



La Conner School District

COVID Reopening Plan

January 26, 2021



Executive Summary

La Conner School District, based on guidance released from the state in mid-December, is starting to bring back more students for in-person services. We are starting with Preschool, Kindergarten, and Grade 1 with a targeted date of February 1. Other grades in the elementary will be added starting with the younger years, and including all elementary grades by the end of February. Middle School will follow with a targeted start date of March 1, with High School following that.

The Hybrid Model for Preschool to Grade 8 will be to have two cohorts, morning and afternoon, to keep the class size low. Class will be 2.5 hours, 8:30-11:00 and then 12:30-3:00.

All people in the building must pass a health screening, and masks must be worn by all staff and students with the exception of a small number of students with disabilities or others for health reasons (see relevant section below). Everybody must also follow all COVID mitigation measures. (social distancing, hygiene, cleaning, etc.).

Letter from Superintendent

There is an end in sight and it can't come quickly enough. The Governor recently changed the metric that is allowing us to move forward more quickly with reopening schools and bring in more students for in-person learning. In addition, the promised vaccine is becoming available for selected groups of individuals with the goal of having 70% of our population vaccinated within seven months. The La Conner School Board has directed me to move forward, with care and safety for all staff and students being paramount in all of our thinking and planning.

This current plan is a document intended to reassure our community that our students are safe and communicate the ways we are constantly staying abreast of new information and adjusting as necessary. With changing conditions in mind, we are setting target dates that may need to shift in the event of increased infection rates that we can not predict with any degree of certainty.

As your superintendent I want to thank all of our community for coming together to serve our children under severe circumstances.

Sincerely,

Rich

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Throughout this plan La Conner uses directions from OSPI, Washington State Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Links to specific documents appear in relevant sections and at the end of the document. We recognize there are dangers to bringing students back in the building during the pandemic; measures discussed here are for risk mitigation. While there is no way to offer a health guarantee, these measures make educating students in person safer. As of this writing, Skagit County is in the “MODERATE

RISK” category for COVID activity with 339 cases per 100,000 people, and a test positivity rate of >10%. ([Find current data here.](#))

COVID Metrics – The Statistics We Use to Make Decisions

La Conner School District will follow the state statistics for reopening schools. In the [Decision Making Tree](#) (Dec 2020 update) the state suggests at a high COVID infection rate (>350/100K) that schools start phasing in elementary students with the younger students coming in first. As rates go down LCSD will continue to bring in more students. The Decision Tree document suggests bringing in secondary students when rates reach 200/100K of population. (You can find state and county data at [this site.](#)) If the county goes above 350/100K the district will pause our forward steps. The district will always aim to provide at least two weeks' notice prior to making changes so that staff can prepare and parents can make plans. At this point we do not have a date for secondary school, but intend that it will follow the elementary school progress. Bringing these students back will also occur in phases.

The following portions of the document detail daily operational needs. (The [CDC checklist](#) of these needs might be helpful.)

Health Screening Procedures

Everybody who enters a building must be screened. (People staying in their cars and picking up something at a school building or at the health booth are not screened.) Screening includes a set of screening questions (from the CDC) and a temperature check. Names are entered onto a sheet to facilitate contact tracing should that need arise and a wristband given to show the person has passed the screening. Each person needs to be screened daily, but not more than once per day.

Currently, screening takes place at the health booth at the beginning of the bus loop in front of the middle school. Although the number of places to be screened and location may change, screening will remain mandatory for all who enter a building. Signs are posted on doors informing people they must be screened before entering and must wear a mask if entering the building.

Students using district transportation are screened before they board the bus using the same system. As we move to having more students on campus we may move to an online attestation system, perhaps starting with staff.

All staff in the buildings are expected to help keep each other safe by monitoring for wristbands and asking anybody without one to exit the building and return to the screening booth. Because of COVID, people outside a cohort will not be allowed to visit classrooms. Staff members should inform their administrator or safety committee representative of problems.

Logs of people screened are kept and submitted to the special services office to be used in contact tracing if necessary. For privacy concerns, these logs are kept in sealed envelopes and destroyed at the start of the second month of their creation. (All September logs are destroyed November 1, for example.) [See the CDC page on screening.](#)

COVID or COVID Symptoms on Campus

There may be times when a student or staff member gets sick on campus. If symptoms are consistent with COVID we will assume they are COVID-positive. The school nurse and building leadership will both be notified if a student is found to have symptoms. That person will be removed from others and isolated until s/he can go home. Isolation rooms currently exist in the Middle School nurse's office, the Elementary School nurse's office, and in a back room of the Braves' Club where Hub students are served.

Parents will be asked immediately to arrange a way home for a student who becomes symptomatic as school. The school nurse or building leadership (or designee) will:

- 1) inform parents of events;
- 2) arrange for a ride home as soon as possible;
- 3) interview parents (and student if appropriate) about symptoms and possible COVID contacts;
- 4) help parents or staff members make arrangements to get a COVID test;
- 5) review when, and under what circumstances, the person may return to school.

The CDC provides a [flowchart for what to do if a student is sick at school](#). The WA DOH has a [similar document](#).

Although we cannot require parents or staff members to reveal COVID test results, doing so may speed their re-entry process.

When a reliable test is available for on-campus use, the test may be administered to a student (with parent permission) or staff by a qualified district person to determine

whether symptoms are COVID or something else. (The test we have available would be valid only for people showing symptoms.) See Testing section below.

Sending a child home so quickly is different than would generally be done in regular times. Sending students home immediately in this case enables us to be protective of all other people in the building so that school can remain open. Keeping sickness out of our schools will avoid disrupting others, and will take a community effort; we're asking for your understanding and cooperation as we all do our part.

A flowchart for returning to school (for both staff members and students) can be found on the [Health Services page of the LCSD website](#).

The state has provided guidance about when to return a classroom or school to remote learning. [You can find that here](#).

School Nurse

Our school nurse, Morgan Driscoll, RN, is active in evaluating all COVID measures. In addition to other measures in this document, she is working with staff to determine which face covering is necessary for each job. Further, we are beginning to fit test high risk staff for N95 masks. The school nurse conducts fit test training with the most up-to-date guidelines and forms. Each staff member is trained and signs off on training on proper mask usage when they pass their fit test. Masks are provided to the district by the DOH and our stock continues to be filled.

Staff are frequently sent emails on mask training such as when to wear what time of mask, proper wearing, and when to change this mask.

The school nurse sends out weekly email updates to staff in regards to new policies, COVID updates per Skagit County DOH, district updates, and any other training that is needed each week.

The school nurse keeps her page updated with the latest COVID information and other health updates. You can find her [health page here](#), and you can email her at mdriscoll@lc.k12.wa.us.

We have 3 isolation rooms through the district (one in the Elementary school, Middle/high school, and the back of the Braves' Club building). See prior section for more details on these rooms.

The school nurse has been training teachers/ classrooms on COVID information such as proper mask wearing, handwashing, social distancing, and when to stay home when sick. The nurse either goes to the class to do this presentation, or she gives the teachers the tools and training to give the presentation themselves if they choose to do so.

Hybrid Model Specifics

La Conner Elementary will start with an am/pm hybrid model, with one cohort attending in-person services Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8:30-11:00 and the second attending 12:30-3:00. Our targeted start date is February 1 for Preschool, Kindergarten and Grade 1 students. We will add upper grades through the month, and aim to have all grades back by the end of February. (Grades 2 and 3 target date is Feb 16. Grades 4 and 5 target date is Feb 22. Middle School target date is March 1, for all grades 6-8.)

The time between the sessions will be used for sanitation, teacher lunch, and teacher preparation. Students are expected to complete learning activities assigned by their teacher when they are not meeting in person. Wednesdays will be used for monitoring the remote portion of the learning, including holding office hours. Teachers will continue to use the school's Learning Management System (LMS) to post assignments and monitor work so that students can continue their education when they are not participating in their education in person.

(A cohort is a group of people who interact only with others in the same group. This limits the risk to people in the cohort, and limits the number of people who may need to quarantine if exposure does occur.)

Parents will be given an option to choose whether their student will attend a hybrid model or remain with remote learning. At the elementary, once the choice is made, students will stay with that choice until trimester changes. Once parents have been contacted to select either hybrid or remote learning, the district will determine staffing needs. Demand for each program will determine where teaching staff is placed. NOTE: this may mean that students will be changing teachers as we implement our hybrid model. Ms. Fakkema has more information in a [letter to parents](#).

At the middle and high schools, a different model may be in place. The secondary principal, Kathy Herrera, will develop this in collaboration from her building leadership team. The target start date for all middle school grades is March 1.

See Daily Procedures section below for information on how the elementary school day will run.

Remote Learning

Many families are anticipated to have their students remain in remote learning. LCSD will support this option at least through the end of the 2020-21 school year.

Elementary students served in the remote learning option will continue to follow their grade level curriculum on the LMS. The district will provide a teacher to support students and parents in this model. As with the hybrid model, the teacher may or may not be the same as their classroom teacher. Also, the schedule of zoom sessions will likely change. Ms. Fakkema has more information in a [letter to parents](#).

The plan for secondary is still being developed. Since many high school teachers are content specialists and therefore don't work in teams, it may be that students who remain in remote learning will be following different lessons than their peers in the hybrid program.

Sports and Extracurricular Activities

La Conner School District believes that these activities are an important part of school for many students. Sports will be offered in accordance with WIAA regulations, both for COVID and the practice and game schedules. Other activities will be done remotely or within the guidelines of the daily procedures section. Contact Ms. Herrera for details. Two Sources of information are:

- 1) [WIAA's Healthy Washington Sport and Activity Guidelines](#)
- 2) [WIAA's Return-to-Play Guidelines](#)

Daily Procedures

This section has many subsections. Guidelines for this and many of the areas below can be found in the mitigation strategies section on this [CDC page](#).

Capacity

A classroom's capacity will be the lesser of 15 people OR the number of people that can be safely accommodated calculating distancing of 6 feet, ventilation, PPE and other factors. (see below.) A large room may be able to accommodate more than 15 people, but only according to COVID mitigation guidelines and in cohorts of 15 people or less.

Custodial

Classrooms will be sanitized between cohorts. Classroom staff will be responsible for cleaning. (Putting things away, wiping student and staff desks and chairs with a wipe.) Custodial staff will sanitize those surfaces, and clean and sanitize other areas (high use areas, sinks, bathrooms) and conduct fogging. All sanitizers are on the EPA's N List approved to kill COVID. Vacuuming or mopping will be done once daily after a room is occupied by students. Playgrounds will be cleaned as usual but not sanitized. (CDC guidance on cleaning can be found [here](#). Sanitizing playgrounds has been found to be an ineffective use of resources.)

Meals

Students will continue to receive meals from the cafeteria, but will not eat at school. These meals will be delivered as before. If snacks are to be served, students will eat either outside, or at their desks inside for the minimum amount of time needed. Any Hub students present for the entire day will eat their meal with COVID prevention measures in place.

Transportation

Students are screened (with questions and a temperature check) before they board a bus. While on the bus students sit one to a seat, and alternate seats on each side. (This may involve assigning seats to students.) Whenever weather permits, windows will be down to increase ventilation. Buses will be sanitized between routes, including at the end of the day. Bus logs are kept to facilitate contact tracing should the need arise.

Details

1. Entry and exit procedures for students riding buses.

For pick up, the aid exits the bus and takes the student's temp while asking them if they have any of the following 5 symptoms: cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, fever, or loss of taste and smell.

If the student has a temperature of 100.4 or more, shows symptoms, OR answers yes to any of the screening questions s/he does not board the bus. Parents are told they will be getting a courtesy call from Nurse Morgan or Kim Pedroza that day.

Students sit in assigned seats, one to a seat. Students will sit in classroom cohorts, and exit from the front first.

Students receive their wrist bands at the health booth, or from bus staff. The driver turns in the screening documentation that can be used for contact tracing.

2. Cleaning protocol for buses.

All buses are sprayed down from front to back with EPA cleaners from the N List. This is in addition to the drivers' usual daily cleaning routines. Drivers attest after every route that the cleaning has been completed.

Ventilation

Rooms used will have recommended ventilation metrics. These include a filter of MERV13 or equivalent, and changing the air a minimum of 5 times per hour. LCSD will adjust HVAC units as needed to meet this requirements. (See also [CDC ventilation guidelines.](#)) For more details, see the [ASHRAE document on reopening buildings.](#) La Conner will follow the [WA DOH ventilation guidelines.](#)

Personal Protective Equipment and other Prevention Measures

All students and staff shall wear a facemask adhering the L&I and CDC guidelines covering both the nose and mouth at all times while inside. The school nurse will determine what type of mask and/or face shield should be worn in each setting. (For example, in close settings an N95 mask may be necessary. A shield or barrier may be required if a student needs to see the mouth of a staff member.) The school shall supply masks for anybody needing them. Students and staff may bring their own masks, but they must pass CDC guidelines. Masks must cover the nose and mouth, must be two layers if made of cloth, and cannot have an exhaust valve. The school nurse can determine if a mask meets the requirements. [CDC has a page on masks.](#) See also the [CDC page on prevention measures.](#)

All staff will check for wristbands and mask wearing, asking students and peers to correct any errors in PPE use. Should multiple corrections be necessary, staff should notify an administrator. Failure to use PPE (like masks) or follow other COVID mitigation measures may result in the person being excluded from the building.

There are exceptions for some students with identified disabilities, documented medical need, and/or others who are unable to wear a mask. The district requires a doctor's note

be provided for exceptions to be made. Given this documentation for a person, the district will develop accommodations to keep that person and the cohort s/he is in safe.

If social distancing can be maintained outside, students may have a mask break outside.

Handwashing and Other Sanitation

Schools will instruct students on the importance and procedures of handwashing, and monitor them as they do this. Hand sanitizer will be stationed at entrance points to schools and at strategic high-use points in the classroom. Sanitation supplies, like wipes, masks and sanitizer, will be issued to all classrooms in use. Students and staff are instructed to wash hands for 20 seconds. The school nurse will offer to help with training needs for staff and students.

On-Site Testing

Currently WA is piloting testing with 12 school districts. ([See document](#)) La Conner is pursuing this option. Many unknowns mean it's unclear when this ability would be in place. Current recommendations are not in favor of universal testing for all staff and students. When testing is implemented within LCSD, we will have procedures indicating who will get testing. For more information on workplace testing, see the [CDC page on testing](#). ([There is an earlier site here.](#))

Our school nurse or another trained staff will be the only person(s) to administer this test, and only with permission from the staff member or parent involved.

Parent Supports and Resources

Parents have an integral role in helping the community stay safe. CDC resources include:

- 1) You may find yourself having difficulty explaining COVID to your child. Like many topics, a single conversation probably won't be sufficient to cover masks, vaccinations, quarantines, and all the other facets of the disease. CDC offers a [COVID-19 Parental Resources Kit](#). This includes reminders, postcards, games, conversation starters, developmentally-targeted approaches, and other resources.
- 2) Making your decision about in-person versus remote services won't be easy. You'll be weighing safety concerns against learning opportunities. CDC offers ideas about what to consider in their page about [Making the Decision for In Person Services](#). This includes checklists when looking at school and when looking at your home.

- 3) Once you make a decision about your student's learning model, successfully executing that choice and supporting your student(s) has more considerations. CDC has a page on [Back to School Planning](#). This includes both in-person and remote services. The page also has a link for mental health considerations.
- 4) Both the hybrid and remote learning models rely on successful learning at home, albeit in different degrees. You may want information on how best to support your learner while at home. CDC also has a page on [Helping Children Learn from Home](#). This includes ways to structure your home to support learning and some learning resources to help do your own teaching.
- 5) As a parent it's important for you to know how to take care of those in your home. COVID is new to everybody, and you'll have to make choices both to keep your home safe, AND to help keep others safe. For more information you can [check the webpage](#) of Ms. Driscoll, our school nurse. Also, CDC has a one-page document on what to do in your home to mitigate COVID-19. (In [English](#) and [Spanish](#).)

Preparation

The CDC has three tools to help schools prepare and plan for reopening schools.

- 1) [Considerations for Schools: Readiness and Planning Tool](#)
- 2) [K-12 Schools Mitigation Toolkit](#)
- 3) [Planning and Executing a COVID-19 Mitigation Walkthrough](#)

Evaluating and Monitoring the Implementation

The execution of the plan will be monitored by administration and the district safety committee. Members of the safety committee are chosen to represent each building in the district, and each department or area within the district. During COVID, building representatives of the committee will schedule regular observations, and establish channels for staff to report incidents. The committee operates independently of the back to school planning group and committee.

When monitoring the execution of the plan, LCSD will include the following methods:

- 1) Any incident reports
- 2) Observation and tracking of hygiene practices
- 3) Observation and tracking of other mitigation measures

4) Staff perceptions

5) Safety/COVID mitigation suggestions from groups, committees, or individuals

Our purpose, of course, is to maintain zero COVID transmission in the school.

CDC has support for this process, which can be found on their [monitoring support page](#).

Sources

The following documents were accessed in the writing of this plan and may prove useful to others to investigate a particular cause or question. This list is not meant to be comprehensive.

[The CDC Coronavirus page](#) offers links to many COVID questions and resources. Within that page, the [Toolkit for K-12 Schools](#) has more specific guidance for schools, parents, and students.

Similarly, the [WA Department of Health Coronavirus](#) page has state resources. Their page with school recommendations can be found [here](#).

[Employer Health and Safety Requirements for School Scenarios](#). (Sept 30) OSPI document, done in cooperation with DOH and L&I.

[K-12 Schools 2020-2021 Guidance](#) update of December 16, 2020. DOH document.

[Toolkit for making decisions \(Decision Tree\)](#) document

[Operating Schools During COVID-19: CDC's Considerations](#). CDC document

[WA Risk Assessment Dashboard](#) can be used to see the infection rates for Skagit County. A good site for percentages, rates, and the like.

The [DOH COVID Data Dashboard](#) is a good site for actual case numbers.

[Washington State K-12 School Testing Guidance](#) (information on COVID testing at school districts) can be found here.

[Symptom Evaluation Flow Chart](#) can be used to make decisions about what to do when a person presents with symptoms that might be COVID.

King County has several strong resources. Their [schools page](#) is quite comprehensive.

For more screening information and support, including contact tracing and working with local health agencies, see [this CDC document](#). See also [this document for non-health care workplaces](#). Washington DOH offers [this resource document](#), which incorporates screening and many other mitigation methods.