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**Safe Return to In-Person Instruction
2021-2022
Updated February 11, 2022**

Overview

In May of 2021, the Illinois State Board of Education passed a resolution indicating that all schools must resume fully in-person learning for all student attendance days for the 21-22 school year. The following guidance is based on updated CDC guidance for COVID-19 prevention in K-12 schools and the State of Illinois updated Executive Order. Executive Order 2021-18 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 the event the Governor lifts the mask mandate (Executive Order 2021-18), Union SD 81 will then enact its plan for layered mitigation in accordance with the information provided in this plan. Updates to the Union SD 81 Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan will be made in accordance with updated requirements from any entity with authority over the District.

Updated Mitigation Procedures

Cleaning

Custodial staff will conduct additional cleaning daily using approved sanitation equipment. Daily and evening cleaning procedures will be updated to reflect an increase in frequency. The District will follow recommendations per the CDC, IDPH, and the local health department.

Hand-Washing and Respiratory Etiquette

All staff, students, and visitors must practice appropriate hand hygiene when inside district facilities including all the following guidelines:

- Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least twenty (20) seconds. When soap and running water are unavailable, use an alcohol-based hand rub with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands that are visibly soiled. More information about proper handwashing is available from the CDC Handwashing website.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practice effective respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.

HVAC

Union SD 81 will monitor air quality on a regular basis. Union SD 81's HVAC systems continuously circulate fresh air into the buildings. The building's HVAC systems are set to provide a mixture of outside air (OA) that meets industry standards as well as allows for efficient

conditioning of air. Union SD 81 will maximize the filtration power of the HVAC system by using the filter with the highest level of air filtration possible and changing the filters on a routine basis to ensure they perform at an optimum level. In addition, we will continue to monitor space temperature and humidity conditions. The space temperature should be maintained between 68-78F, and 30 to 60% RH maximum.

Face Coverings

All teachers, staff, students, and visitors to P-12 schools are required to wear a mask while indoors, regardless of vaccination status. This guidance is based on updated recommendations in CDC guidance for COVID-19 prevention in K-12 schools and an updated Executive Order for the State of Illinois. Executive Order 2021-18 requires that all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to P-12 schools who are two years of age or older and medically able to tolerate a mask, regardless of vaccination status, to wear a mask while indoors. According to the Revised Public Health Guidance for Schools, published by the Illinois State Board of Education, 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. Reusable face masks should be machine washed or washed by hand and allowed to dry completely after each use. Additionally, special attention should be paid to putting on and removing face masks for purposes such as eating. After use, the front of the face mask is considered contaminated and should not be touched during removal or replacement. Hand hygiene should be performed immediately after removing and after replacing the face mask. See CDC guidance on how to wear and take off a mask for additional instruction. Districts and schools may wish to maintain a supply of disposable face masks in the event that a staff member, student, or visitor does not have one for use. School leaders, local leaders, and others respected in the community should set an example by correctly and consistently wearing masks. For additional information, see CDC guidance for wearing masks.

Face masks with exhalation valves or vents are not recommended for source control because they do not prevent the user from spreading respiratory secretions when they breathe, talk, sneeze, or cough. The CDC does not recommend use of single-layer athletic face masks (e.g., “gaiters”/neck warmers) as a substitute for multi-layered cloth face masks. Additional studies indicate that gaiters can be worn as face coverings when they contain two layers of fabric or a single layer can be folded to make two layers, according to updated CDC guidance (February 12, 2021).

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 buses), unless an approved exemption applies. This is in accordance with the CDC Order, in effect as of February 1, 2021, which requires “the wearing of masks by people on public transportation conveyances or on the premises of transportation hubs to prevent the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.” *Students will not be permitted into the classroom without a mask, unless an approved exemption applies. Masks will be provided to students who come to school without one. If students are noncompliant upon entry, progressive disciplinary action in accordance with the Parent/Student Handbook will be taken.*

Individuals who have a condition or medical contraindication (e.g., difficulty breathing) that prevents them from wearing a face mask are required to provide documentation from the individual’s health care provider.

In the event that the Executive Order is lifted, Union SD 81 will follow the metrics plan below to determine when to wear a face covering:

Union will utilize the percentage of positive COVID-19 tests from local community transmission using the following zip codes: 60451, 60448, and 60432. The data can be found on the COVID Data by Zip Code site. A Daily Transmission/Mitigation Chart will be posted on the District Website with this information.

- Shifts to a higher transmission category in the mitigation practices of mask wearing will occur if the Test Positivity 7-Day Rolling Average has been met for three (3) consecutive days.
- Shifts to a lower transmission category in the mitigation practices of mask wearing will occur if the Test Positivity 7-Day Rolling Average has been met for seven (7) consecutive days.
- In addition, school positivity rates could outweigh local community transmission in determining mitigation measures

Indicators	Low Transmission	Moderate Transmission	Substantial Transmission	High Transmission
Positivity Rate	Less than 5%	5% - 7.99%	8% - 9.9%	Over 10 %
Mitigation	Mask recommended for all individuals	Mask recommended for all individuals	Mask recommended for all individuals	Mask required for all individuals

Quarantine

Quarantine Exceptions

- 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. CDC recommends that fully vaccinated individuals test three to five days after a close contact exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- For students in the classroom setting, contacts who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student 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 student for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

Quarantine Procedures

- Quarantine means staying home for at least 5 days after exposure to someone diagnosed with COVID-19. This is because someone can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 but may not show symptoms. Even though someone may not show symptoms, they can still spread the virus.
- Quarantine is different from isolation. Isolation is used by someone who has symptoms of COVID-19, or tests positive for the virus that causes COVID-19, even if they don't have symptoms. Isolation helps prevent transmission of the virus by separating people infected with the virus from those who are not infected.

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

healthcare provider to report their symptoms. The health department can provide guidance on how to safely quarantine and isolate within the household.

Quarantine Instruction

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. Lessons will be provided to students who are in quarantine. Quarantine lessons will be provided by the classroom teacher and are intended to keep students current on their coursework.

Self Certification

Prior to the start of school, parents will sign an agreement to conduct a daily pre-screen for each child prior to arriving at the bus stop or school. Parents will utilize a COVID symptom checklist for each child attending school. The checklist is to be completed at home and will not be collected at school. Parents/guardians are required to keep child(ren) home when symptoms of COVID-19 are present. The symptoms include but are not limited to, fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, nausea, or vomiting. Parents are also required to report symptoms/positive cases to school. The school will maintain an isolation room for students demonstrating COVID-like symptoms until the parent/guardian can pick up the student.

Social Distancing

3-6 feet social distancing in the school environment will be observed as much as possible, including classrooms.

Students with Medical Conditions

The district will resume in-person instruction for all students on Wednesday, August 18, 2021. After this date, if your child has a medical condition that prevents them from attending in-person learning, please contact Tim Baldermann, Superintendent at (815) 728-5218.

Transportation

Students will be required to wear masks on the bus and social distance as much as possible. To plan for transportation, parents/guardians will be asked to commit to either utilizing bus or car transportation at the beginning of the school year.

Vaccination

According to the CDC, evidence suggests that people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are less likely to have an asymptomatic infection or transmit COVID-19 to other people who are not fully vaccinated.

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection.

People who are fully vaccinated can safely resume activities they did before the pandemic, except when prevention measures are required by federal, state, local tribal or territorial laws, rules, regulations, including local business and workplace guidelines.

For anyone who is still looking for a COVID-19 vaccine, please visit www.vaccines.gov to find a vaccination location near you.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

IDPH Press Release

<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/news/illinois-department-public-health-adopts-cdc-covid-19-prevention-school-guidance>

Illinois State Board of Education Covid-19 Reference

<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/covid19.aspx>

Northwestern COVID data Dashboard

<https://Covid-dashboard.fsm.northwestern.edu>

Will County Department of Health & Community Health Center

<https://willcountyhealth.org>