. During the last two school years, the USDA ensured that all schools were able to offer meals free of charge to all students. However, this universal reimbursement expired on June

30, 2022. Therefore, for the 22-23 school year, unless your family applies and is approved for free or reduced meals, there will be a charge for meals. We encourage anyone in need to apply for free or reduced meals. Please visit our [Food Services section on our website](#), and scroll to the bottom for more information and to obtain an application.

The district will use layered mitigation strategies for food areas.

### **Meal Service**

- Hand washing and/or hand sanitizer will be available before and after meals.
- Cleaning and disinfection of tables will be completed regularly throughout the course of the school day.
- Breakfast will be “to go” style. Meals will be eaten in both classrooms and in the cafeteria.
- Students uncomfortable being seated in the cafeteria will have the option to eat in an alternate location. Please contact the building principal to request an alternate location.
- Parents/guardians will be encouraged to set up and utilize a MySchoolBucks account to minimize cash transactions.
- All students with food allergies will have individualized health care plans.
- All staff will be trained on health and safety procedures and guidelines.

### **Transportation**

The CDC and the local county health departments are in agreement with full occupancy of the buses following the protocols below:

- Windows or roof hatches will be open whenever possible.
- Cleaning and disinfection practices will include antimicrobial application.

### **District Transportation Protocols**

- Parents/guardians should screen their child(ren) for fever/signs of COVID-19 prior to getting on the bus; sick students must be kept home.
- All transportation department employees are encouraged to take their temperature and perform a health self-assessment before leaving home each day.

### **Outside Visitors and Facilities Use**

- Nonessential visitors, guest speakers, and volunteers are permitted. All visitors should take their temperature and perform a health self-assessment before entering the school buildings.
- All visitors must follow all district-wide health and safety protocols currently in place.
- The use of district spaces by outside organizations is permissible. This use cannot conflict with school programs (facilities use “as available”). Facilities use will be handled the same as a normal year (including all appropriate forms completed). Groups must follow the applicable district-adopted guidelines.

### **Healthy Hygiene Practices**

- Healthy hygiene practices will be reviewed with students at the beginning of each school year.
- Signs will be posted throughout the school building (including entrances, restrooms, cafeteria,

classrooms, offices, auditorium, and janitorial staff areas) outlining healthy hygiene practices.

- The district will reinforce proper hand hygiene (cough/sneeze covering) among all students and staff.
- The following hand hygiene practices will be used:
  - Traditional hand washing for a minimum of 20 seconds.
  - When hand washing is not available, hand sanitizer (60% alcohol or greater) will be available. Each classroom teacher will have hand sanitizer in their classroom. All offices will also have hand sanitizer available.

### **School Events and Activities**

- Field Trips may be permitted under the following guidelines:
  - Plans for all field trips must be submitted to the building principal for approval.
  - The trip location may be indoors or outdoors.
  - All Health and Safety protocols and applicable district-approved recommendations in place at the time of the field trip should be followed.
  - Students should be cohorted for the bus ride and the duration of the trip as much as practical.
- Extracurricular activities may occur as usual.
- Students/parents may provide homemade and/or prepackaged snacks for their class.

### **Medically Vulnerable/High-Risk Groups**

- The district will, to the best of our ability, protect and support staff and students who are at higher risk for severe illness.
- Staff with a medically vulnerable status should refer to Policy 9350, titled Staff Requests for Accommodations Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, for further information.
- Students with a medically vulnerable status seeking an accommodation must provide medical documentation, which will be reviewed by the ICC school physician.
  - Medical documentation should include:
    - The nature, severity, and duration of the impairment
    - The activity or activities that the impairment limits
    - The extent to which the impairment limits the ability to perform the activity or activities
    - Accommodations recommended by the medical professional and substantiation as to why the requested accommodation is needed
- The district will consult with school health personnel and school physicians and work together with the students' family or staff member on how to meet the individual needs and provide accommodations that are medically necessary.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

- The district will make available face coverings upon request at no-cost to the employee.
- The district will make available face coverings upon request at no-cost to students.

### **Management of Ill Persons**

- Students or staff with symptoms of illness will be sent to the health office to be assessed. Students or staff that exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 that are not explained by a chronic health condition as determined by the school health personnel will be sent to the isolation room until a parent/guardian can

pick them up.

- If consent is given, the student or staff member will be given a COVID-19 test (see above *Point of Care (POC) Testing*).
- If positive, students and staff will immediately be sent home and are encouraged to contact their healthcare provider. If negative, the decision to send the student(s) home will be made by the school nurse in conjunction with the parent/guardian.
- Any POC positive test results will be reported to the local Department of Health as required.

### **If Students or Staff become Ill with Symptoms of COVID-19 at School**

- School staff must immediately report any illness of students or staff to the school nurse.
- If several students or staff are waiting to see the school nurse, they should physically distance from others.
- Two rooms will be available for school health personnel - one room for healthy individuals who have injuries or need their medications or nursing treatments and another room for assessing and caring for ill students and staff.
- School nurses and other school health professionals assessing or providing care to ill students and staff will follow transmission-based precautions which includes the use of appropriate PPE.
- Students suspected or confirmed as having COVID-19 awaiting transport home by the parent/guardian will be isolated in a room or area separate from others, with a supervising adult present utilizing appropriate PPE. Multiple students suspected of COVID-19 may be in this isolation room if they can be separated by at least six feet.
- Areas used by the ill person will be cleaned and disinfected.
- School staff will call for emergency transport for any student showing emergency warning signs for Multisymptom Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C).

### **Exposure to COVID-19**

- The following are the protocols to be followed for an individual that has been exposed or potentially exposed to a COVID-19 positive case. Masking and testing are strongly recommended. Home test kits will be provided by the school when available.
- We recommend that you follow the listed protocols below:
  - Students who are exposed or potentially exposed may remain in school however they are encouraged to wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days from the date of exposure.
  - Test within five days after exposure or sooner if symptoms develop during the ten days period immediately following the exposure.
  - If at any time you receive a positive test result, stay home and notify the school nurse.

### **Return to School After Illness (following CDC and Department of Health Guidelines)**

- If not diagnosed with COVID-19 by a healthcare provider, individuals can return to school when:
  - No fever, without use of fever reducing medicines, and felt well for 24 hours.
  - If diagnosed with another condition and has a healthcare provider written note stating they are clear to return to school.
- If diagnosed with COVID-19, individuals can return to school when:
  - Positive individuals must be out a minimum of 5 days since the individual first had symptoms.

Day 0 is the day of onset of symptoms or positive test result (if no symptoms).

- In order to return after day 5, an individual must be fever free for 24 hours (without using fever reducing medicine) and symptoms must be mostly resolved, including cough and shortness of breath.
- Positive individuals are strongly recommended to wear a well-fitting mask upon return to school and through day ten from initial exposure.
- The school may request medical documentation following the display of COVID-19 symptoms in school.

## **Cleaning and Disinfection**

- All buildings will undergo a deep cleaning and disinfection prior to the opening of school.
- School wide cleaning will include classrooms, restrooms, cafeterias, libraries, and buses. This cleaning will include:
  - Normal routine cleaning with soap and water to decrease how much of the virus is on surfaces and objects.
  - Disinfection using US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved disinfectants against COVID-19. Where disinfectants are used, products will be registered with EPA and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).
  - When EPA-approved disinfectants are not available, alternative disinfectants will be used (e.g., 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water or 70% alcohol solutions).
- The district will clean and disinfect each area with the following frequency:
  - Classrooms: Clean daily
  - Restrooms: Clean and disinfect daily
  - Cafeterias: Clean and disinfect daily
  - Libraries: Clean daily
  - Nurse's Offices: Clean and disinfect daily (and as needed) (see below)
- When possible, shared athletic/gym equipment (e.g., balls, protective gear) will be cleaned between use per manufacturer's directions. When cleaning is not possible in between uses, students will perform hand hygiene before and after use.
- School Health Office Cleaning
  - School health office cleaning must occur after each use of:
    - Cots
    - Bathroom
    - Health office equipment (e.g. blood pressure cuffs, otoscopes, stethoscopes, etc.)
    - Disposable items should be used as much as possible including:
      - Disposable pillow protectors
      - Disposable thermometers, or disposable thermometer sheaths or probes, and disposable otoscope specula.
- Students will perform hand hygiene before and after touching shared objects.

## **Before and After Care Program**

- The district's before and after care program is run by an independent organization, OK Kids, Inc.
- OK Kids, Inc. will follow all COVID-19 procedures and protocols outlined in this document and

all reopening plans.

## **Ventilation and Filtration**

- We are currently utilizing the maximum filtration (MERV 13) and ventilation based on our system's capabilities.
- Ventilation systems are regularly checked and maintained to ensure they are operating properly.
- Outdoor air circulation will be increased by opening windows and doors, unless they pose a safety or health risk (e.g. allowing pollen in or exacerbating asthma symptoms) to students using the facility. Outside air circulation will be maximized in all spaces to the extent possible.
- HVAC equipment will either run a minimum of one hour in advance of the building being occupied or one hour after the end of the instructional day.
- Teachers will be encouraged to have windows open and have class outside as much as possible.
- The cleaning and/or changing of heating/air conditioning system filters will occur quarterly based on run time and environmental conditions.
- The District conducted an inventory of HVAC systems to determine how to maximize the system's efficiency with regard to filtration and ventilation. The inventory was completed with the help of Ichabod Crane's Maintenance Department, mechanical engineers with CSArch, construction managers with Turner Construction and the District's Health & Safety Specialist. Review of the equipment capabilities included representatives from Otto Building Services and Camfil USA, Inc. [View the final report here.](#)

## **Social-Emotional Well Being**

Schools and districts must prioritize physical emotional well-being - not at the expense of academics, but to create the mental, physical, and emotional space for academic learning to occur.

The district will utilize a tiered approach of health interventions to assess students' mental health needs as outlined in the attached graphic: [ICC MTSS Mental Health](#)

- Tier I Support: The district has provided Peaceful Classroom training K-12 for all teachers. This is a curriculum designed to teach problem-solving skills, understanding stress responses, learning different types of thinking, building emotional resilience and mindfulness.
- Tier II Support: Counselors and psychologists will continue to implement Peaceful Kids, a program that targets small counseling groups based on Peaceful Classroom training and the need of a higher level of support.
- Tier III Support: Teachers and counselors will monitor student wellness to identify those who require more intensive intervention. Individualized therapy plans will be provided for those identified students.

### **Support for Faculty/Staff, Students, Parents**

- Mindfulness activities will be implemented school-wide each day.
- Counselors and psychologists will visit all classes regularly to develop relationships and make themselves accessible to all students.
- Counselors and psychologists will provide office hours for students and parents.
- Training will be provided for parents on how to identify students who may need social-emotional support.
- Therapy dogs will return to classrooms.

- Surveys will be utilized periodically to ensure that the District is meeting students' social-emotional needs.

## **Technology and Connectivity**

Access to computing devices and high-speed internet are essential for educational equity. Ichabod Crane is committed to ensuring that all students have access to both a device and to internet access in all grades.

### **District Plan to Provide Devices and Internet Access to Students and Staff**

- In third through twelfth grade, students will be assigned a computing device and provided with internet access as needed.
- In kindergarten through second grade, the district will provide students with a device for use in the classroom only.

## **Career and Technical Education**

- Career and Technical Education is provided by our regional BOCES, Questar III. This organization has developed their own plans which must be followed by all Ichabod Crane students participating in the program.
- We will collaborate with our business partners to ensure a safe and healthy work-based learning opportunity for students with disabilities as outlined in their education plans.