



**COSSA Regional
Technology & Education
Center (CRTEC)**

**Covid-19 Plan for
School Year 2021-2022**

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Overview

For the 2021-2022 school year, it is COSSA's intention to open the school building for face-to-face instructions as long as conditions permit. For the safety of our students and staff, and depending on conditions and guidance from coordinating agencies, we may occasionally need to resort to hybrid/blended, or full distance/remote learning mode. Generally speaking, there are three possible learning modes:

Traditional. All school buildings open. Face-to-face instruction is the preferred learning mode, and the COSSA Academy Instructional Procedures Manual criteria determines if a student may be placed on remote learning. This learning mode is applicable as long as there is no community spread of COVID-19 or any of its variants. This leaning mode includes:

- Return to normal school routines.
- School-wide social distancing and mitigation strategies in place.
- Attendance policies are normal per the COSSA Student Handbook.
- Grading and academic policies are normal.
- Covid-19 vaccine available to all students and staff over the age of 12.

Hybrid/Blended Learning. Most students are in the school building, including all students who are vaccinated. Some parents/families may elect hybrid and/or distance learning for students who are not vaccinated. This learning mode is applicable if there is moderate community transmission. This learning mode includes:

- Modified attendance and academic policies for non-vaccinated students.
- School-wide social distancing and mitigation strategies in place.
- Special safety and sanitizing protocols approved by the health district and the county.
- Concentrates on students in school but provides flexibility for homebound students.

Full Distance/Remote Learning. Only vaccinated students permitted in the school building. This learning mode is applicable if there is substantial community transmission. This learning mode includes:

- Attendance and academic policies highly modified for non-vaccinated students.
- All schooling for non-vaccinated students via Distributed Learning Model.

Our school goals are best fulfilled when teachers and students come together—on campus and in classrooms. However, until the COVID-19 pandemic has abated, an open school building requires special precautions and protocols in order to safeguard the health and well-being of our students, faculty and staff. We have developed these protocols in close coordination with local, regional, and state officials.

Patron Review

The COSSA Stakeholders Group, consisting of industry and political leaders from the communities served by COSSA, meets quarterly. At each quarterly meeting the COSSA Stakeholders Group will review the Covid-19 plan for adherence to CDC and local Covid-19 safety guidance.

COSSA Academy and CRTEC Career Technical School conduct parent-teacher conferences quarterly. At each quarterly parent-teacher conference, the COSSA Covid-19 plan will be available for review and comment by parents and guardians of our students.

Ultimately, the CRTEC Covid-19 safety plan is approved by the COSSA Board of Trustees. Patrons who wish to address the COSSA Board of Trustees will find the policy that guides this request (Board Policy 4105) on the Agencies' website.

CDC Guidelines

COSSA has elected to follow the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance with regard to masking and other prevention strategies, rather than juggling the competing guidance from local health authorities and consortium district Boards of Trustees. The CDC believes that schools can limit transmission by layering the following effective prevention strategies:

1. COSSA believes that no employee or student can be allowed to pose a direct threat to the health or safety of individuals in our school environment. COSSA also believes that staff or students who will not be vaccinated due to health concerns or strongly held religious beliefs must, if at all possible, receive appropriate accommodations. Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. **Vaccination is therefore encouraged, but not required, for staff and students.** Related guidelines are:

Students and staff will not be offered vaccinations from COSSA, and will not be given Covid-19 screening tests within COSSA buildings.

Students and staff who are vaccinated do not need to wear masks.

Non-vaccinated students and staff are encouraged, but not required, to wear masks.

Students and staff who are vaccinated do not need to be sent home when they are exposed to a positive Covid-19 case, unless they develop symptoms.

Students and staff who are not vaccinated and who are exposed to a positive Covid-19 case will be sent home to quarantine, or to their home school depending on that district's quarantine guidance, until CDC quarantine requirements are met (see below).

2. Physical distancing.

All students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, will maintain a 3-foot physical distance while within the CRTEC building.

3. Ventilation.

CRTEC has high-efficiency filters installed throughout the building, and will continue to use these high-efficiency filters throughout the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic.

4. Personal hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

All students and staff are required to thoroughly wash their hands, following CDC

guidelines, before meals. Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, dry hands with a paper towel, and use the paper towel to turn off the faucet.

All students and staff will observe normal respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs or sneezes with a bent arm or tissue and washing hands or using hand sanitizer afterwards.

Hand sanitizer is required upon entry to building.

Keep hands away from nose, mouth, and eyes.

Avoid the sharing of food, drinks, and personal care items (e.g. lip balm).

5. Routine cleaning with disinfection.

CRTEC will use an approved cleaning product to clean desks, common tables, countertops, doorknobs and handles, hands-on learning items, bathroom fixtures, phones, and customer service areas every day. Students may be asked to assist in classroom cleaning by placing chairs on desks, spraying disinfectant, etc.

Teachers, staff, and students will keep their hands sanitized using the automatic touchless dispensers of professional grade advanced hand sanitizer that are installed in every classroom and in hallways.

6. Staying home when sick.

Staff and students must feel healthy and be symptom-free prior to entering the building.

Students and staff will stay home when sick. Parents are required to keep sick students home for at least 72 hours after a fever subsides without the use of fever-reducing medicines. We rely on parents to promote the same hygienic practices we will direct students to practice at school.

If not vaccinated, students and staff will obtain a negative Covid-19 test before returning to school if they are sent home for showing Covid-19 symptoms (see quarantine guidance below).

7. Mental health needs.

COSSA staff have access to an Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) as part of their employee benefits.

Students have access to mental health counseling through Lifeways Counseling, as part of the services offered by the COSSA Academy Community School.

Procedure for Positive or Suspected Covid-19 Case

The latest Southwest District Health “Illness Decision Tree for Schools” will be used to determine quarantine, “stay-at-home”, and close contact procedures. See Appendix A.

Quarantine Guidance

The CDC currently recommends a quarantine period of 14 days. However, the following options to shorten quarantine are acceptable alternatives.

1. Quarantine can end after Day 10 without testing if no symptoms have been reported during daily monitoring.
2. Quarantine can end after Day 7 if a diagnostic specimen tests negative and if no symptoms were reported during daily monitoring. The specimen may be collected and tested within 48 hours before the time of planned quarantine discontinuation (e.g., in anticipation of testing delays), but quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7.

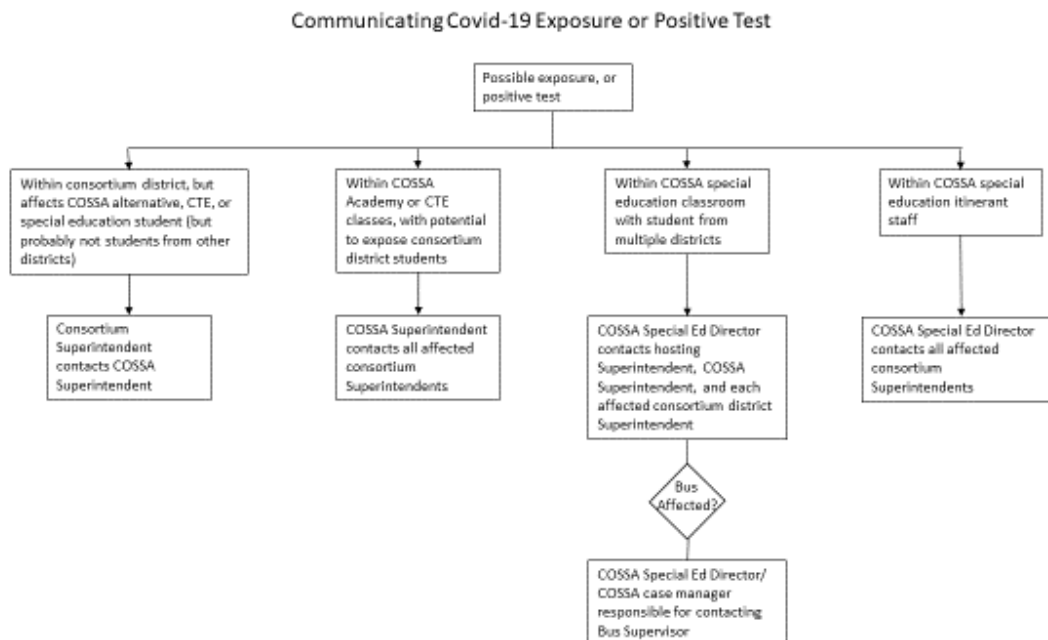
In both cases, additional criteria (e.g., continued symptom monitoring and masking through Day 14) must be met.

Communicating Information Regarding Exposure or Positive Tests

Communication regarding possible exposure or positive Covid-19 tests within a consortium district, that affects students within COSSA alternative, CTE, or Special Education programs, will be between the consortium Superintendent and the Superintendent of COSSA.

If a possible exposure or positive Covid-19 test occurs within the COSSA Academy or CRTEC CTE programs, where students from multiple districts are affected, the COSSA Superintendent will contact the Superintendent of each consortium district affected.

If a possible exposure or positive Covid-19 test occurs within a COSSA Special Education program, where students from multiple districts are affected, the COSSA Special Education Director will inform the Superintendent of the hosting school, the COSSA Superintendent, and the Superintendent of each consortium district affected. If there are many districts affected, the Special Education Director and Superintendent of COSSA may share communicating duties to speed the delivery of the information.



Safety Protocols

Student/Staff Vaccination Questionnaire

Before school begins, the status of student/staff vaccination will be determined by completing the vaccination questionnaire (Appendix B). Students and staff are not required to answer this questionnaire. However, not answering the questionnaire places the student/staff member into the same category as a non-vaccinated student/staff member, should the student/staff become exposed to Covid-19, or develop Covid-19 symptoms.

Vulnerable Employees

Staff who are not vaccinated, and who self-determine they are in a high-risk group or are immunocompromised, should contact COSSA HR and their program administrator immediately upon making this determination. According to the CDC, (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/people-at-higher-risk.html>) individuals at high-risk include those not vaccinated and who are:

People aged 65 years and older

People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma

People who have serious heart conditions

People of any age with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] >40) or certain underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as those with diabetes, renal failure, or liver disease might also be at risk

People who are pregnant should be monitored since they are known to be at risk with severe viral illness

People who are immunocompromised. Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications.

Staff who are determined by COSSA to be a “vulnerable employee”, but who are not vaccinated, may receive accommodations or work assignments other than their initial contracted assignment in order to remain employed by COSSA. New work assignments may affect pay. Accommodations that COSSA may offer to employees who cannot be vaccinated due to disability or religion include: wearing a face mask, working at a social distance from coworkers or non-employees, working a modified shift, getting periodically tested for COVID-19, being given the opportunity to telework, and accepting a reassignment.

Remote Work and Learning

The core of the COSSA Covid-19 plan is for all staff and students to elect to receive the vaccination. Because not all staff and students will receive an immunization, any staff or student who is not vaccinated, and who is exposed to Covid-19, should inform the school and elect not to physically come to school.

With that in mind, remember: COSSA has a deep respect for the right of parental decision making in these types of situations. We strongly encourage all parents to carefully consider what is best for your children and your family. If you come to the conclusion that it is best for your children to stay away from school, please inform COSSA Administration. If the parent/guardian desires to pursue full-time remote delivery of instruction, the COSSA Instructional Procedures Manual contains the protocols and minimum criteria for remote delivery of instruction. Not all students will be eligible for remote delivery of instruction through COSSA Academy.

COSSA expects to require some students to stay at home, or to have to be taken home, if only for a short period of time, as a precautionary measure – for example, if they reach a temperature of 100.1° F or higher.

Attendance - Students

In addition to those listed in the COSSA Student Handbook attendance policy, the following attendance categories are in effect:

1. Absent and vaccinated. Normal attendance policies, limitations, and procedures apply.
2. Absent and not vaccinated. Normal attendance policies, limitations, and procedures apply. However, due to the lengthy absences required by quarantine (up to 14 days), students/parents may need to engage in distance learning if they intend to earn their credit. Credit recovery through the COSSA Academy summer school may also be an option.

Attendance - Staff

Normal staff leave procedures outlined in the COSSA Personnel Handbook remain in effect. Vaccinated staff will not be sent home if exposed to Covid-19 unless symptoms appear. Non-vaccinated staff will immediately be sent home if exposed to Covid-19 because of a violation of masking or physical distancing rules, regardless of symptoms, and will be subject to quarantine rules (see above).

Social Distancing and Mitigation Strategies

Face Covering

Non-vaccinated Academy and CTE instructional staff and students are encouraged to wear face coverings when in CRTEC. Face coverings are defined as a mask or face shield which consists of material that will adequately reduce or eliminate the amount of large respiratory droplets that a person spreads when talking, sneezing, or coughing. Staff and students should provide their own face coverings provided it complies with the above definition. Temporary face coverings will be made available for students and staff members if they have lost their original face covering and desire to wear one, but supplies are limited.

Transportation

Transportation of students within the COSSA consortium is the responsibility of the home school districts. Different districts are approaching the problem of social distancing on buses differently. COSSA measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 starts when the student exists the bus at CRTEC in the morning or afternoon.

Hallways

Students will not socialize in the hallways. The school's culture and behavior expectations already require supervised bathroom breaks. Passage should be an orderly and quiet transit between classes and activities. Teachers will ensure that students maintain increased spacing in lines as they move through hallways.

Classroom Seating

Teachers will use a checker board pattern to maximize the spacing between student desks.

Lunchroom Seating

Academy lunch will be served in two shifts to maximize the ability to spread students in the cafeteria. All lunchroom tables will be spread throughout the entire cafeteria, and a maximum of 7 students will be seated per table (as opposed to 14 normally) alternating each side, thereby increasing spacing between students. Lunchroom monitors will enforce spacing standards.

Breaks, Walks, and Sports

Person-to-person contact sports or activities will be avoided. For basketball or volleyball, all athletic equipment will be sanitized prior to use. Students will maintain social distancing on walks around the exterior of the campus.

Field Trips

Students will maintain 3-foot physical distancing in buses and vans.

Holding Room for Sick Students

The COSSA Board room will be utilized as a holding area for sick students who are waiting to be picked up by parent/guardian.

Common Areas

Signs will be posted placing the Special Education office suite, teacher's lounge, and administrative areas off-limits to students and adults who do not work in those areas. Glass/plexi-glass sneeze barriers will be installed in administrative areas to prevent inadvertent sneezing or coughing from endangering vulnerable adults. Signage for 3-foot separation will also be installed in administrative areas.

Additional Daily Protocols

Staff duties and student activities requiring close contact will be modified as necessary to maximize social distancing and minimize time and distance in close proximity.

Appendix A

Illness Decision Tree for Schools

Q1: Are you experiencing COVID-19 symptoms? They include:

(One or more of these symptoms that is a new onset or is an increase in severity)

- **Fever*** (100.4°F or 38°C) without having taken any fever-reducing medications, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- **Loss of smell or taste***
- **Cough***
- Muscle aches
- **Sore throat***
- Shortness of breath
- **Chills**
- New or unusual headache
- Nausea, **vomiting***, **diarrhea***, or loss of appetite
- Fatigue
- Congestion or runny nose

*The presence of any of these symptoms generally suggests a student, teacher, or staff member has an infectious illness and should not attend school, regardless of whether the illness is COVID 19. Students should not attend school in person if they or their caregiver identifies new development of any of these symptoms.

YES, I HAVE SYMPTOMS

NO SYMPTOMS

Q2: HAVE YOU -

- 2.1: Had close contact with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case?
- 2.2: Travelled to or live in an area that is designated Category 3 (Substantial Community Transmission)?
- 2.3: Recently had a COVID test that is pending?

Have you been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with or tested positive for COVID-19? (within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more)

YES TO 1 OR MORE

NO

YES

NO

Quarantine yourself and contact your healthcare provider (HCP).

Stay at home until you are fever-free without medication for 24 hours and symptoms improve or resolve per school illness policy.

A 10-14 day quarantine is recommended, though some exceptions can be made.

- Details regarding quarantine options:
- [If both parties were wearing masks IDHW](#)
 - [Options to reduce quarantine CDC](#)

Practice physical distancing and good hygiene.

If **YES** to 2.1: Isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms.

If **YES** to 2.2 & you received an alternative diagnosis or negative test: Follow HCP & school guidance on when to return.
If **NOT TESTED**: Isolate for 10 days from onset of symptoms and follow school return policy.

If **YES** to 2.3: Isolate until you receive your test results.

Anyone who has been identified as a close contact should follow their school's quarantine policy.

If **YES** to any of these, call: _____



Appendix B
Student/Staff Vaccination Questionnaire

All students and staff attending the COSSA Academy Alternative School or CRTEC Career-Technical School should complete this questionnaire regarding vaccination status. You may choose not to provide your vaccination status – please just check that box and return the form so that we know we have contacted every student and/or staff member.

Student/Staff Member's Name: _____
(please print)

1. Have you been fully vaccinated with a CDC approved Covid-19 vaccine, which in the case of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine requires two (2) injections?

Yes _____

No _____

I chose not to answer this question _____

Please note: choosing not to answer this question places the student/staff member into the same category as a non-vaccinated student/staff member, should the student/staff become exposed to Covid-19, or develop Covid-19 symptoms.

Student/Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____
(For students under 18)