

2023-24 WDMCS RETURN-TO-LEARN

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) requires public school districts to create a Return-to-Learn plan for the 2023-24 school year. This plan must be approved by the WDMCS Board of Education and reviewed every six months. Revised plans require Board approval, but if the plans do not change, then Board approval is not required. WDMCS considers federal, state, and local health authorities' COVID-19 guidance when updating our Return-to-Learn plan.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

COVID-19 TRACKING

WDMCS has continuously followed CDC guidance in regard to COVID and RSV. This guidance is in line with CDC guidance for other respiratory infections and influenza (as of March 2024).

[Read the full CDC guidance and background online >](#)
[Read the IHHS Illness Guidelines >](#)

Guidance for individuals who test positive for COVID-19

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 and RSV can return to school/work:

- When fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
- If respiratory symptoms are mild and improving.

What does this mean for you?

- If you test positive for COVID-19, you do not have to isolate to return to school/work in WDMCS. Instead, you must meet the new guidelines.
- You do not need to wear a mask when you return to school/work after testing positive, as long as you meet the new guidelines.
- If students test positive for COVID, they will be marked "Sick" in the attendance system if they stay home from school.
- It is still important to prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses by following the CDC's core prevention strategies, including staying up to date with vaccinations, washing hands, and staying home for at least 24 hours after a fever.

Vaccines

- Individuals who are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine are highly encouraged to receive one. Numerous organizations offer free vaccines within Polk County.

BUILDINGS AND BUSES

- Students and staff will be asked to stay home if they feel ill and/or have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher. Student absences will be recorded in Infinite Campus, and staff absences will be recorded through the standard leave process.
- Hand sanitizer and handwashing stations are available and encouraged.
- In 2020, WDMCS upgraded the HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) system to remove viral particles. (We changed from MERV 8 to MERV 13-14 filters.)
- Federal emergency relief funds will be used to continue HVAC updates across the district as part of ongoing construction work.
- Water bottle stations are available in all school buildings. Students and staff are encouraged to bring their own reusable water bottles.
- High-touch areas will be cleaned and disinfected regularly throughout the day.
- Plexiglass barriers may remain within district and school office spaces that have public-facing interaction.
- Cleaning and disinfecting supplies will be provided for each space in buildings.