

# RIVER ISLANDS ACADEMIES

## Return to Campus Plan



River Islands Technology Academy

and

STEAM Academy

Updated March 25, 2021

\*\*Guidelines are subject to change based on Public Health Orders.

\*\*Guidelines are based on the California Department of Public Health, San Joaquin County Public Health, and San Joaquin Office of Education Guidelines.

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# INTRODUCTION

As a response to direction from the San Joaquin County Office of Education and Public Health, River Islands Academies started the 2020-2021 school year with a Distance Learning Model. A Plan for Change Document was shared with families outlining the Distance Learning Model. A successful Distance Learning Program has been in place since August 12, 2020.

A Waiver from Public Health became available on August 28, 2020. Surveys from River Islands Academies provided input regarding interest to return to campus for families and preferred staff models.

On August 28, 2020, the River Islands Academies Board discussed the option to move forward with applying for the Waiver to Reopen Schools. River Islands Academies Governing Board decided to apply for the Waiver. The Waiver was submitted to San Joaquin County Public Health.

The RI Academies opened campus' for three weeks during trimester two as a result of San Joaquin County moving to the Red Tier. As cases increased and the CDPH issued a Stay Home Order on December 3, 2021, the Governing Board opted to temporarily pause the Return to Campus Plan.

On January 14, 2021, the California Department of Public Health provided a NEW COVID-19 Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework and Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools.

The RI Academies Return to Campus Plan was updated on January 21, 2021, to reflect the changes in the CDPH Guidelines and shared with staff and families.

On March 19, 2021, the CDC provided an update to the Essential Elements of Safe k-12 School Operations for In-Person Learning Guidance.

On March 20, 2021, the CDPH provided an update to the COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework and Public Health Guidance.

The RI Academies Return to Campus Plan was updated on March 25, 2021, to reflect the changes in the CDC and CDPH Guidelines and shared with staff and families.

Additional conditions that must be in place will be monitored. State and local guidance documents are included in the Appendix.

# PLAN TO ADDRESS COVID-19

The health and safety of our staff and students remain River Islands Academies' primary concern. This plan will guide us through Phase Two of the Reopening Process. All plans are subject to change as we continue to follow the guidelines of the CDC, CDE, SJCOE, and Public Health.

The San Joaquin Office of Education has provided response scenario procedures following California Department of Public Health guidance on what measures should be taken when a student, teacher, or staff member has symptoms of illness, has had close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 or who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. San Joaquin County guidance will be implemented in the event a waiver is approved.

## **Visitors on Campus**

RI Academies will not allow regular visitation to our campuses until further notice. Only staff will be allowed regularly and according to their established work schedule. We will limit nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving groups at the same time as recommended by CDC and CDPH. Members of the public are required to wear face coverings and observe all social distancing guidelines upon entering RI Academies campuses.

## **Travel Restrictions**

RI Academies will discontinue student extracurricular travel until such time as the State of California, and local health officials move on the State Roadmap, allowing leisure travel. Staff travel to conferences and workshops will need pre-approval by the administration until further notice.

## **Guidance for Known Exposure**

While we all hope to avoid exposure to illness from COVID-19, we need to be prepared for that possibility. If someone has been in contact with someone who has been exposed to the virus, the first concern is for the health and safety of those around them. In this rapidly changing situation, healthcare providers should have the most up-to-date information from the CDC.

## **Triggers for Switching to Distance Learning/Off-Campus Learning**

Individual school closure is recommended based on the number of cases, the percentage of the teacher/ students/staff positive for COVID-19, and following consultation with the San Joaquin Public Health Officer.

Individual school closure may be appropriate when at least three outbreaks have occurred in the school AND more than 5 percent of the total number of teachers/students/staff within a 14-day period.

Individual school closure may also be appropriate when within a 14 day period, an outbreak has occurred in 25% or more stable groups in the school.

The Local Health Officer may also determine school closure is warranted for other reasons, including results from public health investigation or other local epidemiological data.

RI Academies will close all schools if 25% or more of schools have closed due to COVID-19 within 14 days of each other, and in consultation with the local public health department.

If a partial, total school closure is warranted, families will be contacted via email and/ or phone, and a swift transition to Phase 1: Off-Campus/Distance Learning will occur for the school(s) affected. The email and/or phone call will disclose as much information as possible relating to the events. RI Academies will maintain confidentiality as required under HIPAA and FERPA and state law related to educational records privacy. The length of school closure will be 14 days, or according to a decision made in consultation with the SJCPH.

For further information, please visit California's Guiding Document for the Safe Reopening of Schools.

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Campuses were thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before staff returning in July of 2020.

Employees are encouraged to disinfect their workspace multiple times throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers have been distributed throughout the workplace and in common areas. Cleaning sprays and/or wipes are also available to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as telephones and keyboards. The custodial staff will clean all workspaces at their designated cleaning time.

Sanitizing spray/wipes will be placed next to each copy machine.

Please note that proper equipment such as good disinfectant and PPE should be used when cleaning individual workspaces.

Employees, in partnership with custodial, will maintain safety standards by cleaning and disinfecting at the end of each school day.

Per CDPH, frequent disinfection, which was thought at the beginning of the pandemic to be a key safety component, can pose a health risk to children and students due to the chemicals used and has proven to have limited to no impact on COVID-19 transmission.

Staff will ensure that only EPA “N” Label-Approved Sanitizing Products are used and exclude sodium hypochlorite (bleach) based products as they can be asthma inducing.

RI Academies will replace/monitor air filters to ensure optimal air quality. RI Academies will place air purifiers in each classroom.

COVID-19 Response - Extensive cleaning is triggered when an active employee or student has been identified with a confirmed or assessed likely case of COVID 19. After a 24 hour vacancy (when possible), disinfecting of the area will begin as per public health guidelines. While the scope of disinfecting will be based on the circumstances surrounding the extent to which the individual has been in specific areas of campus, the area will be shut down until disinfection has been completed.

## Physical Distancing and Campus Access

Classrooms will consider the following strategies as thoughtful safeguards when in shared spaces.

### **Cohorts/Stable Groups**

*Per CDPH, implementing stable groups of students and staff reduces the numbers of exposed individuals if COVID-19 is introduced into the group, decreases opportunities for exposure to or transmission of the virus; facilitates more efficient contact tracing in the event of a positive case, and allows for targeted testing and quarantine of a small group instead of potential schoolwide closures*

*in the event of a positive case or cluster of cases.*

All teachers and students are asked not to visit another classroom outside of their team or grade level.

- Cohorts/Stable Group classes will minimize crossover among children and adults within the school
- Students should remain in the same space and groups as small and consistent as practicable
- Teachers and aides will remain with the same students to the greatest extent possible
- Short term exposures of less than 6 feet between students and staff are permitted (e.g., a teacher assisting a student one-on-one), but the duration should be minimized, and masks should be worn
- Minimize the movement of students as much as practicable
- Student desks should be placed 3 feet apart at minimum
- Each child's belongings separated in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies or bags
- Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high-touch materials
- Middle School Teachers rotate instead of students, when feasible
- Serve meals (paper bag lunch) in classrooms or outdoors instead of multipurpose room or cafe where practicable - students use hand sanitizer before and after eating lunch
- Hold recess in separated areas at staggered times
- Use of shared playground equipment limited
- Outdoor play structures only need routine maintenance. Students will wash or sanitize their hands before and after using play structures. Cleaning of the play structure is not required between cohorts/stable groups per CDPH
- Outdoor activities requiring minimal contact will be encouraged
- Discontinue rallies, assemblies, or other gatherings
- Discontinue sports and clubs that are not able to be held virtually
- Outdoor singing and band practice are permitted provided that precautions such as social distance and mask wearing are implemented. Playing wind instruments is strongly discouraged.
- Nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving outside individuals will not be permitted

### **Entrance, Egress, and Movement within the School**

Designated routes for entry and exit have been determined using as many entrances as feasible, as well as other protocols which limit direct contact with others as much as practicable, e.g. parents remaining in their vehicles or at

designated gate areas.

Minimize contact at schools between students, staff, families, and the community at the beginning and end of each school day.

- Students are not permitted to gather outside of campus before gates are open
- Staggered drop off and pick up times by grade level or by family last name
- Students walk directly to their classrooms upon entry to school
- Teachers will have doors open at 8:10 AM to permit student entry
- Gates designated for entrance and exit (see map)
- Where both entrance and exit occurs, ground markings will direct traffic directions
- Ground markings will direct traffic in main corridors
- Staff assigned to each entrance/exit to assist with social distancing
- Grade levels assigned to specific gates for dismissal
- Signage will be placed throughout the campus indicating traffic direction, social distancing markings/footprints, and graphics for healthy hygiene habits in easy-to-understand illustrations that empower students to be careful, cautious, and respectful to each other
- Limit number of students in the restroom at a time - designated spaces to stand and wait
- Campus Monitors to supervise hallways and restrooms at specific times of the day
- Staggered dismissal times will be set by grade level

### **Physical Distancing**

Physical distancing, sometimes referred to as social distancing, is an effective way to limit spread of contagion by simply keeping people separated. As noted in the guidance from the AAP, “There is a conflict between optimal academic and social/emotional learning in schools and strict adherence to current physical distancing guidelines.” The CDC recommends schools “space seating/desks at least 6 feet apart when feasible. In many school settings, 6 feet between students is not feasible without limiting the number of students.” When 6 feet of distance is not feasible, 3 feet and a mask is highly recommended.

RI Academies employees, students and visitors should practice staying approximately 3-6 feet away from others and eliminating contact with others when feasible.

- Social distancing in the classrooms with students seated 3 feet apart from each other and 6 feet from the teacher, as practicable



- Staff, students and essential visitors should practice staying 6 feet away from each other
- Designated routes from entry and exit with as many entrances/exits as possible
- Signage to guide and remind of physical distancing and designated routes
- Floor markings to guide and support physical distancing
- Meetings, trainings and collaboration will be held virtually or where social distancing can take place
- Regular safety drills will be conducted with staff only - student safety training provided in classroom or virtually

## Hygiene and Health Practices

As required by California Department of Public Health, to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the potential risk of exposure to our employees and students, employees are required to complete a daily self-screening survey before reporting to campus. The survey is fully online and asks questions related to COVID-19 exposure, signs, and symptoms. Based on the employee's survey results, he/she will either be directed by the School Nurse to remain home or be approved to come to campus. If the results direct an employee to remain home, he/she will be asked to complete a contact tracing survey to help identify close contacts and recently visited locations.

Students are asked to self-screen before arriving at school each day. A Screening Tool will be provided to families as a guide for self-assessment and must be submitted daily to attend on-campus. In addition, students will receive a temperature reading upon campus/classroom entry by a staff member using a touchless thermometer.

Each preventative measure taken helps to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our schools and community.

### Health Screenings for Students and Staff

- Staff Daily Symptom Check Submitted to School Nurse
- Families are to self-screen students daily prior to sending their child to school each day. Self Screening Tool completed and submitted daily as a requirement for student attendance on campus.
- Student temperature checks will be completed upon arrival.

- Anyone with a fever of 100.4 or higher must not go to a school site
- Students are not to be at school if they show any symptoms of illness and they must be symptom free for 48 hours before returning to school
- Students who have been in contact with a person with COVID-19 are to stay home
- Students will receive a temperature reading upon entry using a touchless thermometer
- Temperature checks may be repeated throughout the day
- Students with a temperature of 100.4 or higher will be directed to the office where temperature will be retaken. Parents will be contacted to pick up their child if confirmed to be 100.4 or higher and provided direction for when their child may return to school.
- School Nurse will follow up with students with reported symptoms
- Health Protocols
  - If a student becomes ill at school,
    - They will report to the designated isolation room and provided a mask and gloves, as appropriate
    - Family will be contacted to pick up the child
    - The school nurse will be contacted and will refer to Screening Protocols (attached)
    - The contaminated area will sit idle for 24 hours and then disinfected, when feasible
  - If an employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and/or may have had contact with a person with COVID-19:
    - Quarantine in a room away from others
    - Call their health care provider and follow their instructions
    - Contact school administration

• **US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**

- If an employee becomes ill at work or if another person is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 at work, they may be asked to leave work and go home or to the nearest health center.
- Employees returning to work from an approved medical leave should contact Administration. They may be asked to submit a healthcare provider's note before returning to work.
- If diagnosed with COVID-19, employee may return to work when all criteria are met: At least 1 day (24 hours) have passed since recovery (no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications); and have improved in respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, etc.); and at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first occurred. Or, if

asymptomatic, 10 days since the positive test result. If tested again, may return to campus or be around others when no symptoms are present and have tested negative on two consecutive respiratory specimens collected at least 24 hours apart.

- If symptoms that could be COVID-19 and do not get evaluated by a medical professional or tested for COVID-19, it is assumed that they have COVID-19 and may not return to work until the above criteria listed above have been met.

### **Reported Case of COVID-19 within Schools/Offices**

If a confirmed case of COVID-19 has been reported from an individual within a school, administration must be notified immediately. Administration and the School Nurse will work to identify any close contacts (any individual within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) of the confirmed/likely case and assess the risk of exposure. A notice will be sent via email and/or phone informing close contacts of the known exposure. The notice will disclose as much information as possible relating to the best indicated date and location of exposure. RI Academies will maintain confidentiality as required under HIPAA and FERPA and state law related to privacy of educational records.

Close contacts of the confirmed individual will be instructed to home quarantine for 14 days post exposure, per the SJCPHS Home Quarantine Instructions for Close Contacts to COVID-19.

If someone has symptoms or a fever, they should contact their primary care physician and School Administration. If they are diagnosed with or likely to have COVID-19 they must continue isolating at home.

As per Public Health Emergency Quarantine Order Dated July 1, 2020 under the Authority of the California Health and Safety Code Sections 101040, 101085, and 120175, the San Joaquin County Public Health Officer orders: All Household members, intimate partners, caregivers of a person with COVID-19, and individuals who have had close contact to a person with COVID-19 must quarantine themselves.

If there is an identified cluster, three or more individuals from different households, RI Academies will notify San Joaquin County Health Services as advised.

Updated public health directives issued January 14, 2021 require reporting details of any positive case of a person who has been on campus to SJCPH.

## **Healthy Hygiene Practices**

- Multiple hand-sanitizing stations and/or portable handwashing stations will be placed around campus
- Hand sanitizer or access to a sink with water and soap and sanitizing spray will be provided to each teacher. Hand soap will be provided to classrooms that have sinks.
- Staff will continue to teach students appropriate hygiene, including coughing and sneezing inside the elbow or a tissue.
- Students and staff should wash their hands before sharing equipment and also after eating, coughing, sneezing, or using the restroom
- Drinking fountains will be closed or turned into water filling stations
- Signage throughout campus will indicate foot traffic, social distancing and easy to understand illustrations that empower students to be careful, cautious and respectful to one another.
- Office spaces will have plastic screening as a safety precaution at reception windows and countertops to protect both the employee and campus visitor
- Signage will be posted to limit staff foot traffic in the office areas and to prevent congregating in shared staff areas
- Interior doors in office areas will remain propped open to decrease the use of handles by multiple parties
- Signs posted on door of workroom and staff lounge with reminders to social distance
- Students will be required to sanitize their hands or wash their hands with soap and water upon entering the classroom
- Students encouraged to bring a refillable water bottle to school
- Additional mini disposable water bottles provided to each classroom as needed
- Students are encouraged to keep their personal property to themselves, not to share personal items and to keep non-school related items at home
- Portable plexiglass dividers provided to each classroom for one-on-one assessment or support

## **Face Coverings for Staff**

- Staff required to wear face covering when:
  - Interacting in-person with any member of the public
  - Working in a space visited by the public, regardless whether anyone from the public is present at the time
  - Working in a space where food is prepared or packaged to distribute to others

- Working in or walking through common areas
- In a room or enclosed area where other people are present when unable to social distance
- While outdoors in public spaces when maintaining a physical distance of 6 feet from others is not feasible
- RI Academies will provide face masks as needed.
- Having certain medical conditions accompanied by a doctor's note and other circumstances may exempt individuals from wearing a face covering. Other mitigated measures may be necessary for employees unable to wear a mask.
- Masks with exhalation valves or vents, those with loosely woven fabrics, and those that do not fit properly are not permitted

### **Face Coverings for Students**

- All students are required to wear a face covering at all times while at school.
- RI Academies will provide face coverings as needed.
- Face coverings or face shields should be removed for eating and drinking
- In order to comply with Public Health Guidance, the school will exclude students from campus if they are not exempt from wearing a face covering and refuse to wear one provided by the school.
- Masks with exhalation valves or vents, those with loosely woven fabrics, and those that do not fit properly are not recommended

### **Gloves (allowed but not required or provided)**

- Touching your face with contaminated hands, whether gloved or not, poses a significant risk of infection
- Wearing gloves does not diminish the need to wash your hands
- The proper removal of gloves reduces the risk of being exposed to contamination
- Please note that social distancing should still be practiced even with the use of gloves and masks
- Training will be provided to staff and students in proper care and use of all PPE

# Communication

RI Academies will continuously communicate and encourage proper safety practices. Multiple methods of communication will be utilized including signage on campus, email, app notifications and website.

Automated phone calls will be used for urgent matters only.

If a staff member or student should become infected with COVID-19, communication may vary depending on the specific circumstances of a case in the school or community.

### **Identification and Tracing of Contacts**

Documentation/tracking incidents of possible exposure will be ongoing. Notification will be made to local health officials if affected staff, student and/or immediate family members (or same household) of any positive case of COVID 19 while maintaining confidentiality, as required under FERPA.

The School Nurse is designated to keep in close contact with the San Joaquin County Office of Education Director of Comprehensive Health Services. The School Nurse will create and monitor confidential lists of exposed students and staff.

## Testing of Students and Staff

The availability and validity of rapidly testing asymptomatic individuals is in question by CDPH. San Joaquin County Public Health Services has committed to assisting schools in the event of an outbreak for a single school site. An outbreak is three or more positive cases from unique households.

Testing locations vary by city, however a current site available in Manteca is Modern Urgent Care for rapid testing. They are located at 1630 W Yosemite Avenue Suite 1, Manteca, CA 95337 and can be contacted at (209) 629-8771. Additionally, your health care provider may issue orders for antigen or PCR (polymerase chain reaction) testing.

## Staff Training and Family Education

Staff will be trained utilizing virtual training through Keenan modules and meetings including health and safety actions such as:

- Enhanced sanitation practices
- Physical distancing and its importance
- Proper use of face coverings, removal and washing of cloth face coverings •  
Screening practices
- COVID-19 specific symptom identification

The School Nurse will provide training and education for staff during Professional Development, as needed.

Educational information will be provided to families from the School Nurse in the monthly newsletter, as appropriate.

# Appendices

## **Guidance and Resources**

[COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Instruction Framework and Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California 2020-2021 School Year](#)

[California Department of Public Health Schools Guidance FAQs](#)

[Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools](#)

[COVID-19 and Reopening In-Person Learning Framework for K-12 Schools in California, 2020-2021 School Year](#)

[COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Schools and School Based](#)

[San Joaquin County Public Health](#)

[San Joaquin County Office of Education - A Guide to Address the Challenges of COVID-19](#)