

Butler School District 53 Mid-Year Monitoring Report

Reporting Period: August 2021 – December 2021

Integrated Solutions Consulting (ISC) has been providing COVID-19 Monitoring services for the Butler 53 School District since 2020. The information included in this report refers to observations gathered between August 2021 and December 2021.

During this time, ISC developed and submitted 18 Weekly Monitoring Reports, that included observations of routine and after school activities, as well as one-time events. In addition to the Weekly Monitoring Reports, ISC collaborated closely with the Butler School District 53 team, on the following activities:

- On-site monitoring tours of both in-person instruction as well as special events/activities.
- Discussions and liaising with the DuPage County Health Department.
- Development and facilitation of the Superintendent's Pandemic Health Awareness Committee.
- Planning and providing recommendations for layered COVID-19 Infection Control Strategies.
- COVID-19 Guidance reviews and interpretation.
- Districts COVID Testing program expansion.

ISC observed that overtime Butler School District 53 has been able to build a culture which supports operations with layered COVID-19 mitigation strategies such as face masks, physical distancing, sanitation, disinfection, test screenings, and remote learning.

The observations to date attribute the success of Butler School District 53's response to COVID-19 to (a) District leadership and BOE / Administration proactively setting expectations and guidance following public health best practices, and (b) School Community (Students, staff, parents) adhering to the expectations and ensuring a successful implementation of the different strategies.

These observations and assessments were based on the following:

- From the initial stages there was an expectation that the wellness and safety of Staff and Student be at the primary objective. To that end the public health authorities and the ISBE have stated that in person instruction is best for all involved. Recent studies demonstrate that students attending school with the layered mitigation strategies are statistically safer.
- The School District continues to follow and recognize the authoritative guidance as the CDC, IDPH and the DCHD. The guidance changed frequently and at times was contrary to plans. In every case the School District was able to access work to gain understanding and pivot, demonstrating flexibility and ensure substantial compliance.
- The development and implementation of the Superintendents Pandemic Advisory Group to gain insight into the parents of remote and in person students,
- The School District has committed to substantial investments to ensure the safety of all. This is evidenced by ensuring additional personnel and enhanced scheduling was

available to ensure continuity of operations, purchasing of sanitation/disinfection supplies, as well as retrofitting facilities for this event (water fountains shutoff, taping of floors, signage). Of specific note was the districts exploration and in cases implementation of air filtration systems, UV lighting, and enhanced classroom technology.

- Communications to the School Community ensuring messaging was consistent with guidance and encouraging CDC message for vaccination and testing.
- Ensuring staff could receive vaccinations at the earliest possible time.
- Development of a COVID Testing program for the School District community. We observed firsthand the flexibility and leadership required to implement and maintain this program as guidance was changing at a rapid pace. This program can only be recognized as a success.
- Work with the BOE, Association, and others to develop MOU on remote learning and other policies required to continue in-person instruction.
- Noted the commitment of all to have the students experience graduation, extra-curricular activities, and events. These events required modification to COVID however, were done extremely well.
- While the State and County have been in moderate/high transmission levels the Butler School Community has not.

In summary, Butler School District 53 continues to set an example of how a layered approach to COVID-19 infection control measures can be implemented successfully to allow for students to continue attending school in-person, safely and without interruptions. Butler's success and perseverance in offering their students a COVID-19 safe environment, where other school organizations have not been as successful, can be attributed to the district's commitment in:

- Ensuring wellness and safety first.
- Establishing expectations and policies but more importantly implementing and engraining the operational tenants into everyday operations.
- Recognizing CDC, IDPH and DCHD as the ultimate COVID-19 authority and adopting school guidelines accordingly.
- Reviewing and monitoring operations on a regular basis.
- Demonstrating flexibility and adaptive leadership in a complex and changing environment.

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