



# Norridge School District 80

# Return to Learn Plan 21-22

On July, 9, 2021, State Superintendent Carmen I. Ayala, declared the following:

*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.*

On Wednesday, August 4, 2021, Governor Pritzker issued Executive Order 2021-18 that *requires that masks be worn indoors by all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to P-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. The State of Illinois also requires all public and nonpublic schools to comply with contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine, as directed by state and local public health departments.*

In addition to requirements for consistent and correct universal indoor mask use and contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine, the following COVID-19 prevention strategies, as outline in the July 27, 2021 IDPH/ISBE guidance, remain critical to protect students, teachers, and staff who are not fully vaccinated, especially in areas of moderate to high community transmission levels, and to safely deliver in-person instruction. Schools must implement these layered prevention strategies to the greatest extent possible and taking into consideration factors such as community transmission, vaccination coverage, screening testing, and occurrence of outbreaks, consistent with CDC guidance.

1. Promote and/or provide COVID-19 immunization for all eligible staff and students.
2. Facilitate physical distancing. Schools should configure their spaces to provide space for physical distancing to the extent possible in their facilities.
3. Implement or provide provisions for SARS-CoV-2 testing for diagnostic testing for suspected cases, close contacts and during outbreaks, as well as screening testing for unvaccinated staff and students according to the CDC's testing recommendations.
4. Improve ventilation to reduce concentration of potentially virus-containing droplets in schools' indoor air environments.
5. Promote and adhere to hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
6. Encourage individuals who are sick to stay home and get tested for COVID-19.
7. Clean and disinfect surfaces in schools to maintain healthy environments.

If you wish to read the most updated IDPH/ISBE Guidance, please open this link:

[ISBE-IDPH-Guidance.pdf](#)

As a result of the above, It is recommended that the following actions begin immediately:

**All teachers, staff students, and visitors in any NSD 80 building (Pre-K - 8), regardless of vaccination status, MUST wear a mask while indoors. Teachers may remove their masks while working in their classroom as long as no one else is present.**

All persons, regardless of vaccination status, must wear a face mask at all times when in transit to and from school via group conveyance (e.g., school busses, taxi cabs, small busses, etc.) unless a specific exemption applies.

The face mask should have two or more layers to stop the spread of COVID-19 and should be worn over the nose and mouth, be secured under the chin, and should fit snugly against the sides of the face without gaps.

The CDC does **not** recommend use of single-layer face masks (i.e. “gaiters”/neck warmers) as a substitute for multi-layered cloth masks.

Exceptions to universal consistent use of face masks include the following limited situations:

- When eating.
- If using a face shield when other methods of protection are not available or appropriate.
- For children while they are napping with close monitoring to ensure no child leaves their designated napping area without putting their face mask back on.
- For staff when alone in classrooms or offices with the door closed.
- For individuals who are younger than 2 years of age.
- For individuals who have trouble breathing; or those who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face mask without assistance.
- For persons with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, because of the disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- For individuals who have a condition or medical contradiction that prevents them from wearing a face mask.
- For fully vaccinated staff when meeting with other fully vaccinated staff outside of a setting where unvaccinated persons are present.
- For staff and students who are outdoors. However; particularly in areas of substantial to high transmission, staff and students who are not fully vaccinated should wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated.

### **Other Mitigation Strategies**

1. *Promote and/or provide COVID-19 immunization for all eligible staff and students.*

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic.

NSD 80 staff will minimize barriers to access vaccination for teachers and other frontline workers by providing access to vaccine clinics at or close to the place of work.

We will work with the CCPDH Department to support messaging and outreach regarding vaccination for members of school communities, including students under 12 years of age as they become eligible for vaccination in our community.

Specifically, NSD 80 staff will:

- Host vaccine clinic if deemed necessary and appropriate
- Send parents a letter to communicate about options for eligible children to receive the COVID-19 vaccine
- Continue to talk about the COVID-19 vaccine availability in our district
- Distribute information regarding the COVID-19 vaccination Frequently Asked Questions documents as they are updated and made available.
- We will continue to ask for proof of vaccination status of all staff members for quarantine and contact tracing purposes.
- We will attempt to determine the vaccination status of our 6-8 students in order to effectively quarantine students when necessary (or avoid quarantining) and for contact tracing purposes.

2. *Facilitate physical distancing. Schools should configure their spaces to provide space for physical distancing to the extent possible in their facilities.*

**We will strive to maintain at least three (3) feet of physical distance between students within classrooms to reduce transmission risk.** This minimum physical distance requirement will be increased if/when community transmission levels are substantial or high.

Physical distance should be measured as the distance between persons rather than between furniture.

There is no recommended capacity limit for school transportation.

Physical distancing (minimum of 3 feet) is recommended for students while eating or drinking.

School athletics must comply with the latest Sports Safety Guidance.

3. *Implement or provide provisions for SARS-CoV-2 testing for diagnostic testing for suspected cases, close contacts and during outbreaks, as well as screening testing for unvaccinated staff and students according to the CDC's testing recommendations.*

4. *Require contact tracing in combination with isolation of those with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and quarantine of close contacts, in collaboration with the local health department.*

We will work with our local health department to facilitate contact tracing of infectious students, teachers and staff.

Contact tracing involves identifying people who have a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 and individuals with whom they came in contact (close contact) and working with such individuals to interrupt disease spread. This includes asking people with COVID-19 to isolate and their contacts to quarantine at home voluntarily.

**Students and staff who are fully vaccinated with no COVID-19 like symptoms do not need to quarantine or be restricted from school or extracurricular activities.** The CDC recommends that fully vaccinated individuals test three to five days after a close contact exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

We will implement a tracking process to maintain ongoing monitoring of individuals excluded from school because they have COVID-19 like symptoms, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 and are in quarantine. Tracking methods include checking in with the school health personnel upon return to school to verify resolution of symptoms and that any other criteria for discontinuation of quarantine have been met. Tracking should take place prior to the return to the classroom.

Individuals who exhibit symptoms should be referred to a medical provider for evaluation, treatment, and information about when they can return to school, according to the IDPH Decision Tree for Symptomatic Individuals in Pre-K, K-12 schools and day care programs. Confirmed cases of COVID-19 will be reported to the local health department by the school health personnel or designee as required by the Illinois Infectious Disease Reporting requirements issued by IDPH.

### **Close Contact**

The CDC defines a close contact as an individual not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24 hour period. For students in the classroom setting, contacts who were within 3-6 feet of an infected individual **DO NOT** require quarantine as long as both the case and the contact were consistently

masked. If they were not consistently masked, then close contacts are classroom students who were within 6 feet of the infected individual for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

Individuals who are solely exposed to a confirmed case while outdoors should not be considered closed contacts.

### Quarantine Procedures

Local health departments will make the final determination on who is to be quarantined and for how long.

The CDC describes three (3) options for quarantine:

**Option 1:** Quarantine at home for 14 calendar days. Date of last exposure is considered day 0.

**Option 2:** Quarantine for 10 calendar days after the close contact's last exposure to the COVID-19 case. Date of last exposure is considered Day 0.

- The individual may end quarantine after day 10 if NO symptoms of COVID-19 developed during daily monitoring.
- PCR testing is recommended and may be required by the local health department.
- The individual can maintain physical distancing and masking at all times when returning to school; for classrooms where masking is strictly adhered to as required, physical distance of 3-6 feet is acceptable for return.

**Option 3:** Quarantine period is for 7 calendar days after the last exposure if:

- No symptoms developed during daily monitoring AND the individual has a negative PCR test that was collected within 48 hours of exposure day 7 (starting day 6 of after)
  - The individual is responsible for obtaining a copy of the negative results for documentation purposes.
- The individual can maintain physical distancing and masking at all times when returning to school; for classrooms where masking is strictly adhered to as required, physical distance of 3 to 6 feet is acceptable for return.

Regardless of when an individual ends quarantine, daily symptom monitoring should continue through calendar day 14 after exposure. If any symptoms develop during or after ending quarantine, the individual should immediately self-isolate and contact their health department or healthcare provider to report their symptoms.

#### 4. *Improve ventilation to reduce concentration of potentially virus-containing droplets in schools' indoor air environments.*

We will attempt the following to the extent possible:

- Increase outdoor air ventilation by opening windows when possible; use fans to increase the intake of fresh air into a classroom and decrease occupancy in areas where outdoor ventilation cannot be increased.
- Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and provide acceptable indoor air-quality for the current occupancy for each space.
- Increase total air flow supply to occupied spaces, when possible.
- Disable demand-controlled ventilation controls that reduce air supply based on occupancy or temperature during occupied hours.
- Open outdoor air dampers to reduce or eliminate heating, ventilation, and air conditioning air recirculation.
- Improve central air filtration.
- Run the HVAC system at maximum outside airflow for two hours before and after the school is occupied.
- Inspect and maintain local exhaust ventilation in areas such as restrooms, kitchen, cooking areas, etc.
- Surface cleans desk tops daily.

5. *Promote and adhere to hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.*

We will encourage frequent and proper handwashing daily. We will have proper hygiene supplies available each day: soap, paper towels and hand sanitizer for all grade levels and common areas.

6. *Encourage individuals who are sick to stay home and get tested for COVID-19.*

COVID-19 symptoms include the following:

- Fever or 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.

Individuals who exhibit or self-report should be referred to a medical provider for evaluation, testing, treatment and information about when they can return to school according to the Decision Tree for Symptomatic Individuals.

The following guidelines should be adhered to when determining whether or not to stay home from school due to an illness:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or more. Remain home for 24 hours after the fever is gone without using fever reducing medication. When a child has a fever, they should stay home and be sent to school.
- Vomiting or diarrhea. Stay home 24 hours after last episode and encourage fluids.
- Sore throat. Strep may be present, even without a fever. A person with a strep infection may have a headache and stomachache. If strep has been diagnosed by a doctor. stay home for 24 hours after antibiotics have been started.
- Runny nose, cough. A person who is feeling run down, not sleeping well due to a cold, or actively sneezing or coughing is not going to be able to pay attention and learn.
- Earaches. If a person has an earache that lasts more than a day or has severe pain, they should stay home and see a doctor.
- Skin Rash. See a doctor for a diagnosis and treatment. Treatment must be given for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Pinkeye. If the white of your eye is red and has any drainage, stay home from school and contact your doctor.

7. *Clean and disinfect surfaces in schools to maintain healthy environments.*

We will clean disinfect surfaces daily using proper disinfectant agents as per CDC and IDPH guidelines.

**Conclusion:**

The key points included in this document come directly from the Revised Public Health Guidance for Schools document, Part-5 - Supporting the Full Return to In-Person Learning for All Students - August 2021. We will continue to develop the steps we will take in NSD 80 and revise this document accordingly and as updates and further changes are released from the CDC, IDPH, CCDPH and ISBE. Our primary objective each and every day will be to return our students and staff home to their parents, families and loved ones safe and healthy.