Return to Learn  
Colorado School for   
the Deaf and the Blind

Fall 2022

(Updated as of May, 2022)

The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB)—in collaboration with families, school districts and community partners—educates and inspires learners throughout the state, birth through age 21, to achieve their full human potential through comprehensive, individualized academic, transition, residential and outreach programs and resources.

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Return to Learning  
Families and Staff of CSDB, April 1, 2022

The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind is committed to its students, families and staff to provide   
education following the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the El Paso County Public Health guidelines in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of CSDB will return to in-person learning,   
August 16, 2021, learning as safely as we can. We know most of our students learn best by being in school.

CSDB believes the health and safety of students and staff must be the highest priority as schools reopen,   
August 2022. It is essential that all staff, students, and families understand and embrace the health   
guidelines, including the implementation of risk mitigation practices as recommended by El Paso County   
Public Health and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. CSDB must follow any   
active health and executive orders; all constituents will need to remain flexible and willing to adjust and   
support practices that provide the ability for schools to remain open and educating students. This   
document will outline practices, procedures and protocols for staff, students, and families to understand and follow to maximize the health and safety of students.

Currently, masks are optional indoors and on-campus. Individuals may choose their preference to utilize a mask or not.

CSDB has been focused on supporting the mental health, social and emotional needs of students and staff for some time. Now more than ever, CSDB will continue to prioritize the social and emotional needs of   
students and staff by providing services and resources such as counseling and wellness activities, as well as encouraging communication that not only provides information but solicits information from staff,   
students and families on pertinent needs. Furthermore, high-quality instruction will integrate social and emotional learning strategies into the daily classroom experience to reinforce safety, well-being and   
engagement of students.

CSDB respects and understands the importance of family voice following this unprecedented health crisis. CSDB remains diligent to providing timely information regarding protocols and guidelines. CSDB is committed to providing 100% in-person learning. We look forward to school resuming with our students on-campus in August 2022.

Districts have been directed to work with their local public health department and follow the guidelines from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). We will continue to monitor guidelines and update this plan as necessary. The CSDB Board of Trustees will review the plan, as necessary, during scheduled monthly meetings. The CDPHE will be supplying updated information in terms of hygiene, social distancing, and other public health considerations.

Take care, and stay well!  
Tera Wilkins, Interim Superintendent

Instructional Program  
Upon opening, it will be critical to set and maintain high grade-level expectations for academic growth and development. CSDB will be open for in-person learning. All students will be instructed through in-person learning, on-campus. In the event an isolation or quarantine is necessary, CSDB will communicate with families. …*add clarification of what this looks like*

*Canvas, the CSDB learning platform, will be used by all teachers, creating a blended learning environment for all students. As a result, when a shift occurs between in-person and remote learning, there will be no disruption to instruction. If CSDB returns to remote learning, families will be notified of the remote learning plan.*

Mainstream and off-campus work experience options will continue for the school year 2022-2023. The options will be reevaluated periodically. CSDB will follow Pikes Peak Community College in establishing expectations for students enrolled in those classes.

School programs, Kindergarten through Bridges to Life, will begin August 15, 2022, and will be held Monday-Thursday 8:30am-3:30pm and Fridays 8:30am-1:00pm. Preschool begins August 22, 2022, and will be held Monday – Thursday, 8:30 a.m.– 3:30 p.m., and includes students eating lunch at school.  There is no preschool, on Fridays.

**REGISTRATION**

*Local Students:*

Early Registration scheduled for August 5th in the Gottlieb School building on campus from 9:00am-12:00pm. Registration Day is scheduled for August 14th,from 1:00pm-4:00pm. Registration packets will be emailed to parents to complete electronically.

*Dorm Students:*

Dorm students who normally arrive at CSDB on Sunday nights will return to campus on August 14th.   There will be no charter bus pick-up in Denver on that Sunday. CSDB transportation will begin Friday, August 19th. Bring any necessary medications to registration on Sunday, as per normal procedures. Staff will be available to collect these items. Students should limit the amount of luggage and personal items the first week back to school.  Students may bring more items as needed, in the following weeks.   During registration a CSDB nurse will consult with families, to collect any necessary medical information.  Further information regarding students returning to the dorm, including instructions for students who do not ride the charter bus, will be communicated to parents from our Student Life department, prior to school starting in August.

Instructional Program

**School**

CSDB students will begin with in-person learning in an environment focused on supporting the health and safety of students and staff. Currently, the CDC is not mandating masks within schools. Tactile and visual reminders will be provided in an age-appropriate manner for students. Staff will ask students to separate if standing too close together. CSDB will support parent choice for their child to wear a mask, regardless of vaccination. Custodial staff will disinfect common areas throughout the day and will address high trafficked areas each night.

CSDB has invested in a variety of resources to support instruction in schools, including purchasing additional hand sanitizing and disinfecting tools, for every classroom, that can be used to clean areas quickly; purchasing face coverings for students and staff who wish to use them, installing water stations to fill personal water bottles (no water fountains in use), and adding hand sanitizing stations.

CSDB is admitting outside guests, including visitors, volunteers and presenters, and families. Visitors are responsible to do their own self-assessment and screening prior to arriving to campus. If individuals do not feel well, they are asked to stay home. Teleconferencing will continue to be utilized to stay connected as well as increased email and phone communication. Families should ensure all emergency contacts are up-to-date in case your child needs to be picked up.

**Classrooms**

Creating positive learning environments is a high priority for CSDB. Some adjustments will be required   
because of the health safety practices necessary to keep staff and students in school.

Social distancing and vaccinations are the most important aspects of decreasing the spread of COVID-19.   
Teachers will strive to create as much space as feasible by arranging student desks and tables with as much distancing as possible. Due to our small student population, this school year cohorts will align with the typical elementary and secondary student groupings and schedules. The average classroom size is 6 students. To ensure social distancing and balance the number and students in a classroom space, bell schedules, class assignments, teacher availability and teacher certification will be considered.

Instructional Program

**Classrooms**

Additionally, hand washing and hand sanitizing will continue to be frequent and included in scheduled activities.   
Students will be allowed to bring in hand sanitizer for personal use only; however, hand sanitizer will be available in classrooms as well. Students will be asked to leave all unnecessary items at home and only bring items required for learning. Teachers are expected to limit community items and any shared or community items will be regularly cleaned. CSDB replaced former communal furniture with more individual options so   
students have their own workspaces. Teachers and students will be expected to sanitize work areas and supplies after use.

**COMMUNAL SPACES**

Communal spaces, such as conference rooms, lobbies, and the Bulldog Activity Center (BAC) will be included in a regular cleaning schedule. Which will include spraying of soft furniture and wiping down of hard surfaces.

**Cafeteria**

CSDB will continue to serve meals on-site when school is open. Health/safety protocols for students and food service staff will include hand washing or sanitizing before and after meals, and social distancing while walking to and from the cafeteria. In addition, CSDB will implement the following:

* Cafeteria meal schedules will be staggered to align with grade-level cohort bands.
* Students will maintain appropriate social distancing while going through the cafeteria line to get their food.
* Assigned seating will be implemented in grade-band cohorts.
* Students may bring a lunch from home.
* Microwaves will be available with cleaning between grade-level band cohorts. Kitchen areas will be available to only staff.
* Menus will be posted on the CSDB website and on Infinite Campus.
* Tables and chairs will be cleaned by staff between each meal time.
* Food service staff will clean/sanitize the tables, and other surfaces throughout mealtimes.

**Transportation**

Transportation will be provided from your home district per normal procedure.  Home districts   
transportation offices will be communicating safety protocols regarding students in district cars and busses and students will be expected to adhere to district safety guidelines.   Federal law no longer requires that all individuals wear a mask on school transportation. Any changes regarding transportation will be communicated to you through your district of residence or CSDB.   Bus pick up and drop off schedules will also be provided by home districts.

Staff and students using CSDB vehicles will be required to wear masks.

Student Life

**Residential Program**

· Occupancy will be limited in common areas (e.g., living rooms, kitchens) to ensure appropriate use of the space. Occupancy rates will vary based on each building and room   
capacity.

· Dinner will be prepared in the cafeteria.

· Cleaning will be conducted several times a day. Overnight staff will assist in cleaning/disinfecting   
common areas after students have gone to sleep.

· Staff and students will engage in frequent handwashing.

**Activities and Athletics**

CSDB believes activities and athletics play an integral role in student health and wellbeing; therefore, CSDB will support these programs to the extent the El Paso County Health Department and Colorado   
Department of Public Health will allow. CSDB remains in communication with the Colorado High School Athletic Association (CHSAA) to determine appropriate programming, including practices, meetings, and competitions if there is an increase of positive covid cases.

· Activities will occur on campus so as to reduce the opportunity to bring the virus back to campus.   
Evaluation of activity status will be ongoing.

· Activities will occur outside to the greatest extent possible as outdoor transmission is much lower than indoor transmission.

CSDB will communicate with families and the community as more information becomes available from CHSAA regarding athletic contests. Any changes to COVID outbreak or positive cases will be communicated with parents as well as considerations for the following:

· Safety measures needed to resume specific activities.

· Adjustment of some schedules for athletics.

· Crowd guidelines.

Outreach- If there is need for increased caution and safety protocols based on an increase of positive COVID cases in Colorado, the CSDB Outreach department will adhere to the following guidance:

Outreach Programs is committed to ensuring our families and children continue to meet milestones and develop academic skills through the variety of services provided. Some services will shift to remote learning. The option of returning to in-person services will be evaluated based on Department of Health guidelines.

**Early Intervention (EI) Activities**

EI SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING  
As employees of CSDB, the CO-Hears will continue to provide services to families following the guidance of CSDB. Meetings with families will continue through tele-health or phone options. Meetings with the CCBs, community agencies and the CSDB team will occur remotely. Provider trainings, classes, or   
workshops will use videoconferencing.

The CHIP Early Intervention Providers, delivering weekly services to families, are employed by or contract with the local Community Center Board. Services will follow the Early Intervention Colorado guidance, sent through the Regional CO-Hears.

EI SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE VISION LOSS  
The Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs) will continue to provide direct services to families, virtually. Meetings with the CCBs or community agencies and will be held using videoconferencing.

Colorado Shared Reading Project services will provide sessions via tele-health.   
Initial sessions, ongoing sessions, and assessments will be conducted remotely. Provider meetings and workshops will be held via teleconferencing. Support to families, in using technology for   
sessions, will be provided as needed.

Outreach Programs continue to pilot various options for family-centered events that include literacy   
activities, music, and parent education. Programs, regional or statewide, will be provided using   
videoconferencing and/or webcast means. Support to families, in using technology for events or trainings, will be provided as needed.

**School-Aged Services**

If the need arises due to an increase or outbreak of positive covid cases, contract services requested by school districts, BOCES and charter schools will be delivered virtually. By providing virtual services and reducing travel to the various regions of the state, these measures may reduce the possibility of staff spreading COVID-19.

**Sign language classes**

Family and Community Sign Language classes will be held in person for the 2022-2023 school year.

Contact Tracing and Sick Students- Should the need for contract tracing arise due to an increase in the number of positive cases in El Paso county, the following process will be followed.

**Covid-19 Guidance**

CSDB is prepared to support students and staff members who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 or test   
positive for COVID-19. The Center for Disease Control established, early on in the pandemic, that certain   
people are more at risk of severe COVID-19 infection. Some factors can make individuals more prone to the virus than others. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html>   
However, most importantly, students, staff, and parents must be diligent in self-screening daily. If exhibiting symptoms, stay home and consult with their health care provider to determine if they need to be tested.

If a staff member or student becomes sick while at school or begins to exhibit any symptoms:

1. Isolation will take place in a designated area.

2. Evaluation will be conducted by a Nurse.

3. In the case of a student, parents will be notified to pick-up the student immediately.

4. Identification with whom the person has been in close physical contact.

5. Only unvaccinated staff or students who were in close physical contact with a positive case or who exhibit   
symptoms will be monitored. Being in the room with someone who was ill does not constitute close physical contact.

6. Supervisors must notify Human Resources immediately if a staff member becomes ill. Staff may be eligible for leave under the PHEL. Contact your supervisor or HR for more information.

7. Students sent home for exhibiting symptoms or awaiting test results will be provided remote   
learning opportunities while out.

8. The student or staff need to remain home until cleared to return to work or school.

If a student, staff member, or family member within the household tests positive for COVID 19:

1. Seek medical care from your healthcare provider in accordance with CDC and El Paso County Health Department Guidelines.

2. Alert the school health office as quickly as possible to ensure the student can be provided with   
resources and to get started on remote learning.

3. Do not come to school until they have been cleared to do so by your healthcare provider. In most cases, this requires a 14-day quarantine period. Students must provide a note from a physician   
before returning to school.

4. If a family member is the one who is sick, the staff or student must be tested after that family   
member is no longer showing symptoms to ensure the student or staff is not infected prior to   
returning to school.

5. Staff must remain in contact with Human Resources for guidance on returning to work.

6. CSDB will coordinate with Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment regarding   
 suspected and confirmed cases to determine course of action on a case by case basis.

Sick Staff or Student

**Guidelines for Exclusion:** Identifying and separating students/staff exhibiting illness as per El Paso County Public Health <https://www.elpasocountyhealth.org/>. This requires clear expectations and communication with parents and staff. The appropriate exclusion timeframe will be dictated by Public Health and relayed to the appropriate staff member at school; this timeframe cannot be overridden by any other authority and remains the express authority of Public Health.

Exclusion criteria:

· Positive COVID-19 test result: Stay home at least 14 days since symptoms first appeared AND until no fever for at least three days without medication AND improvement of symptoms.

à Siblings and household members will also be excluded from school and work for 14 days after the last infectious day of the positive case.

à A negative test will NOT affect the recommendations around exclusion; a person will need to   
continue to isolate or quarantine for the entire amount of time, regardless of a negative result   
following a positive result.

· Negative test result but symptoms with no other diagnosis: Stay home at least 14 days after onset of symptoms AND until no fever at least three days without medication AND improvement of other   
symptoms.

à Siblings and household members should stay home 14 days.

· For people with a probable COVID-19 diagnosis without lab confirmation or who have COVID-19   
symptoms but did not seek medical care: Stay at home at least 14 days since symptoms first appeared AND until no fever for at least three days without medication AND improvement of other symptoms.

à Siblings and household member should stay home 14 days.

· For those with other diagnosis to explain symptoms: Stay home until symptoms have improved and follow health care provider instructions to return to school.

à Siblings and household member DO NOT need to stay home.

**Safety Guidelines (in review):**

· Implement physical distancing at all times and to the greatest degree, wherever and whenever possible. Avoid immediate contact such as shaking or holding hands and hugging.

· Require educators and other school staff to wear face coverings or masks in school whenever possible. Teach and reinforce appropriate use of cloth face coverings among staff and students (when age and developmentally appropriate) when in the vicinity of others, particularly in indoor settings.  A variety of face coverings available including clear masks to ease communication with Deaf/HH staff and students.

· Utilize additional barriers (e.g., plastic sneeze guards, face shields) in some common areas of campus for employees working directly with children or where spacing and masking may be more difficult.

· Clean, sanitize, and disinfect frequently touched surfaces multiple times per day, including education tools (e.g. books, whiteboards, computers). Have adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene.

· Shared objects should be cleaned between use.

· Students will not share materials (i.e. crayons, scissors, etc.). Keep each child’s belongings separated in individually labeled storage containers, cubbies, or taken home each day and cleaned.

· Items not easily cleaned, or disinfected are removed (upholstered furniture or soft or plush toys).

· Teach and reinforce washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes among children and staff.

· Take scheduled breaks for hand hygiene. Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures, and properly wear a face covering.

Resources and Citations

American Academy of Pediatricians. <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>  
  
Center for Disease Control. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Center for Disease Control. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html>   
  
Children’s Hospital Colorado and University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.   
  
Colorado Department of Education. <https://www.cde.state.co.us/safeschools>

El Paso County Public Health Department. <https://www.elpasocountyhealth.org/>

Denver Partnership for Health. <https://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/sites/default/files/file_attachments/Metro_Denver_Partnership_for_Health_School_Guidance_25June2020_0.pdf>