

Board Resolution 20210426-2

RESOLUTION AFFIRMING the CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION of the NACS REOPENING PLANS

WHEREAS, on March 6, 2020, Governor Eric J. Holcomb issued Executive Order 20-02 declaring a state public health disaster emergency due to COVID-19 and extended the public health emergency through subsequent Executive Orders, including Executive Order 20-37 issued on July 24, 2020 requiring the wearing of facial coverings in schools and in many other areas; and

WHEREAS, on April 2, 2020, Governor Holcomb issued Executive Order 20-16, which closed all public schools throughout the State for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year; and

WHEREAS, on May 1, 2020, Governor Holcomb issued Executive Order 20-26, which provided for the reopening of entities in the state in five stages. This Executive Order provided details for Stages 1 and 2. Executive Order 20-26 provided Stage 5 will begin July 4, 2020, allowing school grounds and buildings to open; however, subsequent orders extend some Stage 4 restrictions; and

WHEREAS, on March 31, 2021, Governor Holcomb issued Executive Order 21-09, which continues requiring facial coverings, along with other COVID-19 mitigation protocols included in previous orders, in schools through at least the end of the 2020-2021 school year; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics provided guidance to schools on mitigating the spread of and exposure to COVID-19, and the guidance continues to be updated to reflect the most up-to-date understanding of COVID-19 so schools can safely provide onsite learning activities; and

WHEREAS, additional and updated guidance from local medical and public health experts and state and federal agencies about how schools can reopen safely continues to be communicated and distributed to school leaders, including a consensus of local representatives from the specialty areas of pediatric, occupational, mental, and public health and infectious diseases during the April 21, 2021 public work session that masks effectively mitigate the spread of respiratory related illnesses, such as COVID-19, and need to be worn by students, employees, and visitors at school and during school activities for the foreseeable future; and

WHEREAS, the Allen County Department of Health, CDC, and the American Academy of Pediatrics support all schools requiring the wearing of facial coverings whenever physical distancing of six feet or more is not practical. The Governor's Executive Order 21-09 also mandates all students in grades 3-12 to wear masks while in school or attending school-related activities whenever physical distancing of six feet or more is not practical, and it strongly encourages all children ages 2-8 to do so as well; and

WHEREAS, NACS serves many children who have or reside with individuals who have underlying medical conditions making them more vulnerable to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, NACS employs many individuals who have or reside with or care for individuals who have underlying medical conditions making them more vulnerable to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, NACS COVID-19 mitigation protocols have resulted in extremely small levels of transmission in school or during school-related activities; and

WHEREAS, the educational services we provide must be provided in a manner that implements logistically practical protocols designed to mitigate the spread of and exposure to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the educational services we provide must be provided within the limited financial resources available to Northwest Allen County Schools; and

WHEREAS, school districts are required to create and submit plans to provide onsite instruction in the fall of 2021 in order to be eligible to receive the third distribution of appropriated Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) monies.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of School Trustees of Northwest Allen County Schools affirms the NACS Reopening Plans originally adopted on July 27, 2020 via approval of Board Resolution 20200727-1, which have been reviewed by the Allen County Department of Health. The Board also authorizes the Superintendent to continue implementing these plans and creating any procedures that may be needed to ensure appropriate implementation of and compliance with these plans.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in compliance with ESSER III requirements the Board of School Trustees of Northwest Allen County Schools supports the continued implementation of these plans through the first semester of the 2021-2022 school year. The Superintendent is also authorized to update these plans as needed to comply with any subsequent mandate or requirement imposed by a local, state, or federal executive, agency, or legislative body, and if required, have these updates reviewed by the Allen County Department of Health prior to implementation. The Superintendent is further authorized to relax and rescind aspects of the NACS Reopening Plans as appropriate based on local or state conditions as determined by the Governor of Indiana, Indiana Department of Health, and/or the Allen County Department of Health and supported by guidance from the CDC or the American Academy of Pediatrics. Before implementing any changes to relax or rescind aspects of the NACS Reopening Plans, the plans must be reviewed and supported by the Allen County Department of Health.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of School Trustees of Northwest Allen County Schools authorizes the Superintendent to utilize any additional state or federal funding provided to support implementation of the NACS Reopening Plan if such funding is permitted to be used to support such a purpose and complies with related auditing policies and procedures.

ADOPTED this 26th day of April 2021.

Kent Somers, President

Liz Hathaway, Vice President

Kristi Schlatter, Secretary

Steve Bartkus, Member

Ron Felger, Member