



Return to School Plan

July 27, 2021

Organization Acronyms

CDC - Center for Disease Control

AAP - American Academy of Pediatrics

IDPH - Illinois Department of Public Health

CCDPH - Cook County Department of Public Health

ISBE - Illinois State Board of Education

IESA - Illinois Elementary School Association



Guidance for Reopening Schools

Several weeks ago, the CDC published guidance for the reopening of schools for the 2021-2022 school year.

IDPH and ISBE adopted the CDC recommendations in full.

This guidance states that all students should return to their schools in-person and on a full-time basis.

School districts are given the authority to design their return-to-school plans to meet their needs and modify their respective plans based on state guidance and local health conditions.



Will Willow families and staff need to continue daily self-certification during the 2021-2022 school year?

We will ask families to self-certify their child(ren) daily. The following slides outline the questions to ask. If all answers are “no”, students are expected to be in attendance.

If “yes” is answered to any of the questions the student should NOT be sent to school and we ask that you contact the school office at (708) 839-6828.



Self-Certification Questions

In the last 24 hours have you experienced any of the following symptoms in a way not normal to you that would indicate that you need to obtain a COVID-19 test?

- 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

Self-Certification Questions

Are there any other symptoms related to COVID-19 you are experiencing?

Have you been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days?

Is a household member or close contact currently awaiting a COVID-19 test result as a probable case?



Will masks be required for all students and staff at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year at Willow?

Yes.

- ISBE has given local districts flexibility related to mask wearing.
- CDC, AAP, IDPH, and CCDPH guidance indicates that “Masks should be worn by all unvaccinated individuals aged 2 and older while indoors.”
- “Should” does not mean “optional.”
- ALL Willow students and staff WILL wear masks when in our school regardless of vaccination status.



Will masks be required for all students and staff while riding the bus to and from school?

Yes.

- ALL Willow students and staff WILL wear masks when riding a school bus daily.
- ISBE has not indicated social distancing requirements for school buses. We will continue to monitor this issue and update our practices accordingly.

Will Willow School offer a remote learning option for the 2021-2022 school year?

No, however any student who meets the medical requirements as outlined by ISBE can participate in an at-home learning option. Families should contact us if they wish to discuss this further.



How will Willow School handle isolation this school year?

If a student is at school and reports/shows signs or symptoms of COVID-19, they will be isolated from their peers to reduce possible risk of transmission. The student's guardian will be contacted and asked to pick up the student as soon as possible.



Will Willow students be required to quarantine this year and if so, for how long?

Yes.

- If unvaccinated students are symptomatic, have a positive COVID test, or have been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID they will be required to quarantine.
- “Close contact” is anyone who has been near a positive case for a cumulative 15 minutes over the past 24 hours.
- The current standard quarantine period is 10 days for children.
- We are awaiting additional guidance from ISBE and IDPH related to the topic of quarantining for the upcoming school year.

How will students access school if required to quarantine?

- As a new administrative team, we are continuing to work through this issue and waiting on additional guidance from ISBE. We will share updated information on this topic prior to the beginning of the school year.

Will COVID vaccination status be required or tracked at Willow this year?

No.

- The decision to vaccinate is a personal choice and we will not require parents to disclose the vaccination status of their child(ren).
- Students who are fully vaccinated will not be required to quarantine if exposed to a positive COVID case. We will ask for vaccination status in this situation to avoid having to quarantine your child(ren).

What steps will be taken this year to keep Willow students and staff safe?

- All individuals in our school will be masked and practice social distancing, as well as hand and respiratory hygiene.
- Our students and staff will practice appropriate social distancing with a minimum of 3 to 6 feet distance at all times throughout the school day.
- We will utilize outdoor space as much as possible when appropriate.
- We are working to design a lunchroom environment that allows for appropriate spacing.
- Hand sanitizing stations are located in each classroom and additional stations will be strategically placed throughout our school.



What steps will be taken this year to keep Willow students and staff safe? (continued)

- Air purifiers remain in all classrooms, as well as office spaces.
- Our custodial staff will continue our high standards of cleaning and disinfecting our school.
- We will closely monitor symptoms and encourage all individuals to stay home if feeling ill. We will continue to promote vaccinations for all eligible individuals.
- Our team will continue to remain updated with national, state, and local guidance and recommendations that align with science.
- Our team will closely monitor positivity rates in our area as well.



How will extracurricular activities be handled during the upcoming school year at Willow?

- It is our hope that all extracurricular activities will take place this school year, but we are waiting on additional information and guidance from the IESA.
- We anticipate specific safety protocols will need to be implemented for participants and/or spectators.

Will guidance and recommendations continue to be shared with our community?

Absolutely!

We are thrilled to be welcoming students back to Willow on a full-time basis, but we know the weeks ahead will be filled with uncertainty. Our number one priority is to keep our students and staff safe and healthy. We know we cannot predict the future, but we also believe having our students back is a HUGE step forward.

We will continue to monitor updates and guidance from the various organizations and share this information with our community in a timely manner.



Thank you!

We are honored to have the privilege of working with your children through these unprecedented times.

We are committed to providing a safe and engaging environment for all students.

We are proud to serve the Willow Springs community and thank you for your support and cooperation.

