

2020-
2021

PANDEMIC HANDBOOK



Willow Springs
School District

108

Introduction

The COVID19 pandemic has required many changes to the running of the school for the 2020-2021 school year. The District has put this plan into place to address health and safety concerns while continuing our focus on student learning.

Please be aware that the requirements and recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Cook County Department of Public Health, The Centers for Disease Control, and the Illinois State Board of Education change as we learn more about the spread of COVID19 and as the positivity rate changes. The District's protocols and procedures will change as required to reduce the risk of transmission of this virus. Updates and changes will be shared as they are made.

Under this plan, two options will be provided to students and their families. All families will have the option of choosing a completely remote learning option for their students. All families will also have the choice of a blended learning model which involves both in-person and remote learning. The Blended Learning model allows us to have fewer students in the building at one time so that physical distancing requirements can be met.

Learning Options

During the Pandemic the District will operate under Full Remote and Blended Learning Plans.

During times that the COVID19 positivity metrics warrant students to remain out of school, Full Remote Instruction will be provided for all students. Students and families may not switch at their own discretion between full remote and blended learning because each seat in school is counted to accommodate social distancing.

When the positivity metrics allow for in-person learning during the Pandemic, families will have the opportunity to select full-remote or blended learning. Families that select full remote will remain at home during this period and receive instruction remotely. Families that select Blended Learning will have a combination of in-person and remote learning. Families that select Blended Learning should be prepared to switch to full remote learning at a day's notice to accommodate quarantining requirements.

The plans for full remote and blended learning are in the appendix to this handbook.

Inclement Weather on a Blended Learning Day

Families that select blended learning may not elect to keep their child home on a day they are required to be in the school building because of inclement weather. A student will be moved to full remote learning if violations occur.

Social Distancing

Social Distancing must be observed wherever possible. Social or physical distancing means there is six (6) feet of space between each person at school. Classrooms will be arranged so that student desks are at least six (6) feet apart. Student desks will face in the same direction. Hallways and outdoor areas will also be marked to show six (6) feet of distance between people. Classroom occupancy capacity includes students and staff.

Bathrooms, Hallway lockers and Locker rooms

Hallway lockers and locker rooms will be unavailable. Rest rooms, stalls and other spaces will be marked to maintain six (6) feet of distance between people.

Washrooms will be available for the teacher to sign up for a time that is convenient in the schedule for her/his class. This schedule will be available in Google docs. Classrooms will be assigned the washroom they should use. If a student needs to use the washroom during an unscheduled time, the teacher should check the washroom schedule to make sure that there is not a class currently scheduled. If there is, the student will be asked to wait a few minutes.

Physical Education Classes

PE lessons and activities will be structured for social distancing. Contact sports and other activities that require students to be near each other will not be included. Floor markings will be used to help structure activities and keep appropriate social distancing. Students will not be changing for PE classes. In-Person PE classes will be held outdoors whenever possible. Many PE classes will be held remotely.

Special Education / 504 Plans

All students with an IEP will be provided with a remote learning plan that supports their individual needs. This plan will be used in conjunction with the student's IEP to ensure that they are receiving the appropriate accommodations/modifications no matter the learning model the district is currently using (full remote or blended). The remote learning plan will be completed with input from the entire IEP team, including the parent. This plan is a working document and can be updated to address a student's changing needs. When in the blended model, the district will make every effort to ensure that students with IEPs are included in person to the full extent possible, based on individualized needs. Inclusion in the general education setting will be available remotely and/or in person, when the space for students and extra personnel can be accommodated. If a parent chooses to opt their student out of in person inclusion with general education and be provided a remote class instead, all requests must be documented in writing and sent to Meghan Litko at mlitko@willowsschool.org.

All IEP and 504 meetings will be held via Zoom and parents will be contacted to schedule those meetings.

Students with 504 plans will continue to receive the accommodations/modifications in their 504. If special accommodations are needed in the remote and/or blended model those will be decided by the 504 team and added to the student's plan.

Classroom Use

In typical times, students travel to different teachers for art, music, PE, and their junior high subject areas.

During the COVID19 Pandemic, students will remain the same classroom and teachers will move between classrooms as necessary.

Teachers sharing classrooms are expected to keep their desks in such a way that another teacher can use the computer attached to the Promethean Board. Teachers should disconnect and carry their own keyboards and mice with them to reduce contact.

Teachers should hand sanitize upon entering a new classroom.

Lunch and Breakfast

Breakfast and lunch meals will be sent home with students and they will eat them at home.

Athletics and Activities

Fall and winter sports have been rescheduled to spring by the Lyons Township Athletic Conference that we belong to. In late winter, it will be determined if it will be possible to have athletics in the spring.

Activities will also be evaluated on a regular basis. Some activities may be held remotely using Zoom.

Health Rules and Procedures for In-Person Learning

Students in the blended learning model and attending in-person school must follow these rules and procedures while in the building. These rules and procedures have been developed following the guidance provided by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Public Health. Students who do not comply with these rules and procedures may be sent home or assigned to remote learning.

Face Coverings

To prevent the spread of COVID19, face coverings will be required for all District staff members, students and visitors in the school building. Face coverings must also be worn on school grounds in circumstances where social distancing cannot be maintained, primarily just before and after school. Face coverings are masks or other cloth face coverings which cover a person's nose and mouth. They should be fitted to the face and tightly woven but permit breathing without restriction. Face shields may not be used in place of face masks, however they may be used along with face masks.

Students must wear a face covering of their choice at school. If they do not have one, they must wear a school provided face mask.

Face coverings may not be sheer or made of a mesh material.

Face coverings must be worn by students and staff at all times in school, on school buses and on school grounds when social distancing cannot be maintained.

Students and staff who are not wearing a face covering upon entry to school or a school bus will be provided a disposable or clean cloth face covering for immediate use. Students who have not been provided an accommodation to the face covering requirement and who refuse to wear a face covering the school, on the school bus or other school activity where face coverings are required, will be reassigned to a fully remote option.

Students who cannot safely wear or independently remove a face covering due to disability or medical condition may be entitled to accommodations to the requirement. Parents/guardians of students who have a medical condition or other disability which may prevent the safe wearing of the face masks will be required to complete the District's "Face Covering Accommodation Form" which must be verified by the student's doctor. The district may verify all information provided by a student's parents/guardian and/or the student's doctor through an independent review by a licensed medical provider of the District's choice and at the District's expense. Upon review of the completed and verified form, the District will schedule a meeting with parents/guardians to review the form and consider appropriate accommodations for the student.

Hand Washing and Cleaning / Water Bottles

Students will be encouraged to wash/sanitize hands frequently, including upon arrival to and departure from school; after blowing their nose, coughing, sneezing; following restroom use; and upon return from gym class.

Contactless hand sanitizer stations are located in each classroom as well as throughout the building.

Students may not drink directly from water fountains. Instead, students are permitted to carry water bottles throughout the day. Water bottles should have a pull top so if it is tipped over, there is little or no spillage. Students may fill their water bottles at the water bottle filling stations but should not touch the water bottle to the spout. Hand washing/sanitizing is required before and after refilling a water bottle.

Additional cleaning will be conducted throughout the school, especially of highly touched surfaces (door handles, desktops, light switches, pencil sharpeners, and restrooms).

Symptom Screening Prior to School Admission

To prevent the spread of COVID19, all staff members and students must verify before entering the building that they do not have a temperature above 100.3 and that they do not have any of the symptoms of COVID19.

Parents should evaluate their student every morning. Students should be kept at home if they have ONE (1) of these symptoms:

- Fever or feeling feverish (chills, sweating)
- New cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell
- Chills
- Fatigue
- New or unusual headaches
- Congestion or runny nose

If a student comes to school with one of these symptoms, or running a temperature, the student will be escorted to a supervised quarantine area until a parent/guardian picks them up.

Students who are quarantining at home will be allowed to participate fully in the remote learning program.

Temperature Checks

To prevent the spread of COVID19, the District will screen all staff members, students and visitors who come to the building.

Upon arrival at school, the school nurse or other designated staff members will take the temperature of the person using a contactless, infrared thermometer. To prevent sick people from entering school, screening will take place at the following locations:

- The bus stops
- At the main office
- Along Vinewood
- At the entrances to the playground from Nolton and from Archer

While waiting for a temperature, all people shall maintain a 6 foot distance from others entering the building.

For the protection of all people, the screener will be in PPE, including a face mask, a face shield, gloves, and will use a contactless, infrared thermometer. The screener shall wash/sanitize their hands and then put on the PPE prior to the screenings. If the screener unintentionally touches the individual being screened, the screener shall clean the thermometer with an alcohol wipe, wash/sanitize their hands and put on clean gloves before screening the next person.

If an individual's temperature is 100.3 or higher, or they exhibit or identify any of the COVID19 symptoms, or they report they have had close contact with an infected person, then:

1. If an employee or visitor, they will be sent home and advised to contact their doctor.
2. If a student, they will be sent home with a parent/guardian if present or be escorted to the quarantine room while the student's parent/guardian is contacted to pick up the student. The parent/guardian will be advised to contact their doctor.
3. The student will be allowed and expected to participate in the remote learning program as long as s/he is healthy enough to participate.

To facilitate this screening, parents/guardians who are present at school for drop off will be asked to stay on school grounds until the student completes the check and is admitted to the building. If the parent/guardian is unable to remain at school or is not present, and the student is exhibiting symptoms, the student will be placed in the quarantine room until the parent/guardian picks up the student.

Screening of Students on Buses by School Staff Members

For students traveling to school on the bus, the temperature check screening shall be done by a school employee at the bus stop. The screener will be provided PPE, including a face mask, a face shield, gloves and will use a contactless, infrared thermometer. The screener shall wash/sanitize their hands and then put on the PPE prior to the screenings. If the screener unintentionally touches the individual being screened, the screener shall clean the thermometer with an alcohol wipe, wash/sanitize their hands and put on clean gloves before screening the next person.

The screening will take place before the student boards the bus. If the student is found to have a temperature or other symptom, the student will be sent home with their

parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian is not at the bus stop, the student will be placed on a quarantine bus, brought to school and escorted to the quarantine room until the parent/guardian arrives to pick them up.

Visitors

Visitors to the building will be limited. Visitors with essential business in the building will be screened in the same manner as an employee. All visitors will be screened and temperature checked before leaving the front vestibule. Visitors are required to wear a face mask while in the building and will be asked to leave immediately if they do not comply.

Symptom Screening List

This list will be included on all self-certification forms and will be utilized by District staff members for in-person screening. Admission into the building will be denied into the building if any ONE (1) of these symptoms is reported:

- Fever or feeling feverish (chills, sweating)
- New cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell
- Chills
- Fatigue
- New or unusual headaches
- Congestion or runny nose

Isolation and Exclusion Requirements

To prevent the spread of COVID19, the District will follow the following requirements regarding isolation of individuals who may be ill at school and exclusion of individuals who are ill or have symptoms at home.

The phrase “COVID19 symptoms” refers to the following: fever of at least 100.3, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, “close contact” means being within six (6) feet of an infected person for 15 minutes or more (regardless of whether the individuals were wearing masks), starting from 2 days before symptoms appeared or a positive test if asymptomatic.

Report of COVID19 Symptoms Before or After School

Exclusion

If a parent/guardian (on behalf of a student) or staff member reports experiencing any COVID19 symptoms before or after school or during the screening process, they will not be permitted to enter or remain in the school building and should see their doctor.

Based on the IDPH definition of “close contact,” individuals who were within 6 feet of a person with COVID19 symptoms for more than 15 minutes would be required to self-isolate or quarantine. Remote learning will be provided to students who are required to self-isolate or quarantine under these regulations.

The District retains the discretion to require students to self-isolate or quarantine based upon knowledge of exposure.

Return to School

A symptomatic student or staff member cannot return to school until:

- At least 10 days have passed since the onset of symptoms AND they have been fever free (without medication) for 24 hours AND the respiratory symptoms have improved;

OR

- They have had 2 negative COVID19 tests taken at least 24 hours apart AND they are fever free (without medication) AND the respiratory symptoms have improved.
- Students or staff who exhibit symptoms, who see a physician and it is determined do not have COVID19 will be allowed to return to school with the doctor’s written recommendation stating they do not have COVID19.

An asymptomatic student/staff member who tests positive for COVID19 cannot return to school until:

- Ten (10) days after the positive test, provided that the student/staff member does not develop symptoms during that period. If the student/staff member develops symptoms, s/he must meet the criteria listed above.

OR

- They have had 2 negative COVID19 tests taken at least 24 hours apart.

Report of COVID19 Symptoms During the School Day

Isolation/Exclusion

If a student or staff member develops COVID19 symptoms during the school day, they must be immediately separated from the rest of the school population. A quarantine area has been designated for this purpose. Students who report or are observed experiencing COVID19 symptoms should be sent to the quarantine area. A staff member will be assigned to supervise the student while in quarantine. The staff member should maintain at least 6 feet of distance from the student at all times and wear all appropriate PPE. The student's parent/guardian will be contacted to pick the student up from school and directed to contact their doctor. The student will remain in the quarantine area until s/he can be sent home safely. The District will not allow the use of school buses or public transportation to send a student home while exhibiting COVID19 symptoms at school.

If a staff member develops COVID19 symptoms during the school day and is well enough to drive home, the staff member will be sent home immediately and directed to contact their doctor. If the staff member is not well enough to drive or cannot get home safely the staff member must quarantine in the quarantine area until the staff member is picked up from school.

The school nurse, or administrator or designee in the absence of school nursing professionals, will have the discretion to determine who is placed in the quarantine area and the level of supervision needed. Teachers should report any observation of COVID19 symptoms to the school nurse, administrator or designee. The school nurse will document any student or staff member placed in the quarantine area.

The quarantine area has been set up to reduce the risk of transmission:

- Plastic barriers have been placed in the quarantine space to separate people with symptoms from those without.
- Quarantine spaces have been designed to allow for 6 feet of social distancing between individuals.
- When interacting with individuals in the quarantine area, the school nurse, administrator or designee will wear appropriate PPE, including gloves and face coverings.

The District will also close off any areas used by the sick individual and will prohibit use of those areas until after proper cleaning and disinfection. Windows will be opened where possible to increase air circulation in the area. The District will strive to wait 24 hours prior to cleaning and disinfecting the area. If waiting 24 hours is not possible, the janitorial team will clean and disinfect the area after waiting as long as possible. All areas that were used by the individual who was sick will be cleaned and disinfected.

The potentially infected areas will only be reopened after proper cleaning and disinfection has occurred.

Diagnosis of COVID19

Exclusion

Students and staff members who have been diagnosed with COVID19 must be excluded from school and all school activities until they have met the requirements for returning to school.

Students and staff who were in close contact (within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) with the individual who tested positive during the 2 days preceding the positive test or onset of symptoms must also be excluded from school to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of exposure and monitor for COVID19 symptoms. They will be directed to contact their doctor.

Subject to State and local guidance, if a school is able to maintain a distance of 6 feet between all students and staff members through the day, including in classrooms and on the school bus, then only the individual who tests positive for COVID19 will be required to self-isolate.

Report of Close Contact with an individual with COVID19 Outside of School

If a student or staff member has been in close contact with an individual, outside of school, who tests positive for or is suspected of having COVID19 the student or staff member must quarantine at home for 14 days after exposure. No one else in the school is required to quarantine under these circumstances.

Parents/guardians and students should report instances of close contact with a person who tests positive or is suspected of having COVID19. If the student is required to self-isolate, remote learning will be required unless the student is too ill to attend to his/her learning.

Chromebooks and iPads for Student Use

Each student will be assigned a Chromebook (grades 2-8) or an iPad (k-1). Students will need to transport this equipment safely between home and school each day. Students are expected to use the equipment responsibly. Students are expected to charge their device each night so that it has enough power for them to work through the day. There are not enough outlets in classrooms to charge in school.

Students who forget their device at home will call home and their parent will need to bring the device. Work that is assigned while a student is waiting for a device from home or for a device that is not charged will be done on paper. The student will be

responsible for re-doing the paperwork electronically so that it may be submitted for grading. Teachers will only accept work that is submitted electronically.

Close Physical Contact

The Centers for Disease Control and the Illinois Department of Public Health both define close physical contact as being within 6 feet of someone for more than 15 cumulative minutes for a day.

Should you choose to help a student with shoe laces, a zipper or holding a pencil, keep mental note of how long you have been within that student's 6 feet and wash or sanitize your hands. Gloves are also provided for these types of contact.