

## HANDBOOK UPDATES/SPRING INFO

### Back to School: Spring 2021

[Find more information, including answers to frequently asked questions, visit rps205.com.](https://www.rps205.com)

**Symptoms & health screenings:** Staff, students or visitors may not enter schools or district buildings if they have a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees or currently have known symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, vomiting or diarrhea. By coming to work and school, the staff member or parent/guardian of that student confirms that there is no sign or symptoms of COVID-19 and attending school will not cause a public health concern.

On-site temperature screenings are no longer recommended or required, according to the Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Department of Public Health. Tools will still be available for students and staff who want to take their temperature.

Staff or students who develop symptoms during the school day must notify school health services or another identified point of contact in the school building immediately. They will be isolated and sent home immediately. Affected areas in the school will be closed off and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

**Masks or face coverings:** All staff and students are still required to wear a face covering or mask while inside the school building, regardless of vaccination status. Face coverings must be snug and be worn over the nose and mouth at all times. Vented masks are not allowed. Gaiters are allowed if they are at least two-ply.

- Face coverings do not need to be worn outside if students and staff can safely remain at least 6 feet apart. They can be removed when students/staff are eating; however students and staff must remain six feet apart.
- All students in prekindergarten through grade 12 must wear a face mask when in school, unless a specific exemption applies.
- Face coverings may be removed for children who are napping, with close monitoring to ensure no child leaves their designated napping area without putting their face mask back on.
- Staff can only remove masks when they are alone in their classroom with the door closed.
- Students who refuse to appropriately wear a mask may face consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Staff who refuse to appropriately wear a mask may face disciplinary action.

**Social distancing:** Social distancing is now defined as three-to-six feet for students and vaccinated staff whenever possible. Non-vaccinated staff must remain 6 feet away from staff and students whenever possible.

**Hand washing:** Students and staff are encouraged to use soap and water to frequently wash their hands. To supplement hand washing, hand sanitizer stations are stationed throughout each building. Refillable hand sanitizer bottles are available in every classroom.

**Cleaning protocol:** Increased cleaning and disinfection protocols are in place at all district buildings. These protocols align with the CDC and Winnebago County Health Department recommendations and have been in place since the start of the health crisis. The district is using disinfectants that are proven effective and registered with the EPA and comply with the district's safety standards. Increased cleaning and disinfection protocols include daily cleaning and emergency cleaning in case of a suspected or reported case of illness.

**Meals:** While capacity guidelines have changed, students will continue to remain six feet apart while dining and encouraged to sit facing forward. Assigned seats are required, and students will be grouped into cohorts -- or smaller groups -- to minimize student crossover.

Most meal guidelines remain unchanged from the start of the school year:

- Students are welcome to bring lunch from home.
- Students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before eating.
- Each student will receive one pre-packaged meal and one carton of milk. All meals will be served in a pre-packaged container and placed on carts for distribution.
- Building administrators may designate outdoor dining areas or additional areas in the school for meal service.
- Students with dietary restrictions will be on a roster that includes where and when they will receive their meals, and that roster will be shared with Nutrition Services staff to ensure each student's meals are correct. The school nurse will provide a list of all students with a physician's statement on file for a special diet to Nutrition Services staff.
- Food will not be shared. Uneaten food will be thrown away; food will not be saved on a share cart.
- Tables will be sanitized before and after each meal service.
- Spaces will be marked on the floors and tables/seats to help students with physical distancing.
- All staff will wear a mask and disposable gloves during meal distribution.

**Transportation:** Transportation is prioritized for students who have no other option to get to school. If families are able, they should find alternative transportation, because the district's driver pool is limited, and bus capacity is still limited to 48 students.

**High school seniors:** [Follow this link for a senior toolkit](#). It includes graduation requirements, senior checklists and deadlines for post-secondary plans, FAFSA and scholarship info, plus contact information to help support you during your senior year.

**Field trips:** Virtual field trips are prioritized for the rest of the school year. Outdoor field trips will be considered. Principal supervisors will approve field trips based on the educational impact.

**Volunteers, visitors & tutors:** Volunteers and tutors will be allowed into schools if they are there to support student programs. Our preference is for the volunteers and tutors to be fully vaccinated. Visitors will still be restricted.

**Contact tracing:** Contact tracing will continue for any potential close contacts -- including both students and staff -- to positive COVID-19 cases.

**Fine Arts:** Guidelines for fine arts in-person instruction were updated in January:

- Students should only share equipment that can be safely sanitized before and after use. For example, wind instruments, music and scripts cannot be shared. Equipment must be sanitized after each use.
- Multiple students within the same class cannot share a music stand.
- Students and staff must sanitize their hands at the start and end of each class period.
- When possible, shared equipment and materials will be divided and reserved for each cohort. For example, a class will use the same set of equipment until the unit ends. The class set will be sanitized and quarantined over the weekend before a new cohort uses the equipment.

Indoor rehearsal guidelines:

- Students and staff must remain six feet apart, side-to-side, between singers/instrumentalists (nine feet for trombone front to back)
- Students and staff must wear masks while singing or playing. (Students who play wind instruments will wear masks with slits.)
- Instruments should be fitted with bell covers, except flute/recorder.
- Rehearsal time should be no more than 30 minutes at the beginning of class to allow for adequate air exchange between rehearsal groups.
- Classroom ventilation should be optimized by opening doors and windows when possible.
- Water keys will be emptied into the garbage can, sink, or disposable pads.

Theatre & Dance Guidelines

- Block the actors/dancers to allow for six feet social distancing.
- Indoor rehearsal time should be no more than 30 minutes at the beginning of class to allow for adequate air exchange between rehearsal groups.

**Physical education:**

- Masks may be removed by students and staff when outside and socially distanced.
- If weather permits, students will participate in outdoor physical education activities that allow natural social distancing.
- Utilize markings on the gymnasium floor/wall/field to maintain social distancing.
- Pools can be used. [IDPH guidance](#) on swimming facilities must be followed.

- Students who participate in swimming may use locker rooms. Other students should not use locker rooms unless absolutely necessary.
- Games and sport activities that require close guarding and any potential physical contact with another player must be avoided to comply with IDPH requirements. Skills can be taught from close contact games/sports when social distancing can still occur.
- Any lesson that can be modified to accommodate social distancing and sanitizing protocols can be used.
- Equipment can be used and shared when sanitization protocols are followed.
- When possible, shared equipment and materials will be divided and reserved for each cohort. For example, a class will use the same set of equipment until the unit ends. The class set will be sanitized and quarantined over the weekend before a new cohort uses the equipment.
- Students and staff should sanitize hands at the start and end of each class period.
- All equipment should be sanitized after it is used and before it is stored.

**Athletics:** The NIC-10 athletic conference organizers released new guidance on March 29, based on updated information from the Illinois High School Association and Illinois Department of Public Health. (See *below*.) Adjustments are possible; please direct questions to school administrators.

#### NIC-10 Spectator Guidelines: Spring 2021

To ensure the health and wellness of student athletes, coaches, officials, game personnel, and spectators at NIC-10 athletic contests this spring, the NIC-10 Principals and Athletic Directors require spectators to follow the guidelines below at football, boys soccer, and girls volleyball events.

#### NIC-10 Spectator Guidelines at approved venues:

- Spectators are permitted at events as long as they maintain social distancing throughout the event as outlined in the [IDPH Sports Safety Guidance](#) and IHSA [COVID Resource Guidance](#).
- Event Capacity at volleyball - indoor venues of capacity greater than or equal to 200 are now permitted a capacity limit of 25% capacity (same as outdoor venues), not including players, coaches, and game day personnel.
- Event Capacity at soccer and football - 25% of the capacity of the venue, not including players, coaches, and game day personnel.
- Tickets will be allocated at the discretion of and distributed by schools with priority given to athletes' families.
- Spectators may be assigned specific seats. Social distancing must be maintained regardless.
- All [IDPH Sports Safety Guidance](#) must be adhered to.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet between individuals not from the same household must be maintained at all times. Handshakes, fist bumps, hugging, etc. are not permissible.
- Spectators must wear a face covering over their nose and mouth at all times except for when eating or drinking.
- Every effort will be made to stream or record events for outside viewing.
- See your schools' website or contact the athletic director for streaming and ticket information

In the event school officials need to address individuals not following the guidelines above, please note that violators may be required to leave the event. Further instances may result in the removal of spectator privileges. In the event additional violations are reported, the related student athlete may be suspended from participation to ensure safety.

## STAFF UPDATES & REMINDERS

Report a confirmed COVID-19 case on the [COVID-19 Resources page](#), and follow this protocol:

- If you are feeling unwell and need to report a symptom(s) of COVID-19: Notify your supervisor or building principal and your Human Resources Generalist via email.
- If you have tested positive for COVID-19: Complete the [COVID Positive Case Report](#).
- If you are a close contact to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 – and that person is not an RPS 205 staff or student: [Complete the COVID Close Contact Report](#).

**New Staff Quarantine Guidelines:** Quarantine guidelines are updated for staff now that many staff members are fully vaccinated or in the process of completing their vaccination:

- Staff who have been fully vaccinated – and are at least two weeks past their booster shot – will not be required to quarantine simply if they are a close contact to someone who recently tested positive for COVID-19.
- Any fully vaccinated staff who are symptomatic must still quarantine.
- Any staff or students who have not been vaccinated will still be required to quarantine if they come in close contact with anyone who recently tested positive for COVID-19.

The Winnebago County Health Department has revised its quarantine guidelines for adults who are determined to be close contacts to a positive case of COVID-19. The changes were made because of Winnebago County's ongoing positivity rate and increase in fully vaccinated residents. **Note: All children in daycares or K-12 schools must continue the full 14-day quarantine if they are considered a close contact to someone with COVID-19.** RPS 205 will follow these guidelines for staff starting Monday, March 29:

- Quarantine can be reduced from 14 days to 10 days if no COVID-19 symptoms have been reported at any time within those 10 days.
- Quarantine can end after day 7 (on day 8) if a Reverse Transcriptase (RT)PCR test is negative on or after day 5, and no symptoms are reported during any of those 7 days.

At the end of the reduced quarantine period, staff must:

- Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.

- If they have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact their healthcare provider.
- Continue to prevent the spread of COVID-19: Wear a mask, stay at least six feet from others, frequently wash their hands and avoid crowds.

A close contact is defined as someone who is:

- Living in the same household as a person with COVID-19.
- Caring for a person with COVID-19.
- Within six feet of a person with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes within a 24-hour period.
- In direct contact with secretions from a person with COVID-19 (such as being coughed on, kissing, sharing utensils)
- Being in close contact – as described in any of the above scenarios – in the past 48 hours before a person with COVID-19 developed symptoms.

**Staff meetings:** Staff meetings should continue to be held virtually, if possible. All vaccinated staff must continue to remain at least three feet apart. Non-vaccinated staff must continue to remain at least six feet apart. Masks are required at all times.

**Meetings should not include food.** That means no celebrations with treats – like birthdays or retirements – or meetings over lunch.

**Staff breaks:** Staff must remain at least six feet apart while eating or drinking. While the guidelines share new information for vaccinated staff, all staff -- regardless of vaccination status -- must remain at least six feet apart during lunch. It is still encouraged to eat privately when possible.

**Do not ride in vehicles with your colleagues during work hours.** Staff should not share a vehicle for work-related travel with anyone who does not reside in their household. Staff should always stay at least six feet apart.

**Staff may be required to take a rapid COVID-19 test.** If you are directed to take a rapid test, please bring your insurance card and photo ID to the testing facility. Test results should be available within 15 minutes and should be communicated to the Health Services COVID-19 team and your HR Generalist immediately so that Health Services can determine whether you may return to work or if you need to be quarantined/isolated. Information regarding COVID-19 Rapid Testing through Physicians Immediate Care can be found here: <https://physiciansimmediatecare.com/covid-19-molecular-testing-2/>.

**BinaxNOW COVID-19 testing:** BinaxNOW testing is available to RPS 205 staff by appointment only. Follow [this link to learn more about the BinaxNOW](#) testing, the free, rapid, easily administered nasal swab test for staff with COVID-19 symptoms. [Complete this form to request a BinaxNOW COVID-19 test.](#) A certified nurse will administer the test based on nurse availability and staff location.