



# Safe Return to School Plan

Dupo CUSD 196

Approved: 7/27/2021

Revisions Approved: 8/10/2021

# Dupo School District 196

Tiger Families:

Dupo #196 has developed a Return to Learning Plan for the 2021 – 2022 school year.

The district has reviewed our previous Return to Learning Plan that governed the 2020-2021 school year and reviewed the document based on the August 4, 2021, Executive Order 2021-18, guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Illinois Department of Public Health and Illinois State Board of Education. Additionally, input from stakeholders was taken into account to ensure the district properly utilizes American Rescue Plan resources to provide our students with a safe environment, appropriate academic programs, social emotional supports, and current technology. Each of which will allow our students to grow academically and socially as our district recovers from a living through the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the plan is comprehensive it is also a fluid document that will be reviewed and adjusted as conditions change.

Thank you for your time, effort and constant dedication to our students!

**Kelly Carpenter, Ed. D.**  
***Superintendent***

\*This set of guidelines and protocols was initially approved July 27, 2021. The plan was revised in accordance with the Governor's August 4, 2021, Executive Order and approved by the Board of Education on August 10, 2021. This document is an ever changing outline based upon the recommendations and guidelines set forth by the Governor and state of Illinois, the CDC, Illinois State Board of Education and IDPH and may be updated based on school community, and county positivity numbers and after consultation with local public health officials. Modifications to this plan could include increased mitigation measures to decrease the spread of COVID-19, including but not limited to requiring all individuals to wear a mask in the school building, increasing social distancing and other appropriate mitigation measures. The plan will be regularly reviewed, but no less frequently than every six months, taking into consideration the timing of significant changes to CDC guidance on reopening schools. In determining whether revisions are necessary, and in making any revisions, the District will seek public input and take such input into account. If the CDC Guidance has been updated at the time the District revises this plan, the revised plan will address the District's policies for each of the CDC's safety recommendations.

## OVERVIEW

Sweeping through the world in early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in major upheaval to all aspects of life, including unprecedented school closures in the spring and fall of 2020. To open schools for in-person instruction required strict health and safety protocols which created barriers and limitations to teaching and learning.

Recognizing that students across remote and in-person settings faced significant academic, social, emotional, and mental health challenges as a result of the interrupted education and the trauma caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Congress made emergency funds available to local school districts to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.

Most recently, funds available through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act require that school districts develop a *Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services*. As such, this plan has been developed in accordance with the ARP Act, the Illinois State Superintendent of Education declaration of July 9, 2021, and the August 4, 2021, Governor's Executive Order 2021-18; is aligned with guidance provided by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Illinois State Superintendent of Education (ISBE) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and addresses adjustments needed in response to evolving COVID-19 pandemic circumstances.

School strategies in this plan may be removed or increased based upon local conditions, levels of community transmission (i.e., low, moderate, substantial, or high), local vaccine coverage, use of screening testing to detect cases in K-12 schools, and consultation with local public health officials to determine the prevention strategies needed. School officials will communicate any changes in plans to staff members, students, and parents through the district's regular communication platforms.

Opportunity for the public to provide input was provided on July 27, 2021, and August 10, 2021 at a public hearing. Upon request, this plan will be provided in an alternative format accessible to parents who are individuals with a disability as defined by the ADA. This plan will also be made publicly available on the district's website.

## WELLNESS

### **Maintaining the Health and Safety of Students, Educators, and Other Staff**

In accordance with the Illinois State Superintendent of Schools July 9, 2021 declaration, all Dupo #196 schools will be open fully for in-person learning for all student attendance days for the 2021-22 school year. Remote instruction will only be made available for non-vaccinated or vaccine ineligible students **only** while they are under quarantine consistent with guidance or requirements from a local public health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health. If a student does not meet the above criteria, but requests remote learning due to a medical condition, the request for remote learning will be evaluated under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If the student has a qualifying medical condition, the student may be provided homebound instruction.

On August 4, 2021, Governor JB Pritzker issued Executive Order No. 18 requiring the indoor use of face coverings by students, staff, and visitors who are over age two and able to medically tolerate a face covering, regardless of vaccination status, consistent with CDC guidance. Dupo CUSD #196 schools will be in operation in accordance with the CDC's updated (July 27, 2021) *Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Kindergarten (K)-12 Schools*, also adopted by the IDPH on July 27, 2021, the August 4, 2021, Executive Order, and the August 2021 Part 5 Joint ISBE/IDPH guidance.

## **Physical Distancing**

- To the greatest extent possible within school and classroom structures so that it does not exclude students from full day in-person learning, school staff are to help students commit to physical distancing by:
  - arranging furniture and play spaces to model and reinforce physical distancing of at least 3 feet and movement, when possible
  - maintain seating charts
  - coordinate bathroom/restroom breaks to eliminate high levels of congestion
  - providing assigned seating for students and encourage students to remain in these seats to the greatest extent possible; and
  - developing marked paths of travel in classrooms and corridors.
- A distance of at least 6 feet is recommended between students and teachers/staff, and between teachers/staff who are not fully vaccinated. Physical distancing in school buildings will be implemented to the greatest extent possible.
- School staff will maximize physical distance to the greatest extent possible when moving through food service lines and while eating indoors. Aside from the cafeteria, additional spaces for mealtime seating will be utilized when available and feasible (e.g., weather permitting).
- Physical distancing measures are to be done in an equitable manner that does not perpetuate academic, racial, or other tracking (e.g., separating people into fully vaccinated and non-fully vaccinated cohorts).

## **Face Coverings and P.P.E.**

- In accordance with the August 4, 2021, Executive Order and CDC, IDPH and ISBE guidance, the Dupon School District is requiring everyone to wear a mask while indoors in the school building, regardless of vaccination status. Consistent and correct mask use by all students, staff, and visitors while indoors is required. **It is expected that each child will bring and wear a mask while in the school buildings.**
- Mask use is also recommended outdoors during activities (e.g., participating in outdoor play, recess, physical education, sports, extra-curriculars) that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated, particularly in areas of substantial to high transmission.
- Students who fail to properly and consistently wear a mask may be subject to discipline in accordance with the District handbook.
- During school transportation: CDC's Order applies to all public transportation conveyances including school buses. Regardless of the mask policy at school, passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses and other District transportation vehicles, including on buses operated by public and private school systems, subject to the exclusions and exemptions in CDC's Order.
- Masks are required to be worn appropriately on buses and in school buildings at all times. Everyone is expected to provide their own masks. However, a mask will be provided if needed.
- Individuals who are unable to wear a mask or safely wear a mask due to a medical condition may request an accommodation to the mask requirement for evaluation by the District administration. Individuals requesting an accommodation must complete the District's accommodation request form, which must include a physician's note documenting the medical contraindication. Reasonable accommodations (clear masks, shields, etc.) will be made for students with disabilities in accordance with CDC guidelines and the ADA.

## **Hand Hygiene**

School staff will monitor and reinforce frequent handwashing and respiratory etiquette by:

- continuing to teach handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- assisting young children with handwashing;
- reminding everyone in the facility to wash hands frequently;
- using hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol (for teachers, staff, and older students who can safely use hand sanitizer) when hand washing is not possible;
- continuing to teach respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes)
- providing adequate handwashing and hand sanitizer supplies that are safely stored (up, away, and out of sight of young children and used only with adult supervision for children under 6 years of age).

## **FACILITIES CLEANING PLAN**

School custodial staff and transportation staff will continue to clean surfaces daily.

### **Routine high touch cleaning mitigation**

- Restroom stalls and dispensers
- Cafeteria tables
- Toilets, sinks and faucets
- Food preparation surfaces
- Fillable Bottle Water fountains
- Wiping down of desks by students after use each hour or multiple times a day

### **Supplemental cleaning mitigation**

- Door handles and knobs (including exterior doors)
- Elevator buttons
- Handrails
- Recreation equipment / playground equipment
- Vending machines
- Countertops
- Light switches
- Copier, printer, and fax control buttons
- Front desk and lobby surfaces

### **Personal area cleaning mitigation**

- Teacher Desks
- Computer keyboards and mouse
- Phones
- Remote controls
- Cabinet and file drawer handles

When possible, staff will open doors and windows and have activities, classes, or lunches outdoors when circumstances allow.

### **School bus cleaning mitigation**

The transportation sanitation plan will include daily disinfection of the bus fleet. School buses will be disinfected daily at the end of routes using only products that meet the EPA criteria and manufacturers' guidelines and allowed to sit overnight for maximum disinfectant dwell time. When it does not pose a safety risk, transportation staff will keep vehicle windows open at least a few inches to improve air circulation.

## **HEALTH**

### **Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine**

Students and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, should stay home and contact their healthcare provider for testing and care.

Individuals in our school environments who show symptoms of COVID-19 are to immediately report to or be escorted to the school's health care professional's office to be either sent home or be quarantined in the school's supervised safe area while awaiting pickup/evaluation. Students and staff are required to wear masks while in the safe area. Parents should ensure that ill students are picked up from school as soon as possible of being notified. Ill students will not be allowed to utilize the school bus to return home.

Students and staff who are not fully vaccinated should quarantine after a recent exposure to someone with COVID-19. Fully vaccinated people who were in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 but do NOT have COVID-19 symptoms do not need to quarantine or be tested. Quarantine decisions will be made and communicated by St. Clair County Health Department officials.

Student absences related to a COVID-19 isolation or quarantine will be recorded as excused. To ensure continuity of services, school work missed during such an absence can be requested and made up in accordance with the school's policy (refer to student handbook); social, emotional, mental health, or other needs will be provided in accordance with a student's IEP or 504 Plan. Parents of students who have social, emotional, mental health, or other needs outside of an IEP or 504 Plan should contact their child's principal to discuss needs. Remote instruction will only be made available to students who have not received a COVID-19 vaccine or who are not eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine, **only** while they are under quarantine consistent with guidance or requirements from a local public health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health.

If a student does not meet the above criteria for remote instruction due to quarantine, but requests remote learning due to a medical condition, the request for remote learning will be evaluated under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

If the student has a qualifying medical condition, the student may be provided homebound instruction.

Staff absences related to a COVID-19 isolation or quarantine will be recorded in accordance with the district's sick leave policy and collective bargaining agreement. To ensure continuity of services, staff members should contact their principals to discuss support for social, emotional, mental health, or other needs.

To the extent allowable by privacy laws and other applicable laws, school health care professionals will continue to collaborate with St. Clair County Health Department officials to confidentially provide information about people diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19, including making notifications to staff and parents as soon as possible regarding those who were in close contact of someone in the school who tested positive for COVID-19.

The school's health care professional will inform the school community of outbreaks while maintaining student and staff confidentiality rights.

### **Student Health Checklist**

In order to attend school, all students must be screened by their parents for symptoms of COVID-19 and other criteria. All staff must also screen themselves for this criteria prior to reporting to work. By attending school, all students and staff are certifying that they meet the following criteria:

1. They do not have a temperature of 100.4 F or greater.
2. They are not taking fever-reducing medicines, such as those that contain aspirin, ibuprofen or acetaminophen, in order to reduce his/her fever.
3. They have not been directed to self-quarantine by a healthcare provider.
4. They have not been directed to self-quarantine by the County or State Department of Public Health.
5. They do not have any of the following symptoms:
  - New Cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Fatigue from unknown cause
  - Muscle or body aches from unknown cause
  - Diarrhea
  - New onset of moderate or severe headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Vomiting
6. For unvaccinated individuals, they have not had close contact with someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

Unvaccinated students who have had close contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19 must follow the CDC and IDPH guidelines for self-monitoring and self-quarantine. Students and staff suspected of having COVID-19, whether they were tested or not, are to follow the CDC guidelines to determine when they can return to school. Please see the COVID-19 Return to School Flowchart attached as Exhibit A. Fully vaccinated people who were in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 but do NOT have COVID-19 symptoms do not need to be quarantined or be tested.

Remote instruction will only be made available to students who have not received a COVID-19 vaccine or who are not eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine **AND** only while they are under quarantine consistent with guidance or requirements from a local public health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health.

## Diagnostic & Screening Testing

Temperature check system is in place if needed. The district will not temperature check or screen students and staff until there is determined a need by the Superintendent based on current conditions. We will be asking all parents to continue helping eliminate the spread of any virus by keeping their students home when they are not feeling well.

## VISITOR PLAN

Visitors will be restricted to essential personnel only during the school day. Proper mask use is required by all visitors regardless of vaccination status. Visitors to any building must report directly to the main office for a wellness screening.

Non-essential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations with people who are not fully vaccinated are discouraged from visiting schools.

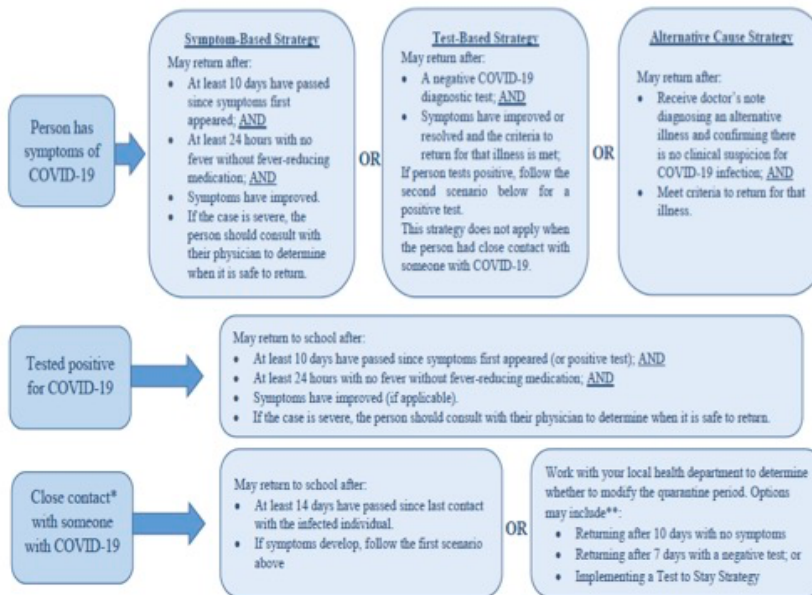
## RETURN TO SCHOOL FLOWCHART

PROVIDED PER CDC / IDPH GUIDELINES – 8/12/21

(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

### Exhibit A: COVID-19 Return to School Flowchart 2021-2022 School Year

Note: This chart is provided for information purposes only. The IDPH strongly recommends medical evaluation and testing for all persons with COVID-like Symptoms. The School District should notify its local public health department with the name of any student or employee with a confirmed COVID-19 test or who is suspected of having COVID-19. The District should coordinate with the person's physicians and confirm with your local public health department regarding the date the person will be eligible and safe to return to school.



\* "close contact" is defined as within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. Close contact does not include students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student where both students were engaged in the consistent and correct use of well-fitting face masks as long as other prevention strategies (such as universal and correct mask use and increased ventilation) were in place.

\*\* See IDPH/ISBE Guidance: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidance for COVID-19 available on the ISBE and IDPH website.



## **PROMOTING VACCINATION**

Working with the St. Clair County Health Department, COVID-19 vaccine clinics will be scheduled throughout the school year for anyone eligible to receive the shot.

Respectful of peoples' varying levels of vaccine confidence, those who want to get vaccinated against COVID-19 can visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find out where they can get vaccinated in our community.

## **DISABILITIES OR OTHER HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

Parents of students who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, or weakened immune systems should contact their student's principal and/or IEP Coordinator to discuss their child's specific need(s).

Staff members who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, weakened immune systems, or a sincerely held religious belief or practice (covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) should contact their school's principal to discuss the need(s).

## **COORDINATE WITH PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS**

Once learning of a COVID-19 case, Dupo #196 will notify the respective Health Department regarding the positive individual, close contacts, and other information deemed necessary.

District officials will continue to collaborate and consult with St. Clair County Health Department officials throughout a pandemic on various logistics and decision-making including, but not limited to, quarantines, school health and safety protocols, contact tracing, vaccine clinics, a change in learning setting, or emergency school closings.

## **PLAN REVIEW**

Through September 30, 2023, this plan will be reviewed no less frequently than every six months and revised as appropriate based on school, community, and county positivity numbers and after consultation with local public health officials and considering public input. Revisions will address the most recently updated safety recommendations by the CDC, provided in an alternative format accessible to parents who are individuals with a disability as defined by the ADA, and made publicly available on the district's website.