

## Regina Catholic Education Center Return to Learn Update 2021-2022

**Premise:** Every effort will be made for Regina Catholic Education Center to operate as normal and routine as possible; however, the situation regarding COVID-19 and the Delta variant is fluid. As such, the information provided here today may change even before school begins on Monday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Regina is closely monitoring the virus pattern and its movement throughout Johnson County. Regina is also reviewing guidance provided by Johnson County Health Department (JCHD), Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), Iowa Department of Education (DOE), and the Diocese of Davenport. **Please note:** the guidance provided by these entities is not always consistent nor do they always align with one another. As such, Regina will proceed by making the best decisions for the students and staff while also adhering to the laws and best practices in virus prevention and containment.

This document is designed to answer questions that students, staff, families, and the entire school community have regarding the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

Regina will continue to monitor [COVID-19 rates](#) and adjust protocols as warranted. Layered prevention strategies, including wearing face coverings, washing hands, minding social distance to the greatest extent possible, and staying home when sick is essential for the well-being of all in the school community. Regina's policies, procedures, and these enhanced health and safety guidelines apply to the entire campus and facilities, school-related activities, programs and events, and community use of campus facilities.

**Will face-coverings be required?** Per [guidance from the CDC](#), universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to schools, regardless of vaccination status, is recommended. Face-coverings will be available for students, staff, and visitors; however, [per Iowa law](#), Regina cannot require face-coverings to be worn in our buildings or on school grounds for *school-related activities*.

- Exception: In compliance with [President's Executive Order](#) on domestic transportation, students are required to wear a face-covering while on the bus or utilizing other Regina-provided transportation.

**Does Regina recommend members of the school community to wear masks indoors?**

Because we do not know the individual health circumstances of students or staff (or the people who reside in their homes) and segments of our school population are not yet eligible for vaccination, everyone is encouraged to wear a face-covering indoors.

**Will there be handwashing opportunities during the school day?** Staff will teach and reinforce virus-prevention etiquette of coughing and sneezing into a sleeve or a tissue. Students and staff are encouraged to take frequent hand washing breaks throughout the day. Hand sanitizer will be available throughout campus and in classrooms.

**Will Regina maintain social distancing?** Regina seeks to maximize the distance between individuals, however, we cannot guarantee consistent social distancing of 3 feet in classrooms and other indoor spaces. Per the CDC, it is [recommended](#) that students wear masks when 3 feet of social distancing is not possible indoors. Consistent and correct face-covering use is especially important indoors and in crowded settings when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

**How will contact tracing be handled? Contact tracing (isolation and quarantine):** If Regina becomes aware of a positive COVID-19 individual, the positive individual will be excluded from activities and programming, and isolated at home for 10 days from the onset of symptoms or from the date of the positive test (asymptomatic cases). Students will receive assignments from teachers during the time that they are gone. The individuals may return to school and activities on day 11 if they have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications) and symptoms are improving.

As Regina becomes aware of positive COVID cases within the school community, an email will be sent to the classroom(s)/group(s) affected. This notification will simply state that there has been an exposure and parents/guardians should monitor for symptoms. Per the IDPH guidance, Regina will not require quarantine of exposed or “close contact” staff or students to start the 2021-22 school year.

**What if a member of the school community becomes sick?** The Iowa Department of Public Health has adjusted its guidance to recommend that schools and childcare settings [approach COVID-19 like other child illnesses](#). For ease of reference, please see the detailed list of [common child illnesses and exclusion criteria](#), which now includes COVID-19. This guidance comes in consultation with the Department of Education, and underscores that the overall health and well-being of children must be our primary focus. The IDPH has revised COVID-19 guidance for school and child care settings, including quarantine guidance, to recommend that while COVID-19 positive and symptomatic children should be excluded, exposed children should no longer be required to stay home, regardless of mask usage.

**How will Regina handle activities/events?** Regina intends to proceed with all jr/sr high activities/practices/rehearsals. The ability to keep these activities going depends on everyone doing their part to reduce transmission through vaccination, masking, proper hand-washing, social distancing, etc.

**Will volunteers and visitors be permitted at Regina?** During substantial or high transmission rate per the [COVID tracker](#), Regina volunteers and visitors will be restricted. During low or moderate transmission rates, volunteers and visitors may be permitted. Volunteers and visitors who have tested positive will need to follow isolation requirements and not come on site for a minimum of 10 days. Individuals are respectfully asked to self-screen for [COVID-19 related symptoms](#) prior to entering the campus. Although in-person meetings will be allowed, social distancing remains an important health measure. Individuals are encouraged to maximize space between each other and wear a face-covering.

**Will lunch be served at Regina?** For this coming school year Regina is able to offer **no cost** meals for every K-12 enrolled student through the [Seamless Summer Option](#) from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). This is a nationwide waiver **for the 2021-2022 school year only** allowing schools to offer this helpful option to all families and facilitates the safe provision of meals by eliminating the need to collect meal payments, including cash payments, at meal sites. This speeds up service of meals, thereby reducing contact and potential exposure to COVID-19.

Free meals (breakfast and lunch) will be provided for all enrolled K-12 students **through age eighteen**. This applies to complete meal only which include an entrée, fruit and/or vegetable and milk. ***Ala cart items are not included and will still be charged at regular prices.*** Families who annually complete the free/reduced waiver form should please do so as this application is also used to determine eligibility for other programs.

**Will outdoor seating be provided during lunch?** A tent has been placed on campus and students will be encouraged to eat outside.

**How will Regina handle cleaning and disinfecting the school?** High-touch areas will be sanitized daily. High touch areas include, but are not limited to:

- Student desktops
- Student chair seats, backs, and fronts
- Classroom tables/surfaces

Building and classroom cleaning and disinfecting will take place as regularly scheduled through the custodial department. Sanitizer will be available in classrooms for teacher use when needed throughout the day.

**Are face coverings required on the bus or any Regina transportation?** In compliance with the [President's Executive Order](#) on domestic transportation, students riding the bus are required to wear a face-covering while on the bus or utilizing other Regina-provided transportation. This includes transportation between home and school, as well as transportation for co- and extracurricular activities, field trips, and other school-sponsored events.

**How will building access be handled?** Regina will balance building access with allowing sufficient time for buildings to be cleaned while students and staff are out of the building.

- Students should exit the building once the school day is complete or the extra/co-curricular activity has ended. Families are encouraged to have drop-off/pick-up plans.
- For activities and events outside the school day, students should arrive no earlier than 10 minutes prior to the event start time.

**Is a COVID-19 vaccination required?** Regina encourages all individuals to get the COVID-19 vaccine. While a vaccine is not required to attend, visit, or work at Regina, this recommendation reflects the guidance of the [CDC](#), [IDPH](#), and [JCPH](#).

**How can I check the level of transmission in Johnson County?** Based on the [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#), Johnson County's level of community transmission is considered to be **substantial as of today**. If this level of transmission changes, these guidelines will be reviewed and adjusted.

**What if I want my child to be online to start the school year?** Per the Davenport Diocese, virtual learning (defined as enrolled in the school but 100% of the instruction occurs outside of school) is not an option for students. However, there are times when a remote solution may be appropriate for a school-approved extended absence. A school-approved extended absence includes the following:

- When there is a documented medical reason that necessitates a long-term absence
- When a student must isolate due to COVID and will be missing more than three days of school

Extended absence due to a health condition must be documented and reported to school administration by a health professional and approved by the principal on a case-by-case basis.