



**Safe Return
to
School Plan
2021-2022**



District Plan for Returning to School
Based on Guidance from CDC, IDPH, MCDH & ISBE

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Summary

Harrison School made it through COVID for the 2020-2021 school year by offering remote learning, hybrid and in-person learning. When the school year ended, the state of Illinois entered Phase 5 of the Restore Illinois Plan as established by Governor Pritzker. Although we entered Phase 5, public schools will be able to resume education with new guidelines in place.

Restore Illinois Plan - What It Means for Schools

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School resumes as “normal” with new public health guidelines in place.

It was during this summer that we received updated guidelines from the CDC and were notified that IDPH would be adopting the CDC guidelines. Harrison will work with the McHenry County Department of Public Health as we continue to navigate a return to what we would remember as a “regular” school day. The health and well-being of our staff and students are a top priority, and it is important to remember that the protocols that are established will be fluid and adapt as necessary.

Updated CDC Guidelines (as of July 9, 2021)

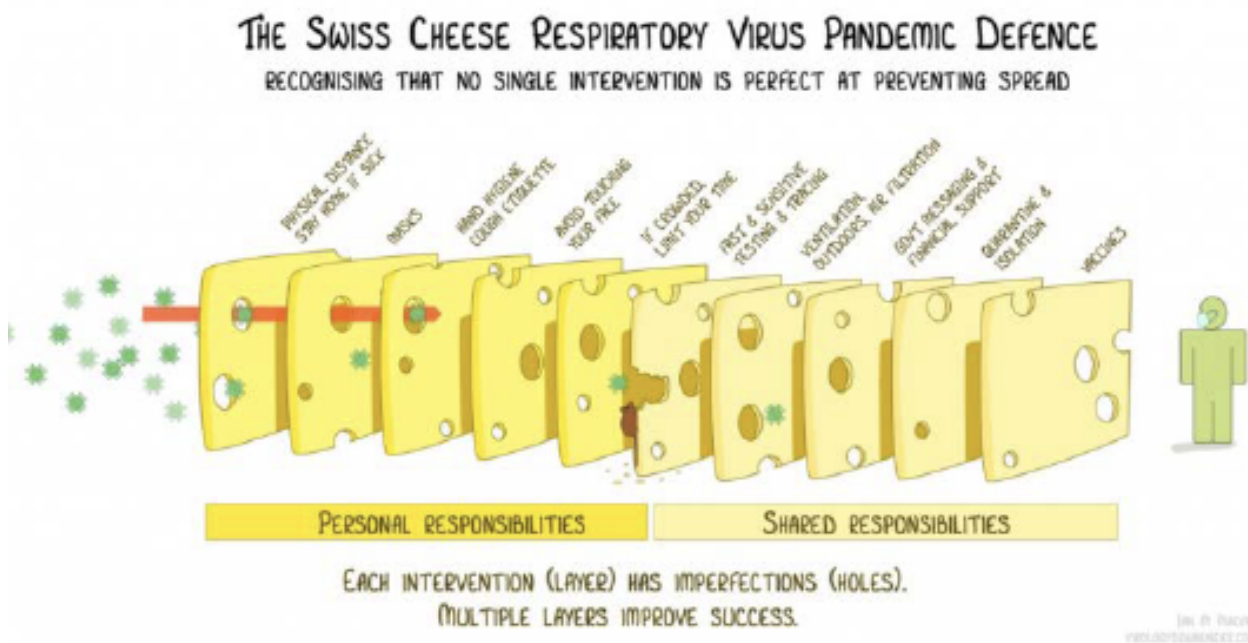
- Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in the fall 2021 is a priority.
- Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting vaccination can help schools safely return to in-person learning as well as extracurricular activities and sports.
- Masks should be worn indoors by all individuals (age 2 and older) who are not fully vaccinated. Consistent and correct mask use by people who are not fully vaccinated is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask wearing by people who are not fully vaccinated, to reduce transmission risk. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully re-open while maintaining these distances, it is especially important to layer multiple other prevention strategies, such as indoor masking.
- Screening testing, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick and getting tested, contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation, and cleaning and disinfection are also important layers of prevention to keep schools safe.
- Students, teachers, and staff should stay home when they have signs of any infectious illness and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care.
- Many schools serve children under the age of 12 who are not eligible for vaccination at this time. Therefore, this guidance emphasizes implementing layered prevention strategies (e.g., using multiple prevention strategies together consistently) to protect people who are not fully vaccinated, including students, teachers, staff, and other members of their households.
- COVID-19 prevention strategies remain critical to protect people, including students, teachers, and staff, who are not fully vaccinated, especially in areas of moderate-to-high community transmission levels.

- Localities should monitor community transmission, vaccination coverage, screening testing, and occurrence of outbreaks to guide decisions on the level of layered prevention strategies (e.g., physical distancing, screening testing).

Prevention Strategies








- [Promoting vaccination](#)
- [Consistent and correct mask use](#) is recommended
- [Physical distancing](#) as much as possible
- [Screening testing to promptly identify cases, clusters, and outbreaks](#)
- [Ventilation](#)
- [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#)
- [Staying home when sick and getting tested](#)
- [Contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine](#)
- [Cleaning and disinfection](#)

According to CDC Guidelines, layering the Prevention Strategies will be beneficial in keeping transmission low within the school. When transmission of cases is Low or Moderate, the prevention strategies may be removed one at a time for a period of time to ensure staff and student safety.



Screening Testing -- Shield Testing

SHIELD Illinois is a COVID-19 screening testing program and infrastructure that uses the University of Illinois' innovative saliva test to help K-12 schools operate safely.

	FREE/LOW COST	The SHIELD Illinois test is free to all Illinois K-12 schools outside of Chicago through an agreement with the Illinois Department of Public Health.
	FAST RESULTS	School districts and IDPH will receive test results within 24 hours of samples reaching our lab.
	IDENTIFY INFECTION	SHIELD Illinois' test detects 3 genes of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, allowing it to identify pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic cases, as well as new virus variants.
	EASE OF USE	The saliva-based test is non-invasive and does not need medically trained personnel to collect samples.
	HIGH ACCURACY	In a recent clinical trial, SHIELD Illinois' test had a sensitivity of 96.8% and a specificity of 98.9%.
	LAB NETWORK	SHIELD Illinois has launched a network of high-capacity labs across the state to process test samples and provide fast, accurate results.
	FDA AUTHORIZED	SHIELD Illinois is a PCR screening test that has FDA emergency use authorization, meaning individuals who test positive don't need to seek a second test result.

Instruction Structure FAQ

As a district, we will be returning to the way we were familiar with attending school with a few adjustments. Based on what we know at this time, we are proposing:

- August 18 – First Day of School for ALL Students, but it is an EARLY Release Day.
- Students will attend school in person as Full Days unless it is noted as an Early Release day (typically the first and third Wednesday of each month).
- Students will be served lunch in the cafeteria); and breakfast will be sent home with students that order lunch that day.
- Lunch and Breakfast are FREE for ALL students (PK-8) this year – we will share further information for PK students at a later date.
- Extra-curricular activities will resume, but there will be enhanced guidelines in place and shared with parents by each sponsor/coach.
- Bus transportation will resume with normal capacity limits. **ALL** bus riders **MUST** wear masks (per CDC guidelines)

- Remote learning is **ONLY** available for those students who did not receive (or choose to receive) the vaccine **AND** must quarantine because s/he is a close contact of a positive case.
- Students will be spaced 3 ft apart, as much as possible within the classrooms. Students will be permitted to use lockers, change classrooms, etc.
- We would like for students to socially distance as much as possible in the hallways, larger areas, such as the library, gym, and cafeteria.
- Staff and students will observe regular hand washing, and all classrooms are equipped with hand sanitizer. All rooms will be sanitized each evening

Will my child be issued a device?

Yes, once the Student Acceptable Use Form and Access to Electronic Network form are signed and returned to school, each student will be issued a device. We still do not want students sharing technology, and we will work with the students to disinfect the devices daily.

Will my child be able to take the device home each day?

Each grade level will decide if devices will go home each day, but if a child has a device to use at home, we strongly suggest the school device remains at school. The device is the student's responsibility, and this includes charging the device. Please read The 1:1 Learning Initiative Student/Parent Handbook carefully, as it outlines the procedures for reporting damage to devices.

What will learning look like if my child has to complete remote learning due to having to quarantine?

Remote learning will be different than last year. Students will be issued classwork for the days they will miss due to being quarantined. The expectation will be that classwork is due upon return to school unless specified differently by the teacher. Students will be able to ask questions of teachers via email. Each teacher may ask for students to "join" class remotely, and this will be worked out with the student and his/her parents.

Expectations for Students/Parents FAQ

Will masks be required?

Yes. On August 4, 2021, Governor Pritzker issued a mandate that all persons on the grounds of all public and nonpublic schools that serve students in prekindergarten through grade 12 must wear a face mask at all times when in school or in transit to and from school via group conveyance (e.g., school buses), unless a specific exemption applies.

Harrison School District 36 understands that families have varying views on the relative benefits of face coverings for children. This is especially important since some carriers of COVID-19 may not have any symptoms. Children can still expose school staff and adults at home who may be more at risk, and vice versa.

Masks will not need to be worn outside, when eating, or during band and physical education classes, which will be held outside whenever possible.

How will social distancing be observed in the school?

Harrison has developed procedures to ensure three feet of physical distance from other persons as much as possible. This expectation pertains to staff and students in all areas and settings to the greatest extent possible. Visual reminders will be posted throughout the school and visuals will be designated (signs, tape, etc.) as indicators of safe distances in areas where students line up or gather (i.e., arrival and departure, lunchroom, hallways, recess lines, etc.).

Use of common spaces will be staggered when possible to minimize the number of individuals occupying them. Students will be expected to follow these guidelines and instructions. Students should refrain from unnecessary close contact, including touching hands, touching displays or walls, displays of affection, etc.

What Social and Emotional Resources will be in place as students return?

We recognize the importance of providing staff and students with extra social and emotional support as they return to school this year. We will dedicate more time to welcome activities, extra time for building relationships and establishing new routines and focus on coping strategies.

Our staff will continue to implement the SEL curriculum with supplementary resources with an intentional focus on student's emotional health who may have been or continue to be impacted by COVID-19. Students will have continued support from our social worker and administration.

What happens when a child is sick?

COVID-19 and other variants still exist and will impact our building at some point. Our best defense against this virus is to be vaccinated, and if that is not possible, then we have layered mitigations in place to help protect our staff and students. First and foremost, any person who is not feeling well should stay home. We do not want to risk other people's health by sending ill students to school. Please stay home if not feeling well!

Attendance personnel will still request specific symptom reporting when absences are reported, along with COVID-19 diagnoses and COVID-19 exposure. Information will be documented and shared with our nurse or other appropriate personnel and the local health department. In accordance with state and federal guidance, school community members who are sick should not return to school until they have met the criteria to return.

Any individual within the school environment who shows symptoms will be immediately separated from the rest of the school population. Individuals who are sick will be sent home. If emergency services are necessary, call 911.

When interacting with students or staff who may be sick, our nurse and staff should follow CDC guidance on standard and transmission-based precautions. **Students should never be left alone and must always be supervised while maintaining necessary precautions.**

Close contact means the unvaccinated individual was within six feet of the individual with symptoms for more than 15 minutes. Additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary if more than seven days have elapsed since the person who is sick visited or used the school. Continue routine cleaning and disinfection. This includes everyday practices that schools normally use to maintain a healthy environment.

Will School close if there's a COVID-19 case in the building?

No, Harrison will remain open but further mitigations may be put in place in order to stop or slow the spread.

Will Students receive safety instruction when they return to school?

Students will be receiving grade level appropriate education and guidance for proper physical distancing, proper use of PPE, and proper hand hygiene during the first week of school. The Principal will develop a plan for providing students with building specific safety measures to follow with an explanation as to why these measures are important.

What if there is a child who is medically fragile or at higher risk?

The administration will work closely with our nurse and parents, as well as the student's medical provider, to determine safe alternatives to in-person instruction. Harrison will consider continuing Remote Learning for medically fragile students, students at a higher risk of severe illness, and students who live with individuals at higher risk of severe illness for the duration of Phase 4.

Transportation FAQ

What will be different on school buses?

ALL bus riders will be **required** to wear masks while riding the bus per CDC guidelines. We will assign seats to the students as we have in any other school year.

Is the procedure different if I drop off my child?

Circle Drive is still the entrance for student drop off and pick up. Students should exit the vehicle on the side **closest to the school**. To keep this line flowing, we ask for students to be ready to exit the vehicle and that parents remain in the car. School staff will help the student with unbuckling and/or his/her backpack as necessary.

Food Service FAQ

Will my child still receive Breakfast and/or Lunch at school?

Yes, both meals are free for all students this year. Lunch will be served in the cafeteria. Breakfast will be sent home with students that ordered a lunch that day.

What changes will be in place for the cafeteria when students are in person?

Students will be seated at lunch tables, but those students who are unvaccinated will be socially distanced from peers. In order to have our students eat lunch in the cafeteria, we will utilize plastic barriers to protect students, but students will still be 3-6 ft apart while eating.

All students will wash their hands prior to entering the cafeteria, as well as when they exit. Hand sanitizer stations are also available, but soap and water are preferred.

Our cooks will have food prepared for students, so students may not have a choice of items. Food items will still be prepared fresh daily, but all items must be on a plate for the students. Water fountains will be available for students to fill water bottles if they choose.

Expectations for Staff

Our staff members play a crucial role in educating and caring for our students. Additionally, the return to full in-person instruction is vital in enabling our families to return to familiar patterns of work and life. Harrison values the safety and health of its employees and will make protecting them a top priority.

The contents of this Plan are subject to change when formal guidance or mandates are issued by the proper authorities (ISBE, IDPH, IHSA, etc.). All employees should be flexible and agile during this pandemic which will require cooperative, collaborative, flexible, and creative problem solving. Harrison will generate guidelines and protocols which will be required for all employees. We will continue to

monitor recommendations from the PRESS Policy Organization, as well as from professional organizations such as IASA, IASB, IPA, and others about educational expectations for student learning.

Staff Return Plan

All return to work expectations will be dictated by executive and legislative guidance from the state and federal government. At this time, CDC guidelines state that full in-person learning is a priority for the Fall. With layered mitigation strategies, staff and students will be able to return to school and follow a regular school day.

Absences that are related to COVID-19 concerns must be accompanied by a physician's note, or official notice from a health agency containing relevant information/direction regarding the claimed condition. Employees will be expected to use their accrued time bank for their absence from work (sick time, vacation time, personal, etc.).

Staffing Level

The district will monitor staffing levels within the building to ensure optimal operations for teaching and learning. In the event that staffing levels drop below the ability for the building to maintain optimal operations, the district will consider all options to support student learning.

Every effort shall be made to ensure substitute teachers are available in all employee categories to fill vacancies and/or absences that could be a result of the COVID-19 health precautions. In the event of any unforeseen circumstances, the district will comply with Federal, State, IDPH, ISBE and CDC guidelines.

Facilities Operations FAQ

Nurse's Office

There will be separate areas created – one for regular care and an isolated area for anyone who presents signs or symptoms of illness. Parents will be permitted to bring medications into the school without advance notice, but unvaccinated adults should wear a mask.

The nurse's office will:

- Allow for at least three feet of distance between students, separation area for sick students, sink for hygiene, appropriate lighting, and proper ventilation.
- Limit the number of individuals allowed in at one time.
- Provide a supervised quarantine space for students/staff who are experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms and may be awaiting evaluation and/or pickup. Students must never be left alone and must be supervised at all times while maintaining necessary precautions within the quarantine space.
- Disinfect a space after it is occupied by a student and deep clean daily.
- May require students exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms to wear a face covering unless medically documented.
- Supply the school nurse and/or the administrator/designee working with individuals with illness

symptoms with appropriate PPE. School nurse should use PPE, including gloves and face coverings, when interacting with students and staff. Appropriate PPE should be used in conjunction with appropriate hand hygiene and standard precautions.

- Implement strategies to reduce unnecessary visits from students, staff, and visitors; reduce health office congestion; reduce exposure to infection, and allow for separation.
- Supply staff with first aid supplies, such as bandages and gauze in the classrooms. In certain situations, students may need to stay in place for an in-person evaluation by the school nurse.
- Treat healthy students reporting to the health office for medical management, such as medications, assessment of injury, or first aid, in a separate clean designated area inside or outside the health office to prevent contact with potentially ill children.

*Persons with common health conditions or those who need basic first aid should not report to the health office but may be managed in the classroom/alternate setting.

*Parents, guardians, or other authorized individuals should pick up ill students within a reasonable amount of time; students should not be allowed to utilize the school bus for the return home.

*In the absence of a nurse, the school district's administrators must determine who will be responsible for meeting the health-related needs of students and staff.

Illness and Diagnoses Monitoring

A contact tracing process will be instituted 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.

Contact tracing ensures CDC and local health authority criteria for discontinuing home isolation or quarantine are met before a student or staff member returns to school. These methods include checking in with the school nurse upon return to school to verify resolution of symptoms and that any other criteria for discontinuation of quarantine have been met.

Continual communicable disease diagnosis monitoring and the monitoring of student and staff absenteeism should occur through collaboration of those taking absence reports and school nurse. Employees and families must be encouraged to report specific symptoms, COVID-19 diagnoses, and COVID-19 exposures when reporting absences.

Districts should inform the school community of outbreaks per local and state health department guidelines while maintaining student and staff confidentiality rights.

It is the responsibility of schools to protect those that are not eligible to receive the vaccine. The prevention strategies outlined in the CDC's Guidance for COVID Prevention in K-12 Schools include:

- Promoting vaccination. Achieving high levels of COVID-19 vaccination among eligible students, as well as teachers, staff, and community (household) members, is critical to help schools safely resume full operations and keep more students in school.
- Consistent and correct mask use.
- Physical distancing
- Screening testing to promptly identify cases, clusters, and outbreaks.
- Increased Ventilation
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
- Staying home when sick and getting tested
- Contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine
 - Case investigation and contact tracing will be performed by MCDH in partnership with the schools to promptly identify, isolate and quarantine cases and close contacts.
 - MCDH has authority to require isolation and quarantine under the IL Administrative Code, Section 690.1330.
 - Vaccinated individuals exposed to someone with confirmed or suspected COVID19 do not need to be quarantined, but testing is recommended 3-5 day after exposure.

- Cleaning and disinfection

Guidelines for Determining Level of Community Transmission

CDC's Guidance for COVID Prevention in K-12 Schools refers to "community transmission levels" throughout the guidance document. The level of community transmission (i.e., low, moderate, substantial, or high) for McHenry County is based on incidence rate and test positivity as summarized in the table below. If the two indicators suggest different transmission levels, the higher level is selected: Indicator - If the two indicators suggest different transmission levels, the higher level is selected

Indicator - If the two indicators suggest different transmission levels, the higher level is selected	Low Transmission Blue	Moderate Transmission Yellow	Substantial Transmission Orange	High Transmission Red
Incidence Rate	0-9.99	10-49.99	50-99.99	≥100
Test Positivity	0-4.9%	5-7.9%	8-9.9%	≥10.0%

Recommendations for Families

- Please make sure all emergency contact information is up to date in Skyward.
- All staff and students should stay home if they are sick with any illness symptoms.
- The CDC recommends everyone 6 months of age and older get **vaccinated** every **flu** season. Flu symptoms overlap with coronavirus symptoms.
- When reporting illness absences, be sure to report if your child:
 - Is a close contact of someone with a positive COVID 19 test
 - Has signs of coronavirus
 - Has been diagnosed with coronavirus
 - Has been diagnosed with influenza (respiratory flu).
- For students with asthma, **no nebulizer treatments will be given at school during the pandemic**. Asthma action plans should reflect the use of asthma inhalers and spacers.
- Please send your child with extra clothing in case a change is necessary, as there will be no clothing stored in the nurse's office.

What should be expected if there is a confirmed case in school?

- A staff member or student exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will be referred immediately to the school nurse for evaluation. While under evaluation, the individual will be placed in a designated quarantine area.
- For all confirmed or suspected cases, McHenry County Department of Health (MCDH) will be consulted.
- Information about cases will be communicated to the appropriate group of families in accordance with MCDH recommendations and applicable health information and student records laws.

Returning to school after having had coronavirus

- Please call the school nurse prior to returning to school.

- Students will stay home for at least 10 days and must be fever free for 72 hours after symptoms have resolved without any fever reducing medication OR have two negative Covid-19 tests in a row, with testing done at least 24 hours apart.
- As new guidance emerges, **guidelines may change**.

Cleaning and Sanitizing the Building

Sanitation, hygiene, and PPE supplies will be ordered for employee access. All custodial/maintenance staff will be trained on the return to school guidelines, where applicable. These procedures will include sanitation efforts using certified EPA products in both low/high contact areas including:

- Countertops
- Desktops
- Door handles
- Bottle fillers
- Handrails
- Light switches
- Restroom fixtures

Building custodians and cleaning personnel will conduct daily cleaning and disinfection. An EPA approved cleaner will be used for disinfection along with our standard cleaning protocols. All frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles/knobs, desktops/tabletops, countertops, light switches, pencil sharpeners, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, phones, toys, cubbies/coat and backpack areas, sinks and faucets) will be cleaned on a regular basis. Soft surfaces such as carpets and rugs will be cleaned daily. Items such as cloth toys or other cloth material items that cannot be disinfected should not be used.

Restrooms & Water Fountains

- Water fountains that do not have bottle filling stations will be turned off in accordance with guidelines.
- Touchless water bottle filling stations will remain available for use in all buildings.
- Restroom usage will be minimized when possible, with restroom breaks scheduled as appropriate.
- Social and physical distancing will be practiced in restrooms.
- The importance of hand washing and sanitizing after restroom use will be reinforced continually.

Extra & Co-Curricular Activities

Extracurricular activities must follow IDPH requirements set forth for the school setting, which include social distancing, appropriate use of PPE, limiting the number of individuals in one space. All indoor extracurricular activities and athletics will be required to wear a mask. Athletics will follow the guidelines provided by the Mid-Northern Athletic Conference and the IESA.

Playground

Students do not need to wear a mask while outside for recess. Students must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at the start and end of recess.

Communications

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, Harrison will use the following communication methods to keep stakeholders informed on changes regarding all protocols:

- School website (www.hsd36.org)
- Email, phone and text alerts via SendIt
- Messages via Skyward or Class Dojo
- Social media (Twitter, Facebook)

All parents/guardians who wish to receive communication should make sure email addresses and phone numbers are up to date in Skyward.