

OPEN D2 5

A Plan for Safe, Healthy and Rigorous Learning

**ELMHURST COMMUNITY UNIT
SCHOOL DISTRICT 205**

2020-2021

Introduction

In May 2020, D205 administrators convened a 2020-21 Opening of School Committee based on the District Management Group Model that included four committees, Instructional Core/SEL, Operations, Stakeholder/Communications, and Resources, and a Steering Committee to coordinate the work. A total of 78 teachers, administrators, staff, Board members, labor representatives, and community members.

The Steering Committee determined that the following four foundational beliefs would guide the work:

1. The top priority is protecting the health and safety of all students and employees;
2. Re-establishing relationships and ensuring that the social-emotional needs of students and basic wellness needs of families will be prominent in the learning and resource allocation decision-making process;
3. Educators will champion an assets-based philosophy and ensure appropriate rigor to promote student growth—interventions will be strengthened to address skill deficiencies that may have emerged due to the disruption in the educational process; and
4. The plan will be legally sound such that the District is protected from liability and in compliance with state and local directives while incorporating the agility and flexibility to adjust for the potential of rapidly changing environments and expectations.

This document is intended to serve as requirements and guidance for students, staff, parents and the community. In some cases, there will be details that will and must be commonly adhered to, and, in other cases, specific implementation strategies will be developed by building leadership teams or other means and approved by D205 district office administration. In addition, the document is intended to be fluid so that it can be edited quickly as needed to respond to external circumstances that cannot be predicted at this time.

The undertakings by the District described in this plan are intended to be performed reasonably and practicably in light of the uncertainties of COVID-19 and the frequent changes in guidance and standards from multiple governmental and private entities. Nothing in the plan constitutes a waiver of the District's protections under the Illinois Tort Immunity Act or other law or creates standards of care different than those established by the Act.

To see the full plan, please click [here](#), and to view the July 15, 2020 D205 Board of Education Meeting during which the Open D205 Plan was presented, click [here](#).

Start of the 2020-21 School Year

With the passage of [Public Act 101-643](#), school districts are allowed to have up to five Blended Remote Learning Planning Days included in their calendar. As such, District 205 has made the following alterations to the calendar for the 2020-21 school year:

- The first day of school will now be Monday, August 24, 2020. A one-week delay to starting school affords D205 staff the opportunity to train and prepare for a safe and healthy in-person learning environment.
- Three Remote Learning Planning Days will be taken on August 19, August 20 and August 21, 2020. The planning days are in addition to the originally scheduled Teacher Institute Days on August 17 and 18.

School Schedules for the 2020-21 School Year

Elmhurst Community Unit School District 205 believes that all students should be provided with in-person instruction to the greatest extent possible. As scheduling for the 2020-2021 school year was considered, the Open D205 Team considered guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education

Pre-Kindergarten through Fifth Grade Scheduling

In the early grades, we believe that all students **can be in school safely and the current plan is to reopen all elementary schools for in-person instruction.** However, all parents and families should be aware of the following:

- Any parent/guardian of a child may choose to have their child educated remotely. The District will provide information to all parents and families about how to make this choice. This option will be given at the beginning of the year and, where feasible (given staffing levels, school safety, current recommendations from health departments) parents may opt-in or out on a semester basis (i.e. opting for remote learning at the beginning of the year would be a choice through January).
- All students must wear a mask or other face covering during the school day with the exception of when eating lunch or when outside. Information about how exceptions to this requirement will be handled are available in previous sections of this document.

However, should the spread of the virus necessitate great social distancing or if there are changes in the guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health or the Illinois State Board of Education, **parents and families should be prepared to implement the following hybrid schedule:**

PK-5 Hybrid Schedule - To Be Used ONLY if Need Arises					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group A	In-Person	In-Person	Remote	Remote	Remote
Group B	Remote	Remote	Remote	In-Person	In-Person

The District will provide at least a 24-hour notice (when possible) to all parents and families of the implementation of a hybrid option. Finally, we are also prepared for the possibility that all students in the early grades may require remote instruction (i.e. that in-person instruction might not be possible at some points during the year).

Middle Schools and High School Scheduling

As a part of a middle school or high school experience, students typically move between classrooms and have several different teachers. While some teachers could move from room to room during the day at the middle schools, the number of students mixing between teams is still significant. We believe that the benefits of having a middle school or high school schedule are an integral part of the Elmhurst Community Unit School District 205 experience. Therefore, with the present guidance on social distancing in mind, **all students in 6th through 12th grade will experience a hybrid schedule** with some instruction being provided in person and some instruction being provided remotely. The following key points should be kept in mind:

- Any parent/guardian of a child may choose to have their child educated remotely. The District will provide information to all parents and families about how to make this choice. This option will be given at the beginning of the year and, where feasible (given staffing levels, school safety, current recommendations from health departments) parents may opt-in or out on a semester basis (i.e. opting for remote learning at the beginning of the year would be a choice through January.).
- All students must wear a mask or other face covering during the school day with the exception of when eating lunch or when outside. Information about how exceptions to this requirement will be handled are available in previous sections of this document.
- We are also prepared for the possibility that all students will require remote instruction (i.e. that in-person instruction might not be possible at some points during the year).

Additionally, as the scheduling team considered options, there was a need to have students attend school in smaller groups for the purpose of social distancing along with a need to have consistency in learning days each week. Given these parameters, the scheduling option below was developed which attempts to accomplish the following:

- Offers in-person instruction each week for every student.
- Provides a combined block of interventions and remote learning on Wednesday rather than a full day of intensive interventions and a separate day of remote learning.
- Minimizes the days in between in-person instruction (maximum of three school days in between).
- Allows all students to have instruction on the same days every week.

Typical Student Perspective - Group A

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
What's Happening?	In-Person Instruction	In-Person Instruction	Remote Instruction with Intensive Intervention/ Programming	Remote Instruction	Remote Instruction
Length of Day	Typical school day length*	Typical school day length*	Minimum of five hours of instruction	Minimum of five hours of instruction	Minimum of five hours of instruction

**The length of the school day may change given circumstances with staffing and student safety.*

Typical Student Perspective - Group B

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
What's Happening?	Remote Instruction	Remote Instruction	Remote Instruction with Intensive Intervention/ Programming	In-Person Instruction	In-Person Instruction

Length of Day	Minimum of five hours of instruction	Minimum of five hours of instruction	Minimum of five hours of instruction	Typical school day length*	Typical school day length*
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*The length of the school day may change given circumstances with staffing and student safety.

Please note: Students with disabilities and students who receive English Learner services through the District will have the opportunity to attend school in groups A and B as listed above.

Transition Center

Students who attend the Transition Center will experience the same schedule as those students from the early grades as we believe that all students at the Transition Center **can be in school safely.** However, all parents and families of students at the Transition Center should be aware of the following:

- Any parent/guardian of a student at the Transition Center may choose to have their child educated remotely. The District will provide information to all parents and families about how to make this choice. This option will be given at the beginning of the year and, where feasible (given staffing levels, school safety, current recommendations from health departments) parents may opt-in or out on a semester basis (i.e. opting for remote learning at the beginning of the year would be a choice through January).
- All students must wear a mask or other face covering during the school day with the exception of when eating meals or when outside. Information about how exceptions to this requirement will be handled are available in previous sections of this document.
- Students who are being educated at the Transition Center are often out in the community at work sites. There may be additional requirements for students while they are at supported work sites and the District will work with all students and their families as appropriate.

Equity & Diverse Learners

The District 205 Support Services Department works diligently to consider and plan to equitably meet the diverse needs of all students. Our team is committed to working with families to answer questions, resolve concerns, and problem-solve obstacles to a student’s success. Diverse learners require differentiated learning environments in order for learning needs to be met. The District will prioritize in-person learning for the below groups of students to the greatest extent possible.

Health & Safety

Our first priority as a school district is the health and safety of our students, staff, and community. Throughout this pandemic, our team from District 205 has partnered with and been guided by local, state, and federal agencies including the DuPage County Department of Public Health, the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois State Board of Education and the Centers for Disease Control.

As the date for the start of the school year draws closer, we will always put the health and safety of our students, staff, and community at the forefront of our decision process. D205 will follow all public health regulations and expectations including:

- Requiring face covering for all students, staff, and visitors

- Self-certifying temperatures of students and staff on a daily basis. Students with a temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit will be sent home. If students or staff are ill, they must stay at home.
- Maximizing airflow in places in classrooms and common gathering spaces.
- Utilizing 6 feet of social-distancing as much as possible.
- Maintaining consistent cohort groupings of individuals and limit the amount and size of gatherings as much as possible.
- Limiting the duration of interaction between individuals outside of cohort groupings.
- Increasing the focus on handwashing and promoting the usage of hand sanitizer when soap and water is unavailable.
- Adhering to the highest regulations for cleaning. Custodial Services cleaning practices will be focused on cleaning for health, which includes an emphasis on disinfecting surfaces where bacteria or viruses are most likely to be transmitted.

Blended Remote Learning

A *Plan for Continuity of Instruction* was developed in the Spring of 2020 in response to COVID-19, in which Elmhurst Community Unit School District 205 defined “Continuity of Instruction” as a continuation of academic activities as much as possible while mitigating the effects of any significant academic disruption(s).

In response to the evolving academic disruptions posed by COVID-19, and to continuously improve remote learning practices and procedures during the 2020-2021 school year, the following three elements emerged in planning as the major focus areas for consideration and development related to the future remote learning experiences of students.

- *Engaging Learning Experiences for Students*
- *Professional Learning Experiences for Staff*
- *Organized Systems for Students and Parents*

District 205 appreciates the hardworking, adaptive team of faculty and staff across the District committed to continuing to utilize remote learning procedures, to the extent necessary, to maintain the continuity of instruction and support the social emotional learning needs of students in the event of an emergency disruption that may result in a suspension of learning, including but not limited to in-school classes and/or campus activities.

Transportation

The D205 Transportation Department supports students by providing safe and timely transport services for eligible riders attending on-site programs whether the education model is traditional or hybrid. The District will continue to meet special education student transportation needs. Transport service will follow public health guidelines:

- No more than 50 individuals may be on a vehicle at any one time during Phase 4. No more than 10 individuals may be on a vehicle at any one time during Phase 3

- Sanitization will be completed daily or between use on all vehicles used for student transportation.
- Students must undergo symptom and temperature checks via self-certification before boarding a bus.
- IEP or 504 teams will determine individual transportation needs for students who require special accommodations.
- The district will enact contact tracing if a child tested positive for COVID-19 who rides to or from school on a school bus.
- District will suspend the Paid Access to Transportation bus program for our middle school students.

More detailed transportation plans will be available once student schedules are in place, and the District will provide additional information to families using bus transportation regarding specific procedures and expectations.

Food and Nutrition Services

Elmhurst School District 205 will continue to provide meal service to students. The meal service program will be a combination of in-school serving and a “grab & go” program similar to the one implemented in spring of 2020. The following health and safety guidelines apply to food service workers and services:

- All food service and support employees will wear the face coverings and gloves whenever cleaning or sanitizing an item or surface.
- All cleaning and disinfecting of facilities will be in accordance with CDC guidance.
- All federal, state and local health and safety standard protocols will be followed by FNS staff and serving support.
- All meals served will be in compliance with federal nutrition requirements.
- All meals will be individually plated. The type of attendance day will dictate whether in-school or “grab & go” service will occur.

Workforce Management and Support

The Elmhurst Community Unit School District 205 workforce is large and varied, delivering direct and indirect service to critical components of education. During planning and implementation of workforce management initiatives, attention will be given to two primary needs:

- Delivering all services related to education and operations
- Supporting our staff with their personal needs related to their work and safety and personal health.

District 205 will provide flexibility for educators in balance with the needs of delivering education to each of our students and their personal needs. This may look like a full-time schedule in the in-person/hybrid environment (in-person+remote/student rotational learning) or a full-time schedule in the remote-only environment. With school-level planning of schedules at the center, Human Resources will support the needs of the school and educator by creating categories of schedule styles including: hybrid (in-person/remote), full-remote, and others as needed. In addition, the District will be prepared, if necessary, to transition from a hybrid to a full-remote environment depending on public health

conditions. Through all, the negotiated agreement and all laws will be followed to make certain educators understand the expectations of the new and fluid work environment

Community Engagement and Communications

Elmhurst District 205 Communications and Public Relations Department aims to inform, engage, and inspire all stakeholders and the community, no matter the environment. Whether functioning in a traditional school model, implementing remote learning or a blended remote learning plan, the district's Communication and PR team will continue to keep D205's staff, students and their families and the extended school community informed about work of the district and its plans to OpenD205 for 2020-21 school as the state and nation reengage amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regardless of the learning model, D205 will relay critical and necessary information for all audiences, support crisis situations, fortify the district's brand, lead community relations and family engagement, respond to the media, and direct many other "business-as-usual" communications strategies.