

NORTHBROOK SCHOOL DISTRICT 27 REOPENING PLAN

SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021



July 17, 2020



MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear District 27 Families,

We are looking forward to welcoming you back to school this fall and have created a plan for our reopening in August. Over the course of the past few weeks, we conducted our Parent Q&A Sessions, held numerous Advisory Committee meetings, and developed the details for a safe and productive opening of school.

We based our plan on adherence to the most recent public health information from the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Center for Disease Control, and on the guidance of the Illinois State Board of Education. The plan is subjected to change as new guidance from these organizations is provided to best support the health and safety of our students and staff. All updates will be posted on our website under the [2020-2021 School Year](#) tab and will be shared through all of our communication channels.

If Illinois moves from Phase 4 back to Phase 1, 2, or 3 due to a resurgence of the virus, it is possible that the governor will direct all Illinois schools to move to remote learning for all students for a period of time. On July 15, the number of regions that were originally established in the “Restore Illinois” plan was increased to 11, which redesignates Northbrook and its surrounding communities to be in a separate Suburban Cook County region. This change allows for more specific monitoring of cases within our region of the state and for the governor potentially to implement restrictions to individual regions as needed. As a district, we are preparing for this scenario and as always, are committed to keep you informed of any new developments.

Several weeks ago, the district asked parents to complete a preliminary anticipated student attendance survey. Combined with guidance and recommendations from several resources and input from our Advisory Committees, the data collected from this survey helped us formulate two options within our Reopening Plan for the 2020-2021 school year.

Option 1: Full day in-person instruction for kindergarten and first grade and a rotating schedule for grades 2-8.

For in-person instruction, all classes will adhere to the 6 foot physical distancing between students and the staff members.

Kindergarten and first grade students will attend school in person full time, 5 days a week, due to the creation of a new kindergarten campus to be housed at the Leisure Center on Walters Ave in our District. This new location is available due to a partnership with the Northbrook Park District and will allow our kindergarteners to attend daily, as well as to increase physical distancing space available at Hickory Point.

First grade students will attend at Hickory Point, and they will be divided into two classrooms with a teacher and an instructional assistant. The teacher will teach in-person to half the class and remotely to the other half of the class with the assistant. The teacher will move between the two rooms during the day so that all students are in-person with their teacher for about half the day. The teacher will use technology to direct the learning in both classrooms.

We will begin the school year on an A/B rotation for students in Grades 2-8. Students in these grades will attend school in person 2-3 days a week and remotely 2-3 days a week, depending on their individual schedules. While off campus, students will join remotely the class operating onsite at school. The remote students will receive live instruction occurring simultaneously with the students physically in school.

Option 2: Full Remote Learning

We know that in-person instruction may not be an option for some of our students with elevated health risks or for those students whose family members have elevated health risks. Families who do not feel comfortable with their children attending school in person are not required to do so. Their children will be able to attend the live class(es) synchronously.

With these options in mind, it is critical for parents to confirm for us their child(ren)'s attendance for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. We have provided a link on the [2020-2021 School Year](#) webpage, as well as within this document, to the [Student Attendance Confirmation form](#). We will also share a link to this form within a direct email to all parents. **We need for every parent to complete this form by July 22, 2020.** This confirmation will give us final information about whether your child will attend school in-person or if your child will be in a full remote learning schedule.

We will revisit both options that are included in our Reopening Plan on October 1 and adjust accordingly. Full details of the plan can be found on our website www.nb27.org in the [2020-2021 School Year](#) tab.

Respectfully,



David J. Kroeze, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

PRINCIPLES GUIDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR PLAN

We anchored our plan in the following guiding principles:

- Prioritize student and staff safety.
- Prioritize all students having access to some in-person instruction.
- Strive to offer in-person daily attendance to our youngest learners.
- Aim for students at highest risk of compromised learning (some Extended Resource Program - ERP and English Language - EL) attend in-person daily.
- Attempt to schedule elementary siblings (K-5) on the same days for in-person school if possible.
- Provide synchronous instruction that follows the school schedule when students are in a remote environment - curriculum moves forward on a daily basis.

KEY OBJECTIVES OF OUR PLAN

The Key Objectives of the Plan:

- Provide the safest environment for our students and staff.
- Maximize in-person attendance for all students while adhering to IDPH and CDC guidelines per our space capacity.
- Avoid “close contact” and implement aggressive mitigation to provide for the highest likelihood of stability in student and staff attendance if they are exposed to COVID-19.
- Deliver our rigorous and coherent programs.
- Remain agile and flexible to be able to adapt as conditions and guidance evolves.

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION GUIDANCE

On June 23, 2020, the [Illinois State Board of Education released guidance](#) with requirements for schools to meet for reopening plans in Phase 4. Key components of the guidance include:

- In-person instruction is strongly encouraged in Phase 4; however, it is critical to note that this does not signify a return to pre-pandemic operations.
- Districts must prepare an alternative for students with elevated health risks.
- Districts must plan for return to remote instruction pending a resurgence or second wave of the virus.

Illinois Department of Public Health guidelines (as stated within the [ISBE guidelines](#)) include:

- Require use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings;
- Prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one space;
- Require social distancing be observed, to the greatest extent possible;
- Require that schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require that individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings;
- Require an increase in schoolwide cleaning and disinfection.
- Parents/Guardians will be expected to provide a cloth face covering for their child/children on a daily basis if they are participating with in-person instruction. District 27 will maintain an inventory of disposable masks in the event that a child’s face covering becomes unwearable during the day. Children will be required to wear a face covering on prior to boarding the school bus and before entering the school building.



DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF OPTIONS

Option 1: Full day in-person instruction for kindergarten and first grade; grades 2-8 on a rotating schedule.

Elementary School

- All kindergarten students will return to school full day each day at the Leisure Center in Northbrook. We created a partnership with the Northbrook Park District to secure large classrooms so the full class can attend. The Leisure Center was one of the District schools from 1964-1982 and is fully configured for classroom instruction. We are grateful to the Park District for this partnership, as this planning is a community effort.
- All first grade, students will return to school full day, each day at Hickory Point, and each class will be split into two classrooms to adhere to the 6 foot physical distance. There will be a teacher and an instructional assistant for each class. The teacher will move from one classroom to the other so that there is in-person teaching for everyone. When the teacher is instructing one half of the class, he/she will be teaching the other class synchronously with the Instructional Assistant (IA) supporting the students.
- All 2nd-5th grade students will attend in-person learning on an A/B schedule.
 - Group A will follow a Monday, Wednesday, and every other Friday schedule.
 - Group B will follow a Tuesday, Thursday, and every other Friday schedule.
- On their remote learning day, the students will have a regular daily schedule and attend class [synchronously](#).
- Teachers will modify the delivery of instruction to reduce the sharing of materials/equipment and maintain 6 foot physical distancing.
- All students will have art, music, and PE classes taught in-person. A physical fitness block of time will be scheduled for students on their remote learning days.
- Signage will be posted throughout the school buildings as safety reminders to wear face coverings, adhere to physical distancing, and maintain proper hand hygiene.
- Staff and students will wear face coverings (masks) inside school and will be able to remove them when outside maintaining a 6 foot physical distance. Face shields will be used only with exceptions.
- Students will eat lunch in larger spaces so that they have more room for movement and also to keep the classroom clean. These larger spaces will allow students to be even further apart than 6 feet when unmasked and eating.
- Students will have recess with their own cohort to reduce contact with other students.
- There will be no extra-curricular activities at the beginning of school.
- Hallways will be marked to show directions and 6 foot distancing.

Middle School

- All 6th-8th grade students will follow an A/B schedule.
 - Group A will follow a Monday, Wednesday, and every other Friday schedule.
 - Group B will follow a Tuesday, Thursday, and every other Friday schedule.
- Teachers will modify the delivery of instruction to reduce the sharing of materials/equipment and to maintain 6 foot physical distancing.
- All rotation classes (Art, Music, Applied Technology, Health, Public Speaking) will be part of the students' schedules.
- All students will have in-person Advisory every week.
- We are still reviewing our Electives program, and we will share more information soon.
- We will space classroom seating at the 6 foot distance and face the desks in the same direction.
- On students' remote learning days, they will have a regular daily schedule and attend classes [synchronously](#).
- Students will follow their normal 10 period day both in school and when they are learning remotely.
- When at school, students will move from period to period but be released on a staggered bell to reduce numbers in the hallway.
- Students will eat lunch in larger spaces so that they have more movement and to keep the classroom clean. (Groups of <50)
- There will be no extra-curricular activities at the beginning of the school year.
- Hallways and stairwells will be marked to show directions and 6 foot distancing.
- Lockers will not be used until further notice.

Option 2: Full Remote Learning

We will make a fully remote learning opportunity available to students who:

- Have a verified medical or mental health condition that prevents them from participating safely in in-person learning (documentation will be required);
- Are unable or unwilling to wear a face covering during the bus ride and throughout any in person learning;
- Are not comfortable attending in-person under the conditions being implemented in the District.

Because of the fluid nature of the pandemic, there may be additional circumstances under which a parent would request a fully remote learning opportunity previously not identified.

If parents elect to have their child to participate in full remote learning, their child will remain on this schedule at least through October 31st.

The District will provide a device to all students, and students will join their class daily for [synchronous instruction](#) throughout the day.

LOGISTICS

Arrival at School

- The school hours will remain the same as in the past for each school.
- Face coverings (masks) will be required by all students and staff members.
- Students will be screened daily with temperature checks, or parents will self-certify their children. We are developing the process that will be used for temperature and symptom checking prior to coming to school each day. More information will follow.
- Bus riders and those students dropped off by car will enter the school through designated doors and will maintain 6 foot physical distance.

Facilities - Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Cleaning and sanitizing will meet the health/medical requirements.
- Students will not share “community supplies.” Individual storage areas/kits will be created and maintained, along with individual student manipulative kits.

Instruction and Technology

- All students in the District will be provided with a District Chromebook.
- A video-conferencing tool will be used to conduct synchronous instruction. Students in grades 2-8 will use this tool on their remote learning days.
- Canvas, our learning management system, will be used to post video conferencing links for synchronous instruction (for students participating remotely) as well as class documents, assignments, and information. Upgrades are being made to make Canvas more user-friendly for students and parents.
- New and enhanced resources will be used for overall delivery of instruction and for personalized learning in K-5 and some middle school math courses. Additionally, new digital resources and strategies will be implemented for classroom-based assessments.
- Across all grade levels and disciplines, teachers are collaboratively planning for the upcoming school year. Work includes planning for the beginning of the school year and taking into consideration skills and knowledge that may not be secure from last year, prioritizing curriculum objectives, identifying lessons and units that need to be adjusted due to substantial partner work that requires close proximity of students and/or sharing of materials, planning for the execution of synchronous teaching, and developing strategies for the management of materials.
- This summer, the social workers are developing a framework of strategies and resources to help staff address the social/emotional needs of returning students. Areas of focus will include: creating a classroom community; supporting student engagement; understanding trauma related to the pandemic; safety; and communicating through the mask. In addition, PBIS expectations at each building will be enhanced to include expected behaviors related to social distancing, wearing a mask, washing hands, etc.

Transportation

- Our bus company contracted for this year is North Shore Transit.
- We will send registration for the bus service to families.
- We will permit a maximum of 24 riders per bus to enhance physical distancing.
- Parents need to self-certify their child(ren) to enter the bus.
- All passengers and bus drivers must wear face coverings on buses.
- Cleaning and sanitizing of the bus will occur after every route.
- There will be no late bus or buses for extracurricular programming.

Calendar

- The first day of student attendance will be Thursday, August 20th.
- The first few days of the year will look a bit different as teachers will focus on the in-person students to develop relationships and set up routines and procedures. We will have more information for you on the opening day activities for all children. Our priority for these initial days of school will be to make our students feel welcome, safe, and comfortable being back in the classroom under some new/different circumstances.



QUESTIONS

We have created a [website tab with key information](#) about the reopening. Also, we have created an FAQ to address questions about the reopening. A [form](#) is available for parents to submit questions related to the school reopening plan. We will do our best to provide the answers and will update our FAQ to keep everyone informed.

IN CONCLUSION

We are excited to welcome our students back to school. We will take every measure to mitigate risk and to protect students and staff as we navigate this new reality. We will continue to monitor regularly the guidance and the environment in order to make adjustments as appropriate.

One final important note: Please use this link to the [Student Attendance Confirmation Form](#) to inform the District of your child(ren)'s attendance for the start of the 2020-2021 School Year. **We need for every parent to complete this form by July 22, 2020.** This confirmation will give us final information about whether your child will attend school in-person or if your child will be in a full remote learning schedule.

We look forward to seeing the students on August 20.

