

Sherrard Community Unit School District 200



Return to Learn Plan
2021

Revised 8.6.21

Revised 8.16.21

Return to Learn Plan 2021

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has fully adopted the school guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Sherrard School District uses this guidance along with the advice of the local health departments, disease experts and attorneys. The plan is subject to change throughout the year.

Face Coverings

Sherrard School District's goal is to protect the health of all students and staff. On Wednesday, August 4, Governor JB Pritzker announced an Executive Order requiring that masks be worn indoors by all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. The mask mandate also extends to pre-kindergarten through grade 12 indoor recreational sports. All fans must wear a mask while they are inside a school building for athletic events. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention strengthened its guidance last week for universal indoor masking in schools.

Families who do not want their children to wear face masks for medical reasons should get a note from a healthcare provider. There are no other options available at this time for families who do not want their children to wear a mask at school.

In addition to mask wearing, it is especially important to layer other preventive strategies to keep our schools safe. These strategies include maintaining at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, screening testing, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick, contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation, cleaning and disinfection.

Full Return to In-Person Instruction

Per State requirements, all students will be expected to return for full in-person instruction. The only time students will be remote is when they test positive for the virus or when they are quarantined. Government agencies emphasize in-person learning regardless of whether all prevention strategies such as social distancing can be implemented at school.

Illness

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. Students with symptoms should not come to school with the expectation of being tested for COVID-19. Doing so will put others at risk of infection. Students who develop symptoms at home should get tested at the health department, a local pharmacy, or a medical facility.

Social Distancing

Social distancing will be maintained to the greatest extent possible utilizing the 3 feet guidelines. The social distance threshold increases to 6 feet when the students remove the mask while eating. Six feet of social distance must be maintained for unmasked students who have a medical note from a healthcare provider.

Busing

- Parents are encouraged to transport their own students to and from school
- Bus riders, drivers included, will be required to wear a mask.
- Bus riders will have assigned seats with siblings when possible
- The buses will be sanitized daily
- PPE and sanitizing products will be available on all buses
- Unvaccinated drivers must keep the front two seats on the bus unoccupied.
- To determine 3 feet of social distance, the seat in front, behind and beside the positive student will be used. To determine 6 feet of social distance, the two seats in front, two seats behind, and three seats beside the positive student will be used.

School Day

All schools will return to a full-day schedule five days a week.

Preschool

The half-day preschool schedules will return to their pre-pandemic start and end times. The morning preschool hours will be 8:50-11:30. The afternoon preschool hours will be 12:45-3:40

Wednesday Teacher Institutes

Teacher institutes will be implemented on various Wednesdays throughout the school year. Junior/Senior high students will be dismissed at 1:00 and the elementary students will be dismissed at 2:00.

Updated COVID-19 Symptoms

Over the past 18 months, there have been numerous changes to the list of COVID-19 symptoms. People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue

- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Capacity Limits

There are no longer any capacity limits for outdoor and indoor areas. School buses are no longer limited to 50 students.

Daily Symptom Screening

Schools do not have to conduct daily symptom screenings this year. However, there still needs to be daily self-certification checks. The parents are asked to daily check their children for COVID-19 symptoms and keep them home if the child displays one or more of the symptoms. The staff will also be asked to sign a form promising to conduct daily symptom checks.

Website Posting of Positive Cases

The District will continue posting the number of positive COVID-19 cases to the district website under the “Community” tab on the homepage. The information will be given for each building in two formats: 1) results for the current week and 2) cumulative results for the school year.

Nurses

The district will continue to employ two additional nurses in the district (total of 4). A full-time nurse will be assigned to each campus. Rapid testing (antigen) will be available for symptomatic individuals.

PreK-4 Art and Music

The elementary art and music teachers will travel to Winola and Sherrard Elementary as they did prior to the pandemic. The students will travel to the designated classrooms for instruction.

Backpack Night and 7th Grade Orientation

The backpack nights and 7th grade orientation will be held as usual.

Family Nights, Career Days, Grandparents Days

None of these activities will take place during the first semester. They will be reevaluated at the end of the first semester to see if they can be implemented at some point during the second semester.

Matherville Cohort

Last year, the sixth grade students were grouped together for most of their classes. This year, the students will be interspersed throughout the classes so they can get to know more students. The students will return to the cohort model if the number of positive cases reaches 5%.

Desks and Tables

To maintain 6 feet of social distance last year, some classrooms replaced their tables with desks. That arrangement will be maintained for another school year.

Free Breakfast and Lunch

The federal government provided free breakfast and lunch meals to all students regardless of income last year. The free meals will continue again this year.

Lunch Room Protocol

The JH/SH will continue with the sack meal format at the beginning of the school year. There may be a transition to tray meals at some point. The elementary schools will provide tray meals on the first day of school. There will be a limited number of ala carte items available for sale this year.

The elementary schools will continue to have the expanded lunch schedule as a means to maintain social distance. The JH will spread the students out among the tables. The HS will continue to use multiple locations (commons, gym, outside) to increase social distance.

Playgrounds

There will be no restrictions on the use of the playground equipment. Students will use hand sanitizer when they leave the building and when they enter the building.

Toys

Students will not be allowed to bring toys to school.

Physical Education

PE activities will return to normal. Students at the JH/SH will change into PE clothes. The showers will be used as appropriate (e.g., wrestling team). The students will be assigned lockers in the locker rooms for PE class and for athletics. So that students can have a mask break, PE teachers are strongly encouraged to have class outside during the suitable weather.

Water Fountains

Each school has a bottle filler station and the students used them to fill their water bottles. The same protocol will be followed this year. The water fountains will remain off. An additional bottle filler station will be installed at each of the schools. Students are encouraged to bring their water bottles from home.

Signage

Signage will be posted regarding masks, handwashing, and social distancing

Visitors

Visitors and volunteers will be allowed into the school buildings for authorized purposes only. The vestibules will be used for routine situations (e.g., dropping off a permission slip or pick up homework). Visitors and volunteers who enter the building will confirm they have no COVID-19 symptoms and they will wear a mask. The district will be exploring the feasibility of purchasing background check software for each of the schools.

Sharing of Materials

Students will not be allowed to share materials without first sanitizing those materials.

Band and Choir

Bell covers will continue to be used in band. Disposable cups will be used when emptying spit from instruments. Air purifiers will be purchased for all band and chorus rooms.

Driver's Education

All occupants in the driver's education vehicles will wear a mask while they are in the vehicles.

Concerts and Christmas Programs

There will be band and chorus concerts, Christmas concerts and plays/musicals, but we are uncertain about day concerts and family attendance. We will monitor transmission levels and make a final decision as the concert dates approach.

Veteran's Day

Each school will host its own Veteran's Day activities (i.e., schools will not travel to one location for a presentation).

Internet signal being broadcast at Coyne Center and New Windsor

For the second year, an internet signal will broadcast from the Coyne Center Fire Station and the New Windsor Presbyterian Church. A permanent internet signal will continue to be broadcast into the parking lots of each school campus.

Mental Health Caseworker

The district's mental health caseworker services will be reduced from full-time to part-time.

Classroom Parties and Birthdays

Schools will be allowed to resume having parties again. All food items must be individually wrapped.

Staff Food Celebrations

The staff may resume having food celebrations (e.g., birthdays). The use of individually-wrapped food items is preferred. Participants should wear gloves if serving utensils will be shared.

IEPs and 504 Plans

The district encourages the staff and parents to conduct all IEP and 504 plans virtually.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

The Parent-teacher conferences may be conducted in-person, but it is permissible for them to occur virtually.

Teachers Cleaning Desks

The teachers are encouraged to continue sanitizing student desks at key points during the school day. Hand sanitizer, bottles of sanitizer, micro cloths and gloves will available to all classrooms.

H2Orange2

The H2Orange2 spray is a sanitizer/virucide and is used to clean surfaces in the classrooms. Hydrogen peroxide is a disinfectant and it is a key ingredient in the H2Orange 2 cleaner. Each teacher has been provided with a spray bottle containing this product and some micro cleaning cloths.

The custodians will clean and sanitize all the classrooms once a day and the maintenance staff will use the electrostatic sprayer once a day to disinfect the classrooms. The 6-12 teachers are encouraged to use the cleaner before a new group of students comes into the room. The PreK-5 teachers are encouraged to use the cleaner at some point in the middle of the day. The following is a list of procedures for the use of the cleaner.

1. The cleaner is safe enough to use without gloves. Teachers are welcome to use gloves, however.
2. The cleaners should be sprayed 6-8 inches from the surface. A micro cloth should be used to wipe off the surface. The cleaner can be allowed to dwell on the surface for a few minutes or it can be wiped off immediately.
3. Damp wipe (i.e., wipe while the surface is still wet) all the student desktops.
4. Damp wipe door handles, light switches, pencil sharpeners and other frequently touched surfaces.
5. Store the now-soiled micro cloth in a spot that is mutually agreed upon with the custodians who will take the soiled cloths to be laundered.

Transmission Via Surfaces

The virus is transmitted primarily through droplets in the air, not from touching surfaces. However, it is important to clean, sanitize and disinfect surfaces because, when the virus is transmitted by touching surfaces, it is usually because individuals rubbed their eyes or touched their mouths with their fingers. Because of this, everyone should wash their hands frequently for 20 seconds with soap and water and use hand sanitizer when hand washing isn't an option.

The following is a quote from a CDC statement: *"In most situations, the risk of infection from touching a surface is low. The most reliable way to prevent infection from surfaces is to regularly wash hands or use hand sanitizer. When no people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 are known to have been in a space, cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove virus that may be on surfaces and help maintain a healthy facility."*

Extra Cleaning

The custodial staff will continue to conduct extra cleaning throughout the buildings. The two new custodial positions will continue to be used for extra cleaning and as substitutes for other custodians who are absent.

Isolation Rooms

Each building will continue to maintain an isolation room for students who display COVID-19 symptoms but have to wait for a parent to pick them up from school.

Close Proximity Classroom Activities

Teachers are discouraged from having classroom activities that cause the students to be in close proximity with each other.

Lockers

The 5-12 students will be able to use the lockers, but they will be assigned in a way to allow for social distancing.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program (DHH)

Sherrard School District hosts the Blackhawk Special Education District's (BHASED) DHH program at Winola Elementary and Matherville Intermediate School. The individuals in that program will follow the protocols set by BHASED including a mask mandate.

Music

Students should avoid sharing instruments. If instruments must be shared (e.g., drums, mallet instruments, ukuleles), they should be cleaned and disinfected between students. Students are discouraged from sharing music stands so that students do not inadvertently move closer to each other to see the music.

Masks must be worn while singing. Masks with slits should be worn when possible while playing instruments involving the mouth. Bell covers must be used while playing wind and brass instruments. Brass fluid (saliva) should be eliminated using disposable cups. The cups should be dropped into a lined garbage can after each practice.

Quarantine

The local health departments have the final say about quarantine issues. Generally, the health department in the county where individuals live will make the decisions about being quarantined.

Individuals who have been fully vaccinated and do not have any COVID-19 symptoms do not have to be quarantined.

To avoid quarantine, a six-foot social distance must be maintained by unvaccinated staff members.

With local health department approval, the following protocols will be used for quarantine.

1. For situations where the close contact student and/or the individual who tested positive were not wearing masks properly, six feet of social distance will be used in determining quarantine.
2. For situations where the positive individual and the student are both wearing their masks properly, 3 feet of social distance will be used in determining quarantine.

3. Students and teachers who have not maintained social distance have the option of a Test-to-Stay protocol. Close contacts must be tested on days 1, 3, 5, and 7 after exposure. As long as close contacts remain negative, they are not required to quarantine. Close contacts are only eligible for Test-to-Stay if both the close contact and infected individual were wearing masks at the time of exposure.
4. If the quarantined students and staff have a negative PCR test result from a test taken on day 6 of the quarantine period, they may return to school on day 7 of the quarantine period.

Help with Quarantined Students

From the newly ratified labor agreement: “Teachers who have total of three (3) or more quarantined students in their PreK-5th grade class, and teachers who have a total of six (6) or more quarantined students in their 6 th-12th grade classes will have access to district-provided staff who will assist with communication, questions, and instruction with the quarantined students. This access will last until the number of quarantined students falls below the aforementioned levels.”

Revisions adopted by the Board on 8.18.21

Face Coverings: Add the following sentence - All fans must wear a mask while they are inside a school building for athletic events.

Illness: Add the following sentences - Students with symptoms should not come to school with the expectation of being tested for COVID-19. Doing so will put others at risk of infection. Students who develop symptoms at home should get tested at the health department, a local pharmacy, or a medical facility.

Social Distancing: Add the following sentences - The social distance threshold increases to 6 feet when the students remove the mask while eating. Six feet of social distance must be maintained for unmasked students who have a medical note from a healthcare provider.

Busing: Add the following points

- Unvaccinated drivers must keep the front two seats on the bus unoccupied.
- To determine 3 feet of social distance, the seat in front, behind and beside the positive student will be used. To determine 6 feet of social distance, the two seats in front, two seats behind, and three seats beside the positive student will be used.

Daily Symptom Screening: Make the following changes - The parents ~~will be~~ are asked to ~~sign a form promising to~~ daily check their children for COVID-19 symptoms and ~~to~~ keep them home if the child displays one or more of the symptoms.

Website Posting of Positive Cases: Make the following change - The District will continue posting the number of positive COVID-19 cases to the district website under the “Community” tab on the homepage.

Visitors: Make the following change - Visitors and volunteers who enter the building will confirm they have no COVID-19 symptoms and they will wear a mask ~~if they are not fully vaccinated.~~

Add the following:

H2Orange2

The H2Orange2 spray is a sanitizer/virucide and is used to clean surfaces in the classrooms. Hydrogen peroxide is a disinfectant and it is a key ingredient in the H2Orange 2 cleaner. Each teacher has been provided with a spray bottle containing this product and some micro cleaning cloths.

The custodians will clean and sanitize all the classrooms once a day and the maintenance staff will use the electrostatic sprayer once a day to disinfect the classrooms. The 6-12 teachers are encouraged to use the cleaner before a new group of students comes into the room. The PreK-5 teachers are encouraged to use the cleaner at some point in the middle of the day. The following is a list of procedures for the use of the cleaner.

1. The cleaner is safe enough to use without gloves. Teachers are welcome to use gloves, however.
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Add the following:

Transmission Via Surfaces

The virus is transmitted primarily through droplets in the air, not from touching surfaces. However, it is important to clean, sanitize and disinfect surfaces because, when the virus is transmitted by touching surfaces, it is usually because individuals rubbed their eyes or touched their mouths with their fingers. Because of this, everyone should wash their hands frequently for 20 seconds with soap and water and use hand sanitizer when hand washing isn't an option.

The following is a quote from a CDC statement: "In most situations, the risk of infection from touching a surface is low. The most reliable way to prevent infection from surfaces is to regularly wash hands or use hand sanitizer. When no people with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 are known to have been in a space, cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove virus that may be on surfaces and help maintain a healthy facility."

Close Proximity Classroom Activities: Deleted the following sentence - ~~When close proximity cannot be avoided, the students should wear masks.~~

Lockers: Make the following changes - ~~The JH/SH students will not use the hallway lockers this year.~~ The 5-12 students will be able to use the lockers, but they will be assigned in a way to allow for social distancing.

Add the following:

Help with Quarantined Students

From the newly ratified labor agreement: “Teachers who have total of three (3) or more quarantined students in their PreK-5th grade class, and teachers who have a total of six (6) or more quarantined students in their 6 th-12th grade classes will have access to district-provided staff who will assist with communication, questions, and instruction with the quarantined students. This access will last until the number of quarantined students falls below the aforementioned levels.”

Revisions adopted by the Board on 8.6.21

Face Coverings: The following changes were made

Sherrard School District’s goal is to protect the health of all students and staff. On Wednesday, August 4, Governor JB Pritzker announced an Executive Order requiring that masks be worn indoors by all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention strengthened its guidance last week for universal indoor masking in schools.

Families who do not want their children to wear face masks for medical reasons should get a note from a healthcare provider. There are no other options available at this time for families who do not want their children to wear a mask at school.

~~In alignment with recommendations from the CDC and IDPH, the district expects and strongly encourages individuals (age 2 and older) who are not fully vaccinated to continue to wear a mask indoors. Masks do not have to be worn outdoors. Though unvaccinated individuals should wear a mask, it will not be mandatory. The district will continue to closely monitor the number of positive COVID-19 cases among the students and staff, and will make necessary changes including reimplementing of a mask mandate if warranted. Individuals who are fully vaccinated may resume activities without wearing a mask except where required by federal, state, and local rules and regulations. Per state guidelines, masks will be required to be worn in all school buses.~~

In addition to mask wearing, it is especially important to layer other preventive strategies to keep our schools safe. These strategies include maintaining at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, screening testing, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick, contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation, cleaning and disinfection.

~~Students cannot be removed from school or the bus when they refuse to wear a mask or when their parents will not allow them to wear a mask. Because of this restriction, all masking mandates, in essence, become optional.~~

Music: The following information was added

Students should avoid sharing instruments. If instruments must be shared (e.g., drums, mallet instruments, ukuleles), they should be cleaned and disinfected between students. Students are discouraged from sharing music stands so that students do not inadvertently move closer to each other to see the music.

Masks must be worn while singing. Masks with slits should be worn when possible while playing instruments involving the mouth. Bell covers must be used while playing wind and brass instruments. Brass fluid (saliva) should be eliminated using disposable cups. The cups should be dropped into a lined garbage can after each practice.

Quarantine: The following information was added

Individuals who have been fully vaccinated and do not have any COVID-19 symptoms do not have to be quarantined.

To avoid quarantine, a six-foot social distance must be maintained by unvaccinated staff members.

With local health department approval, the following protocols will be used for quarantine.

1. For situations where the close contact student and/or the individual who tested positive were not wearing masks properly, six feet of social distance will be used in determining quarantine.
2. For situations where the positive individual and the student are both wearing their masks properly, 3 feet of social distance will be used in determining quarantine.
3. Students and teachers who have not maintained social distance have the option of a Test-to-Stay protocol. Close contacts must be tested on days 1, 3, 5, and 7 after exposure. As long as close contacts remain negative, they are not required to quarantine. Close contacts are only eligible for Test-to-Stay if both the close contact and infected individual were wearing masks at the time of exposure.
4. If the quarantined students and staff have a negative PCR test result from a test taken on day 6 of the quarantine period, they may return to school on day 7 of the quarantine period.