



Return to Learning Plan 2021-2022 School Year

(updated 8/13/21)

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Responding With Dignity To Diversity

Thank you to our families, students, communities, and staff for their patience and understanding as we navigate through the COVID-19 health crisis. Schools across Illinois have been challenged with the task of how to provide quality educational programs and services while balancing the health and safety of our students and staff. Over the last year and a half, our families, students, communities and staff have worked tirelessly to create meaningful and robust learning opportunities during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The purpose of this information is to provide you with the 2021-2022 Return to Learning Plan for Eisenhower Cooperative Programs and Services. This plan outlines the COVID-19 safety mitigations for the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

The State of Illinois has adopted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) updated [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 schools](#). This guidance applies to all public and nonpublic schools that serve students in prekindergarten through grade 12 (P-12).

Major changes to guidance for the 2021-22 school year include the following:

- Promotion of vaccination as the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic
- Additional emphasis on the importance of offering in-person learning, regardless of whether all of the prevention strategies can be implemented in a school
- Revised definition of close contacts to guide quarantine procedure.
- Introduction of a Test to Stay alternative to quarantine.
- Alignment with State of Illinois Executive Order 2021-18 on required universal indoor masking in P-12 schools for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status.

This updated guidance supports the safe and full return to in-person instruction for the 2021-22 school year, as declared by State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Carmen I. Ayala, on July 9, 2021:

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](#), remote instruction be made available for 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.

In alignment with the Revised Public Health Guidance for Schools Part-5 from ISBE, <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Updated-Public-Health-School-Guidance.pdf>, all Eisenhower Cooperative programs will be resuming full in-person instruction for students in Eisenhower Cooperative Programs. We know that the best place for your child to learn is in the classroom and will continue to implement layered mitigation strategies to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff members.

As we navigate through this pandemic, it is important to note that the mitigation strategies may be adjusted and changed throughout the year based on outbreaks, increasing trends in the school/community, local vaccination levels, and/or updates from CDC, local health departments, and ISBE. We will continue to monitor the local metrics, state/federal guidance and conditions to determine what adjustments need to be made to the plan.

Key elements of the 2021-2022 Return to Learning Plan are:

- Full Return to in-person learning and a regular school day
- If a **student** is ***medically ineligible/unable to attend school***, parents/guardians can ***work with their medical doctor to apply for homebound instruction***. The Request for Home Instruction Services form can be accessed through this link [Request for Home Instruction Services Form](#). Completed request forms must be submitted to the program supervisor for consideration.
- We continue to encourage all eligible individuals (ages 12 and up) to be vaccinated against COVID-19. We encourage families to consult with their pediatrician to get students vaccinated.
- Staff and students who are vaccinated will need to ***submit proof of vaccination status*** to effectively and efficiently address the contact tracing process and quarantine monitoring.
- Students and staff should self-monitor for signs of illness each day. Anyone who is not feeling well should stay home. *Daily self-certification form does NOT need to be completed.*
- We will follow local health department guidelines and enforce quarantine requirements to prevent the spread of the virus among students and staff. *Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine in most cases, as long as they are asymptomatic.*
- If a student is quarantined, their teacher will provide them with lessons and instructional materials via Google Classroom, work packets, or other activities during the required quarantine period.
- **Physical distancing** of at least 3 feet will occur between students within classrooms, to the greatest extent possible. 6 feet may occur whenever possible.
- We will conduct **contract tracing for close contacts at 3 feet**. Individuals who are not vaccinated and not masked will need to quarantine if they are identified as a close contact to a COVID positive individual.
- All staff and students will be **required to wear masks** when indoors and on the bus, **regardless of vaccination status**. Masks do not be worn outside.
- Students and staff will be expected to adhere to handwashing and appropriate social distancing.
- Protocols for cleaning, disinfecting, handwashing, and respiratory etiquette will be followed.

Eisenhower Cooperative had developed this return to school safety plan based on guidance to open schools for in-person instruction with enhanced safety precautions set forth by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) in consultation with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). This plan will be amended to comply with any updated safety requirements for in-person instruction.

Plan Components and Health/Safety Protocols will address the following areas:

1. Face Masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
2. Wellness Checks and Monitoring
3. Testing and Screening
4. Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols
5. Handwashing
6. Physical Distancing and Space Utilization
7. Classroom Cohorts
8. Contact Tracing and Quarantines
9. Related Service and Itinerant Services
10. Travel Guidelines and Restrictions
11. Visitor Guidelines
12. Transportation

The requirements identified in this plan apply, until further notice, to all individuals who are present on cooperative/school grounds, including students, employees, parents/guardians, and other visitors. Accommodations may be considered, if an individual has a disability and/or is medically contraindicated. All requests for accommodations should be brought to the attention of the program supervisor and/or executive director for consideration.

Employees, students, and visitors who fail or refuse to comply with the health/safety plan requirements, may be excluded from cooperative/school grounds and school-related activities until compliance is achieved. In addition, employees and students may be subject to discipline for non-compliance.

Plan Components and Health/Safety Protocols

1. Face Masks and PPE

- *All staff, students and visitors to the school will be required to wear face masks at all times (regardless of vaccination status) when in school buildings and on the bus*
 - Face masks must be layers, fully cover the nose and mouth, secured under the chin, and must fit snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps
 - Face masks must be worn at all times on cooperative transportation.
 - Families are responsible for cleaning their child's face mask each day.
 - Face masks can be removed when eating, drinking, or when outside as long as social distancing can be maintained. Face masks must be put back on as soon as the identified activity is completed or upon reentering the building.
 - Emergency PPE supplies will be available in the event that a student or staff does not have a face mask or the mask becomes soiled.
 - If a student who is unable to wear a face mask/face shield refuses to comply:
 - Discipline may be imposed; and/or
 - The student may be excluded from school and school-related activities until compliance is achieved; and/or
 - Non-compliance will be addressed by the administration on a case-by-case basis, considering the student's individual circumstances
 - Parents are encouraged to practice with their children to increase their tolerance to the face mask. In addition, cooperative staff will also work with students to build up their tolerance.
 - *Exemptions*
 - *Individuals who are under the age of 2.*
 - *Individuals who are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face mask without assistance.*

- *Students and staff who provide a health care provider’s note as documentation that they have a medical contraindication (a condition that makes masking absolutely inadvisable) to wearing a face mask.*
 - *Teachers needing to show facial expressions where it is important for students to see how a teacher pronounces words (e.g., English Learners, early childhood, world language, etc.). However, teachers will be required to resume wearing face masks as soon as possible. Preferred alternatives to teachers wearing face shields include clear face masks or video instruction. There must be strict adherence to physical distancing when a face shield is utilized in lieu of a face mask.*
- *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Protocols*
 - [PPE and Cleaning Protocols](#)

2. Wellness Checks and Health Monitoring

- *Staff and students should self-monitor for symptoms before arrival at school*
- *Student temperature check will continue, prior to entrance into the building*
- *Staff and students are required to stay home if they are not feeling well.*
 - Individuals who have or self-report a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius or currently have known symptoms of COVID-19 may not enter school buildings
 - Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, vomiting, or diarrhea
 - Any student displaying any of these symptoms while in school will be quarantined and monitored in an isolation room until parent/guardians pick them up from school
 - Students should be picked up within one hour of notification from school
 - Attendance personnel will request specific symptom reporting when parents report absences.
 - Any known confirmed COVID-19 diagnoses and COVID-19 exposure must be reported if it is the reason for the student’s absence.

3. Testing and Screening (more information to follow)

- *Eisenhower Cooperative will participate in an on-site COVID-19 testing program this school year*
 - When testing “kits” are received and our procedures are in place, we will communicate the plan with all of our parents and staff, so we can receive their consent.

4. Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- *Recommendations from CDC, IDPH and ISBE for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting buses, equipment, classrooms and buildings will be followed.*
 - Cleaning products that are known to combat COVID-19 and are approved by the EPA for safe use in school will be utilized
- *Cordless electrostatic sprayers for quick and effective infection control will be utilized as recommended.*
 - Sprayers will be used when students are not present on buses or within school buildings.
 - Sprayers reduce the amount of time required to disinfect an area.
 - Sprayers will not replace other effective cleaning practices such as wiping down high touch surfaces.
- *Classrooms, restrooms and frequently touched surfaces will be sanitized throughout the day.*
 - Frequently touched classroom surfaces and restrooms will be cleaned and sanitized during the school day.
- *All schools and the Cooperative Office will be disinfected nightly.*
- *Cleaning Protocols*
 - [PPE and Cleaning Protocols](#)

5. Handwashing

- *Frequent and proper handwashing will be encouraged throughout the school day.*
 - Handwashing will be performed upon arrival to and departure from school, after blowing one’s nose, coughing, or sneezing; following restroom use; before and after eating; upon return from recess.
 - Classrooms with sinks will be stocked with antibacterial soap.
 - Hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol will be available for use under the supervision of staff.

6. Physical Distancing and Space Utilization

- *Physical distancing of at least 3 feet between students within classrooms will be maintained, to the greatest extent possible*
 - A distance of at least 3 feet is recommended between unvaccinated students, but not required.
 - A distance of at least 6 feet is recommended between unvaccinated adults or between unvaccinated adults and students, but not required
 - When unvaccinated persons cannot maintain recommended physical distancing, strict adherence to masking is especially important.
 - Physical distancing of 3 feet is recommended for students while eating or drinking. Given the risk of transmission among unvaccinated persons while unmasked, a distance of at least 6 feet is recommended for all unvaccinated individuals while eating and drinking, but is not required
 - Staggered schedules for arrivals/dismissals, passing periods, mealtimes, bathroom breaks, and other student/staff movements may be considered to ensure the safety of unvaccinated students and staff
- *Plexiglas barriers will be utilized when and where their use is appropriate.*
 - Main offices will be equipped with Plexiglas barriers to shield staff from visitors that are required to enter buildings.
 - Plexiglas barriers may be used in classrooms during individual or small group instruction or for therapies when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- *Sharing of items among students will be minimized, if possible.*
 - Student belongings will be kept separately as much as possible.
 - When necessary, additional classroom supplies will be purchased to minimize sharing of high-touch materials (i.e., art supplies, manipulatives) to a single student or groups of students at a time. If shared, materials will be disinfected between uses.
 - Each student in K-8 will have their own technology device to eliminate sharing.
 - Students are discouraged from bringing personal items to school.
- *Fresh air ventilation will be increased in classrooms.*
 - Classroom windows will remain open to increase ventilation when weather permits.

- Outside air ventilation will be increased throughout building HVAC system
- *Lunch may be served in classrooms, lunchrooms (commons), or other designated eating areas.*
 - Students may be assigned to an area to eat other than the lunchroom. Most students will eat in their classrooms.
 - All areas/surfaces used for eating will be sanitized before and after meals.
- *Widespread safety signage will be posted.*
 - Signage will be posted throughout buildings to remind students and staff of mandatory safety procedures.
- *Traditional water fountains will not be available for use*
 - Students and staff are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school.

7. Classroom Cohorts

- *Classroom sign in sheets will be utilized by each classroom and will be completed any time a person who is not typically scheduled to be in the room enters the classroom*

8. Contact Tracing & Quarantines

- *Eisenhower Cooperative will continue to work with the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) to report positive cases for contact tracing and quarantine purposes, as recommended for exposed or ill individuals.*
 - Student and staff medical confidentiality will be maintained at all times.
- *Eisenhower Cooperative and CCDPH will follow the quarantine guidelines set forth by IDPH.*
 - [IDPH COVID-19 Exclusion Decision Tree](#)
- *Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine in most cases, as long as they are asymptomatic.*
- *Length of quarantine will be determined by the local department of public health*

9. Related Service and Itinerant Staff

- *Related Services and APE: Related Services will be delivered in person.*
- *The related service provider will be included on daily contact logs for each classroom they visit.*

- *Equipment, material, and space used during therapy sessions will be cleaned and disinfected between sessions.*

10. Travel Guidelines and Restrictions

- *Screening and additional requirements to quarantine following travel may occur based on guidance from local, state, and federal recommendations*
 - *Suburban Cook County schools follow the Chicago Travel Advisory Guidelines*
 - <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/covid-19/home/emergency-travel-order.html>
- *Parents, families, and staff returning from travel are expected to notify their program supervisor*

11. Visitor Guidelines

- *ALL Visitors must follow all safety protocols (wearing face mask, social distancing, etc.)*
- *Visitors must complete a health screening immediately upon entering the school building.*
- *Visitors showing symptoms of COVID-19 will not be allowed to enter or remain in any Eisenhower Cooperative program location.*
- *Mandatory IEP and 504 meetings will continue to be held remotely to the greatest extent possible.*
 - *In-person meetings will occur as required by state and/or federal law.*
- *In-person meetings at school and District Offices will be by appointment only.*
 - *Only meetings required to be held in person will be scheduled. All other meetings will occur via Zoom or by telephone.*

12. Transportation

- *There are currently no capacity limits on transportation*
- *All students will be assigned a seat*
- *Bus drivers and students will be required to wear a mask while occupying the bus.*
 - *Any other employee assigned to assist on a bus route will also be required to wear a face mask.*

- Extra masks will be available on school buses for students without a face mask.
- *Windows will be open as weather permits.*
 - To increase fresh air flow during operation, bus windows will be open as weather permits.
- *Buses will be sanitized between bus routes to the greatest extent possible.*
 - High touch areas will be sanitized between each route.
 - Buses will be fully disinfected daily.
 - Parents are encouraged to have students sanitize hands prior to boarding school bus
- *If your student typically rides the school bus to/from school and you will be transporting your student to school, please notify the program supervisor asap that you do not intend to have your student ride the bus.*

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources

ISBE

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources

<https://www.isbe.net/coronavirus>

Revised Public Health Guidance for Schools:

Part 5- Supporting the Full Return to In-Person Learning for All Students August 2021

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Updated-Public-Health-School-Guidance.pdf>

State of Illinois and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in P-12 Schools (FAQ 8.9.21)

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/ISBE-IDPH-School-FAQs-20210809.pdf>

Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources

<https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19>

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Considerations for Schools:

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

Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources

<https://cookcountypublichealth.org/communicable-diseases/covid-19/>

Covid-19 Surveillance Data

<https://ccdphcd.shinyapps.io/covid19/>