



# 2021-22 RETURN TO LEARN

## OVERVIEW

We successfully navigated the COVID school years through a combination of hybrid and in-person learning while providing the best possible education for our students. While learning is always our focus, we were also able to address the social/emotional and psychological needs of our students through our CARES team process. Our entire teaching staff was trained in ReThink Ed, a curriculum designed to support the mental wellbeing of staff and students.

Unfortunately, we are still in the midst of this pandemic. Effectively educating students is again our focus while keeping our children, staff, and the community safe. Layered mitigation factors are still necessary to provide a safe and responsible in-person education for our students. The district has continued to prepare educational plans and building level procedures based on guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education (**ISBE**), the Illinois Department of Health (**IDPH**), the State’s five-phase reopening plan, **Restore Illinois**, the local health department (**MCHD**), and the **CDC School Guidance**.

This guide outlines the educational plans and protocols in place for the 2021–22 school year based on the phases of the Restore Illinois plan. While the state is currently in Phase 5, there is continued uncertainty regarding variants of COVID19 and the required mitigations to prevent spread. Protocols outlined in this guide are subject to change as federal, state, and local guidelines developed in response to changing regional, local, and school district infection rates and other data. The situation remains fluid, and the need for adjustments will be addressed on an ongoing basis.

We are excited to have our students back full time and in person for the 21-22 school year! The education of children depends on our continued collaboration, patience, and dedication to safe in-person learning.

| Phase 1 Rapid Spread  | Phase 2 Flattening   | Phase 3 Recovery  | Phase 4 Revitalization  | Phase 5 Illinois Restored   |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Strict stay at home and social distancing guidelines are put in place, and only essential businesses remain open.</p> <p>Every region has experienced this phase once already and could return to it if mitigation efforts are unsuccessful.</p> | <p>Non-essential retail stores reopen for curb-side pickup and delivery.</p> <p>Illinoisans are directed to wear a face covering when outside the home and can begin enjoying additional outdoor activities like golf, boating &amp; fishing while practicing social distancing.</p> | <p>Manufacturing, offices, retail, barbershops, and salons can reopen to the public with capacity and other limits and safety precautions.</p> <p>Gatherings of 10 people or fewer are allowed.</p> <p>Face coverings and social distancing are the norm.</p> | <p>Gatherings of 50 people or fewer are allowed, restaurants and bars reopen, travel resumes, child care and schools reopen under guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health.</p> <p>Face coverings and social distancing are the norm.</p> | <p>The economy fully reopens with safety precautions continuing.</p> <p>Conventions, festivals and large events are permitted, and all businesses, schools and places of recreation can open with new safety guidance and procedures.</p> |

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

These health and wellness guidelines were developed following recent guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Department of Public Health, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and local health department recommendations. The content of these guidelines are subject to change, pending further guidance or directives from the relevant authorities.

**Masks:** In light of the most recent regional, local, and school district infection rates and other data including: 20 news cases and 2,819 confirmed cases in area code 62040 on 7/30/21, a community vaccination rate of approximately 30%, a 7-Day average case positivity rate of 8.41%, and given that masks are a proven mitigation strategy against the spread of many illnesses including COVID19, a final decision about face coverings will be made prior to the start of school with as much notice as possible.

**Self-Certification:** Students are required to complete a self-certification form each semester stating they will not come to school if they are displaying common COVID symptoms.

**Staying Home/Calling In Sick:** Staying home when sick is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of many illnesses including COVID19. Parents or guardians must notify the school if a student is absent. It is critical the following information is shared with the school nurse when calling: the student has tested positive for COVID-19, the student is undiagnosed but displaying COVID-19 symptoms, the student has been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual.

**COVID Screening:** In an effort to increase safety, identify infection as early as possible, and prevent spread, we are partnering with University of Illinois to offer SHIELD screening ([SHIELD Illinois Overview](#)) to our students. The test is once a week, saliva-based test that does not involve any invasive steps, takes less than 5 minutes and is completed by the students themselves. The saliva samples are collected and delivered to a lab where they are analyzed and results are returned in less than 24 hours. All samples are permanently destroyed, and all results are confidential and not shared.

Students taking part in SHIELD screening or other preventative measures, masked at all times, and distanced 3 feet apart will not be sent home due to close contact. Students not participating in screening, or not wearing a mask, within 6 feet of a positive case for 15 total minutes will be sent home due to close contact. Parents will be notified of a form to complete in Skyward that will allow them to opt out of the weekly SHIELD screening program.

## DAILY SCHOOL OPERATIONS

### School Times:

|             |                   |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Coolidge -  | 7:45AM to 2:00PM  |
| Frohardt -  | 8:00AM to 2:15PM  |
| Mitchell -  | 8:00AM to 2:15PM  |
| Lake -      | 8:00AM to 1:30PM  |
| GCHS -      | 8:30AM to 2:45PM  |
| Maryville - | 8:50AM to 3:05PM  |
| Wilson -    | 8:50AM to 3:05PM  |
| Prather -   | 9:05AM to 3:20PM  |
| Grigsby -   | 9:15AM to 3:30PM  |
| PreK (AM) - | 9:15AM to 11:45AM |
| PreK (PM) - | 1:00PM to 3:30PM  |

**Before Arriving at School:** Students exhibiting symptoms of sickness should not come to school. We are asking parents to immediately notify the school once a student starts displaying symptoms. Nurses are available for questions.

**Arriving at School:** Students will be permitted to enter the building 15 minutes prior to the start of school. Students will not be permitted to gather in groups before class.

**In-Person Learning:** Per the declaration from the Illinois State Superintendent on July 9th ([ISBE/IDPH Guidance](#)), daily, full day, in-person learning will be in place as long as federal, state, and local guidelines developed in response to changing regional and school district infection rates will allow. To protect our children, staff, and community to the greatest extent possible, the following mitigation measures are in place.

**Classrooms:** All classrooms will use 3 feet social distancing *to the extent possible*. Teachers will use assigned seating for students and students are to remain in these seats *to the greatest extent possible*. Regular hand sanitization will occur in all classrooms daily. Cleaning and disinfecting will be completed multiple times daily through cooperation of custodians, staff, and students. Increased ventilation using fans and open windows will be used as needed.

**Cafeterias:** Students will eat in cafeterias. Grab and go breakfast and lunch will be provided to all students. Cafeteria tables will be spaced and social distancing will be maintained to the greatest extent possible. Additional dining spaces may be provided as needed if possible.

**Restrooms:** 3 feet physical distancing will be maintained and cleaning and disinfecting will occur multiple times per day.

**Hallways, Main Office, and Other Common Areas:** Social distancing of 3 feet will be maintained to the extent possible and masks are recommended for all staff and students in all areas and situations in which they are not required. Signs will be posted at entrances and in hallways as reminders of distancing and the recommendation of masks. Visitor access will be limited and restricted to designated areas in each building. All visitors must certify that they are symptom-free, and follow all CDC/IDPH guidelines. High touch areas will be cleaned throughout the day.

**Extracurricular Activities:** IDPH requirements for school settings will be followed by all extracurricular activities. IHSA and the IESA guidelines will be followed by athletics at all levels.

**Remote Option:** Per the declaration from the Illinois State Superintendent on July 9th (Prevention School Guidance), “Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, all schools must resume fully in-person learning for all student attendance days, provided that, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-30 and 105 ILCS 5/34-18.66, remote instruction be made available for students who have not received a COVID-19 vaccine or who are not eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine, only while they are under quarantine consistent with guidance or requirements from a local public health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health.” Therefore, a remote option will not be available to students who do not meet the qualifications above. Medically fragile students and students at a higher risk of severe illness may be considered for Homebound education.

“Home or hospital instruction may commence upon receipt of a written physician's statement, but instruction shall commence no later than five school days after the school district receives the medical statement. The medical statement must be signed by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches (as determined by the Medical Practice Act of 1987) or by a PA or by an APRN.” (Illinois State Board of Education, Division of Regulatory Support and Wellness, ISBE Homebound Requirements).

**Quarantined Students:** Alternate learning services will not be provided in the same format as remote instruction last year. All teachers will maintain a Google Classroom with current posted assignments and instructional resources to support student learning. Questions can be emailed to the teacher or posted directly to their Google Classroom.

## **SANITATION**

**Custodians:** All highly used locations and commonly touched surfaces will be thoroughly disinfected routinely throughout the day and again each night. Locations such as classrooms, bathrooms, cubbies/coat/backpack areas, stairwells, and items such as, water coolers/fountains, faucet handles, doorknobs, desktops, tabletops, countertops, light switches, pencil sharpeners, handrails, sinks, and faucets will receive focused attention.

**Students/Staff:** Wipes and hand sanitizer is provided. Routine disinfecting of personal items such as computers, laptops, iPads, phones, and toys will be performed throughout the day. Chairs, tables and desks will be wiped down by students and Staff as needed. Staff will remove all items from classroom surfaces and high touch areas daily to expedite evening deep disinfection by the custodial staff. Items that cannot be disinfected, such as cloth items, will be removed from the classroom.

**Bus Drivers:** Sanitizing bus seats, handrails, and inside windows is the responsibility of the bus drivers.

**Coaches:** Coaches will wipe down all equipment and benches.

**Deep Cleaning Procedures:** Deep Cleaning Procedures will be performed anytime a sick person visited or used the school. Any area used by a sick person will be closed off until it has been disinfected. All equipment used by the individual will also be disinfected. If possible, windows will be opened in the area to increase air circulation in the area. The area will remain closed until all disinfecting procedures are complete.

**Federal and State grant funds (ESSER) have been and are currently being used to purchase additional disinfection and sanitation equipment and personal PPE *Layers of mitigation, such as masking, physical / social distancing, and other measures will be assessed and revised as conditions change and/or improve.***

## COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The District will work with the Madison County Health Department to help track local transmission rates and other metrics. In the event local COVID-19 metrics indicate that changes to prevention and mitigation layers are necessary, the District will collaborate with the Madison County Health Department and consider necessary changes to these protocols and school operating procedures. The District will consult with the Department on logistics and decisions for items such as other school health and safety protocols, screening testing, contact tracing, vaccine clinics, and emergency school closings. ***You will be notified of any changes to these health and safety protocols as soon as possible once the District has consulted with the Department.***