**Template Letter about Safety Guidelines

Purpose:** This letter can be customized to provide detailed information about your district’s back-to-school safety guidelines.

**Application:** If your district is using the color-coded system for guidance, couple this letter with the district-specific, color-coded requirement template available in the OSSBA portal. If you are not using the color-coded system, simply delete that portion of the letter.

Dear [Mascot] family:

As you know, members of the [District] team have worked hard this summer to prepare the best possible plan for the 2020-21 school year. We are grateful to the many parents, teachers, community members, support staff and students who provided valuable input and ideas to help shape the plan.

Our decisions throughout this process have been guided by the following principle: protect the health and safety of our staff and students, while also offering the best education services possible. A copy of our back-to-school plan, which provides [in-person, virtual and/or blended learning] options for students, can be found by visiting: [link.] If you would like to choose virtual learning for your child, please contact [Name], [title] at [phone number].

School begins [date], and we can’t wait to welcome students. We have adopted the following safety guidelines for those who will be attending class on campus:

**Color-Coded Safety Protocols**

Recently, the state Board of Education recommended new safety guidelines to protect Oklahoma students and education professionals. The guidelines are based on, but not identical to, the state Department of Health’s color-coded alert system that measures risk for COVID-19 exposure by county. The risk level is determined by the number of positive cases per 100,000 residents.

Recently, our board of education adopted safety protocols based on the state’s recommendations. You can learn more about the requirements by reviewing the attached guidelines. *(Attach the district’s color-coded requirements.)* Additionally, a current, color-coded map can be viewed at ossba.org/map or [insert website if posted by the district.]

The map will be updated every Friday, which means school safety requirements may change on a weekly basis. We understand it may not be possible for you to check the alert system regularly so the district will [text, call and/or email] parents every Friday evening and Sunday afternoon to communicate safety requirements for the upcoming week. *(A phone/text script for this communication is available in the OSSBA portal.)*

**Face Coverings**

[Insert your district’s requirements or recommendations regarding face coverings, including what types are allowed. Specify when and where the face coverings must be worn. Indicate where they can be purchased or when they will be distributed by the district. Focus on safety and explain that your team will be patient and understanding as students learn to implement this new procedure.]

**Social Distancing**

[Insert your district’s plan to promote social distancing throughout school buildings. Acknowledge what is possible and provide information about additional precautions that will be taken where social distancing cannot be accomplished.]

**Deep Cleaning/Sanitization**

[Insert information about your district’s plan to provide students and staff with sanitized school facilities. Acknowledge the hardworking custodial team who will assist with this effort.]

**Handwashing and Hand Sanitizer**

[Insert your district’s plan to provide students with hand sanitizer and to promote better and more frequent handwashing.]

**Schedule Adjustments**

[Insert your district’s plan to reduce the number of students on campus at one time if it becomes necessary. Explain how the schedule will work, and the process you will use to communicate with parents about when their children will attend. Remember to include information about extracurricular and co-curricular activities. Also, specify the situation or color-code level that would initiate the alternative schedule.]

**Public Events/School Activities**

[Insert your district’s plan to postpone or cancel public events and after-hour school activities if it becomes necessary. Explain the situation or color-code level that would initiate changes to public events.]

**Virtual Learning (All Students)**

[Insert information about your district’s virtual learning plan if it becomes necessary to use it for all students. Specify the situation or color-code level that would initiate the change. Explain the steps the district is taking now to help students and staff prepare for this potential transition.]

**Positive Cases**

[Insert your district’s plan for addressing positive cases. Emphasize your intent to cooperate with county health officials. Explain the decision-making model your district will use to determine who must quarantine. Emphasize the importance of cooperating with contact tracers if someone in their family tests positive. Also, let parents know how they will receive communication about COVID-related cases and positive exposures. When communicating, be honest and transparent and use reassuring language.Letter templates from the state Department of Health are available in the OSSBA portal*.*]

We understand these new guidelines will be an adjustment for everyone involved, and we are here to answer your questions and to help with your concerns. Please contact your school principal for additional information and assistance.

Our goal is to make the school year safe, productive and enjoyable. Every piece of our plan has been developed out of care and concern for the safety, health and wellbeing of students, staff and the community.

We want to thank you again for your patience and flexibility. Although it will look and feel different than it has in the past, together, we will do everything possible to make the 2020-21 school year a safe, successful and positive experience for [District] students. We appreciate your support.

Sincerely,
[Name]
Superintendent