

# 2021-22 Health & Safety Measures (in-depth)

From virtual Town Hall, hosted by NineNorth

Aug. 25, 2021

# Agenda

## 6:30-8 p.m.

- **6:30-6:45 p.m.** — Epidemiologist & district nurse update on local COVID-19 data.
- **6:45-7:00 p.m.** — District COVID-19 mitigation strategies.
- **7:00-7:05 p.m.** — Wilshire Park Elementary School COVID-19 mitigation strategies.
- **7:05-7:10 p.m.** — St. Anthony Middle School COVID-19 mitigation strategies.
- **7:10-7:15 p.m.** — St. Anthony Village High School COVID-19 mitigation strategies.
- **7:15-7:20 p.m.** — Community Services programming COVID-19 mitigation strategies.
- **7:20-8:00 p.m.** — Submitted questions.

*This Google Slides presentation & recording of the Town Hall will be available at [isd282.org/SafeReturn](https://isd282.org/SafeReturn)*

# Panelists

- **Dr. Renee Corneille**,  
*Superintendent*
- **Wendy Webster**, *Director of  
Community Services and  
Communications*
- **Lori Watzl-King**, *District  
Wellness Coordinator*
- **Maria Roberts**, *Wilshire Park  
Elementary School Principal*
- **Amy Kujawski**, *St. Anthony  
Middle School Principal*
- **Andrew Hodges**, *St. Anthony  
Village High School  
Interim-Principal*
- **Mageen Caines**, *Public Health  
Data Scientist and  
Epidemiologist*
- **Stefan Gingerich**, *Senior  
Epidemiologist at Minnesota  
Department of Health*

# 2021-22 Health & Safety Measures

Approved by the School Board Aug. 24, 2021

- [Local Incident Team \(LIT\)](#) recommendations on COVID-19 mitigation strategies as outlined in the district's Health & Safety Measures for the 2021-22 school year.
- The purpose of the LIT is to evaluate the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) guidelines, as well as local COVID-19 data, to make informed decisions regarding mitigation strategies.

# Update on local COVID-19 data

## Current COVID-19 numbers, Delta variant

- Hennepin and Ramsey counties are classified as high-transmission by the CDC and are in the red zone.
- Rates are increasing, but not "racing"(as we experienced in 2020 and early 2021).
- Among unvaccinated younger kids and those school-aged youth who are eligible for the vaccine, transmission rates are growing rapidly.
- The Delta variant is more transmissible and more serious when contracted. Yet, infections are only happening in a small proportion of those who are vaccinated. There is evidence that fully vaccinated people can spread it to others, but the vaccines are staying true to what they promised (preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death).

# CDC indicators and thresholds

## Community transmission of COVID-19

**Table 1. CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19<sup>1</sup>**

Indicator	Low Transmission Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Total new cases per 100,000 persons in the past 7 days <sup>2</sup>	0-9	10-49	50-99	≥100
Percentage of NAATs that are positive during the past 7 days <sup>3</sup>	<5.0%	5.0%-7.9%	8.0%-9.9%	≥10.0%

<sup>1</sup>If the two indicators suggest different levels, the actions corresponding to the higher threshold should be chosen. County-level data on total new cases in the past 7 days and test percent positivity are available on the County View tab in [CDC's COVID Data Tracker](#).

<sup>2</sup>Total number of new cases per 100,000 persons within the last 7 days is calculated by adding the number of new cases in the county (or other community type) in the last 7 days divided by the population in the county (or other community type) and multiplying by 100,000.

<sup>3</sup>Percentage of positive diagnostic and screening NAATs during the last 7 days is calculated by dividing the number of positive tests in the county (or other administrative level) during the last 7 days by the total number of tests resulted over the last 7 days. Additional information can be found on [the Calculating Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 \(SARS-CoV-2\) Laboratory Test Percent Positivity: CDC Methods and Considerations for Comparisons and Interpretation](#) webpage.

# Update on local COVID-19 data

## Current COVID-19 numbers, Delta variant - continued

- Our district is nestled within a very concerning situation and has unique advantages that we can leverage for the school year, most notably, exceptional vaccine rates.
- The St. Anthony-New Brighton School District (SANB) should expect changes to public health guidance throughout the year. These changes will have an impact on what school looks like:
  - The CDC recently changed the definition of a “[close contact](#)” for K-12 settings:
    - This new definition will eliminate large-scale quarantine, **as long as masks are worn.**

# Update on local COVID-19 data

## Staff vaccination rates

- Last year, the district had an estimated 95% vaccination rate for staff.
- With changes in staffing over the summer, we will be implementing a voluntary-anonymous survey of staff seeking vaccination status for the 2021-22 school year.
- *If it becomes available for staff*, we are looking into participating in weekly COVID-19 testing (is similar to what we implemented last school year).

# Update on local COVID-19 data

Student vaccination rates at secondary level (grades 7-12) as of Aug. 5, 2021

Grade	Percentage of fully vaccinated	Percentage of at least one shot
7	57%	65%
8	73%	82%
9	63%	71%
10	76%	80%
11	75%	78%
12	76%	79%

# District COVID-19 mitigation strategies

- The goal of the SANB— especially during this global pandemic— is to ensure high levels of in-person learning in the safest way possible.
- To allow for in-person learning without unfortunate interruptions such as classroom closures, school closures, and extended quarantine periods, **the following mitigation strategies will be implemented within our district.**

# District COVID-19 mitigation strategies

## Masks:

- Universally required cloth-mask wearing in school buildings for all students, ages 2 and older, and staff, regardless of vaccination status.
- Masks should be well-fitting without valves.
- Neck gaiters are not adequate.

## Physical Distancing (cohorts/pods):

- During the 2020-21 school year, cohorts/pods were created as a mitigation strategy. This strategy limited the educational experience for students during the school day and required a shortened school day.
- Based on universal cloth-mask wearing, along with heightened-symptom awareness, our schools will operate *without* cohorts/pods.

# District COVID-19 mitigation strategies

## Grades K-12

### **Classroom/school closures & quarantines:**

- Universal cloth-mask wearing prevents the need to shut down classrooms or extended quarantines.
- The CDC states that as long as individuals are wearing masks, schools are not required to implement classroom quarantines and/or shut down of classrooms.
- Limited quarantines may be required for unvaccinated people if the exposure occurs when unmasked (i.e. lunch, sports).
- Shortened quarantine options will be available as long as the exposure is not within the household.
- Household quarantines for unvaccinated people is 14 days.

# District COVID-19 mitigation strategies

## Visitors:

- Visitors will be limited to only essential services during the school day.
- Thoughtful consideration will be required to ensure the safety of staff and families during Open House/back-to-school events.
- Communication will be shared with families prior to and during the events in order to:
  - Limit their time in the building.
  - Open all doors.
  - Allow for one parent/guardian per child to attend.

# District COVID-19 mitigation strategies

## Meals (breakfast and lunch):

- Mask wearing is not possible during breakfast and lunch times. The following accommodations will be provided during these times:
  - Hand sanitizing upon entering/leaving.
  - Wearing masks when entering the lunchroom until seated and when finished eating.
  - Grades 1-5 classrooms will enter and exit together as a class.
  - Encourage eating outside when the weather is agreeable.
  - Middle/high school lunchroom table documentation will be used for contact tracing.
  - The elementary level will utilize seating charts.
  - Direct instruction to students regarding COVID-19 mitigation strategy protocols.
  - At the middle/high school, breakfast carts will be in the hallway and staff will hand out breakfast to students as they walk into the Commons Area.

# District COVID-19 mitigation strategies

## **Recess:**

- Masks are not required at outdoor recess.
- Children in grades K-5 will not be in pods during recess.
- There are no reported cases of transmission of COVID-19 in outdoor settings in our district.

## **Transportation on vans/buses:**

- Masks are required on all mass transportation per federal law.
- Students and staff will be required to wear masks when riding buses or vans.

# District COVID-19 mitigation strategies

## Contact tracing:

- The district will notify staff and students of a COVID-19 positive exposure (even if child won't be required to quarantine because everyone was wearing a mask).
- Recommendations will be provided to take a COVID-19 test 3-5 days after exposure and to continue masking.

## Lockers and locker rooms:

- Students will be masked so use of lockers and the locker room are permitted.

## Cleaning and sanitizing:

- Students will have hand washing breaks throughout the day (K-5) and will have access to hand sanitizer.
- Custodial staff will clean and disinfect surfaces in each room at the end of each day.

# District COVID-19 mitigation strategies

## Ventilation system:

- The district has implemented a top-of-the-line ventilation system in its school buildings.
- We also have raised the outside air intakes above the required minimums by 25% or greater.
- In addition, school filters have been upgraded to a Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) 14 - The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning.
  - Engineers suggests a MERV 13 or greater to combat the COVID-19 virus.

# Wilshire Park Elementary School

## COVID-19 mitigation strategies

- Highest mitigation strategies.
  - Natural podding occurs at the elementary level:
    - Classrooms.
    - Lunch-assigned seats.
    - Recess.
  - Frequent hand-washing breaks.
  - Hypervigilant about symptoms.

# St. Anthony Middle School

## COVID-19 mitigation strategies

Full-day, in-person instruction for the 2021-22 school year, with the district mitigation strategies in place:

- Vaccinations.
- Masking.
- Ventilation.

- Hypervigilant about symptoms.
- Students return to lunch.
  - Outside when possible, sitting with same people, extra supervision, and contact tracing.
- Students will be using lockers.
- Limited time spent in halls.

# St. Anthony Village High School

## COVID-19 mitigation strategies

- Masking and vaccinations are the best way to mitigate spread of COVID-19.
- High-rate vaccination in the high school.
- Students return to full-day, in-person instruction, without podding, for the 2021-22 school year, with district mitigation strategies in place.
- Hyper vigilance regarding symptoms.
- Lunch:
  - Continuing to contact trace; encourage students to eat with same table each lunch and outside when possible.
- Athletics/activities:
  - Masks when not actively participating.
  - Indoors - masks on if unvaccinated (swimming excepted).

# Community Services programming

## COVID-19 mitigation strategies

- Community Services early childhood programs (ages 3-5) are a Certified Childcare Center by the Department of Human Services.
- Masks are required for children ages 2 and older and adult participants in Early Childhood Family Education classes.
- Village Kids serves grades K-5 and will follow K-12 guidelines.

If we have a positive case in an early childhood classroom:

1. All parents will be notified and encouraged to have their child tested on Day 5 after last exposure.
2. Children will be required to quarantine.
3. Vaccinated staff are not required to quarantine.

# Questions?

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