CFT COVID-19 TASKFORCE
#OurLivesOurSafety
Executive Summary
(Drafted April 23, 2020)

PURPOSE: The COVID-19 virus pandemic is a public health emergency. It is critical that the Cincinnati Public School (CPS) District ensure that we are doing everything in our power to keep our students, their families, and our staff safe. The Cincinnati Federation of Teachers (CFT) has convened a rapid response taskforce that will delineate a set of necessary conditions that we will recommend to the Board of Education in order for staff and students to safely return to in-school instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. This "CFT COVID-19 Taskforce" is being branded *#OurLivesOurSafety* to reflect the reality that it will take a unified effort to ensure we are all safe as we return to school together in a post-COVID world.

STRUCTURE: The CFT COVID-19 Taskforce is guided by a steering committee that oversees various teacher/clerical focus groups. These groups will propose recommendations on various issues such as: Facilities; proper filtration and ventilation, High School Instructional, Elementary Instructional, Special Education, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and Safety Equipment and Training, Mandatory Testing, etc.

RESULT: The CFT COVID-19 Taskforce will culminate our work by listing final recommendations to the CFT membership in the form of a Resolution that will be titled, "Our Lives, Our Safety Resolution". The recommendations in the Resolution will reflect the list of conditions that we deem necessary before teachers and students can safely return to in-school instruction by the start of the 2020-2021 academic year.

TIMELINE: The CFT COVID-19 "Our Lives, Our Safety Resolution" will be approved by CFT membership no later than May 15, 2020. The Resolution will then be presented to the Board of Education for implementation by the first Board meeting in June, 2020.

Below is a short list of resources CFT Taskforce members will refer to as a starting point; some have excerpts showing examples of what focus groups may want to consider for their recommendations for the "Our Lives, Our Safety Resolution":

CDC's (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) **Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs** found at this link: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html.

CDC's **Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools and Child Care Programs: Plan, Prepare, and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)** found at this link: (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html)

CDC: Getting Your Workplace Ready for Pandemic Flu
https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/pdf/gr-pan-flu-work-set.pdf

EXCERPT: Impact of disease on vulnerable employees and students who may be at higher risk for COVID-19 adverse health complications, including early childhood students, older adults, and those with chronic medical conditions.

- Encourage sick employees to stay home;
- Enact sick leave policies that are flexible and consistent with public health guidance:
- Allow care for family members, and
- Forego healthcare provider notes for employees who are sick with respiratory illness;
- Ensure routine cleaning of high-touch surfaces before students arrive and leave for the day. Disinfect commonly used surfaces with approved products and consider deep cleaning for disease outbreaks.

National School Boards Association: COVID-19: Preparing For Widespread Illness in Your School Community
A Legal Guide for School Leaders [1] (Source: https://www.nsba.org/Resources/coronavirus/legal-guide)

EXCERPTS:

Review your school district's current policies and procedures that may come into play, such as:

- student and employee absences due to illness (should "perfect attendance" procedures be amended?),
- school closures based on public health concerns,
- emergency management plans, and
- non-discrimination policies.

Assess levels of supplies that will be needed in case of an outbreak.

Check your insurance coverage for contingencies such as school closures and high employee absenteeism.

Emphasize the need to remain vigilant against stigma due to perceived race, national origin, or recent travel. Foster a supportive environment free from rumors or associations of a virus with a specific population.

Consider cancelling nonessential travel per travel guidance on the CDC website, including local and national field trips.

Prepare materials including symptoms lists, student absence protocols, emergency response team communications plans, communications procedures with parents in the event of school closures, and the like.

Coordinate with your state educational agency about the possibility of mass student or staff absences. Will there be flexibility on requirements for student attendance days, graduation requirements, and staffing requirements?

Determine when school closures are indicated based on a set percentage of staff and student absenteeism as recommended by local and state public health authorities.

- Establish virtual education options for students if available for extended school closures.
- Address how staff will be informed about expectations for student home-based academic work.
- Coordinate with the state educational agency about the possibility of school closings. How will attendance days and/or virtual class time be counted?
- Explore deploying visiting teachers to monitor or ensure education remains on track in case of school closings; recruit parents to assist in the delivery of educational services to their children.
- Coordinate with local health and welfare agencies to ensure children receiving free and reduced-price meals continue to receive nutrition usually supplied at schools.
- Address how the school district can provide information and support to families in need of childcare when schools are closed.
- Determine under what conditions schools will re-open.

In collective bargaining states, explore the contract implications for mass and extended individual employee absences, and instruction during school closings.

- Coordinate with the unions in advance.
- Draft any needed agreements.
- Plan for substitutes for all positions -- bus drivers, teachers, cafeteria staff, etc.
- Address any needed sick leave exceptions or waivers.
- Consider emergency sick leave pools.
- Coordinate with health insurance carriers regarding any anticipated challenges with the widespread use of health insurance benefits.