

Safe Return to In Person Instruction and Continuity of Services 2021-22

August 2, 2021

General

This document builds upon and supersedes the [Reopening Schools 2020-21 document approved by the Board of Education on July 27, 2020](#).

This document also fulfills one of the requirements to apply for funds provided by the *American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act*.

“Section 2001(i) of the ARP Act requires an LEA [Local Education Authority] that receives ARP ESSER [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency and Relief] funds to develop and make publicly available on the LEA’s website, within 30 days after receiving its allocation, a plan for the safe return to in person instruction and continuity of services. Prior to making the plan publicly available, the LEA must seek public comment on the plan and take such comments into consideration when developing the plan.”

This document was developed to align with the Illinois Department of Public (IDPH) [guidance](#) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) [guidance](#) provided to school districts July 9, 2021, in response to the July 9, 2021 guidance issued by the CDC. Additional guidance from IDPH, ISBE, and the Lake County Health Department (LCHD) is expected, and as health and safety guidance evolves, this document will also evolve. This document also reflects IDPH FAQs that were issued July 26 and [a news release IDPH provided July 27](#) aligning with [July 27 CDC recommendations on wearing masks in schools](#). As well as the joint amendment to the FAQs [provided by IDPH/ISBE on August 2](#).

District 113 will continue to operate schools by following guidance from IDPH, ISBE, and LCHD. District 113 will also continue to follow [IHSA guidance](#) for sports.

In-person Learning, Remote Learning

All classes will be in-person for all students in 2021-22.

Per [ISBE’s message on Friday, July 9](#), temporary remote instruction will be made available for students who are *both* (a) not eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine and (b) under quarantine as ordered by a local public health department.

- When students are put into quarantine or isolation by the Lake County Health Department, we will provide instruction and support similar to prior practices used when students experienced an extended absence, such as mononucleosis.

- Teachers will not plan to or be expected to teach simultaneously this year.
- Students should bring their Chromebook to school each day in the event that a teacher may be teaching remotely due to a quarantine order. By continuing instruction with the classroom teacher, students will experience greater continuity of instruction.

Schedules and Calendars

The DHS schedule mirrors the pre-pandemic schedule; the HPHS schedule is similar to that of pre-pandemic school with the addition of a short “homeroom” period on most days. Please see each school’s website for details: [DHS schedule](#) and [HPHS schedule](#).

Student Vaccination Status Data Collection

Starting on August 3, parents/guardians will be requested to provide vaccination status in Infinite Campus. Only school nurses have access to student health records in our student information system (Infinite Campus), and they will use this information when situations arise that require knowing who is vaccinated.

District 113 will monitor and publicize vaccination rates for students and staff.

Student vaccination information, once provided, has the privacy protection that all student records have and will only be accessed by school nurses. Staff vaccination information will have the privacy protection given to personal medical information.

Students of parents or guardians who do not respond will be considered unvaccinated for any situation for which vaccination status makes a difference.

Staff Vaccination Status Data Collection

District 113 will request employees to provide proof of vaccination as well when situations arise that require knowing who is vaccinated. Staff can also expect that their personal COVID-19 vaccination information will remain confidential just as all medical information is confidential. More information will be provided to staff in a separate staff communication.

In its July 26 FAQs, IDPH indicated that schools use their “local community” for determining vaccination coverage. Until we have vaccination rates by ZIP code, D113 will use vaccination rates of students and staff who live in District 113 as a proxy for vaccination rates in our three ZIP codes.

Mask Wearing

On July 27, IDPH “fully aligned” with the July 27 CDC masking recommendations for schools, that all persons in schools regardless of vaccination status wear masks. District 113 follows the

guidance of IDPH and accordingly, all persons in schools regardless of vaccination status will be required to wear masks to start the school year.

Social Distancing

In its July 9 message, ISBE reiterated the recommendation to maintain three feet of social distance “but not if this would be a barrier to in-person learning.”

Teachers should encourage three feet of distance but also should resume activities such as group work, laboratories, and other configurations if that will enhance the learning experience for students.

Similarly, students will be expected to follow social distancing rules when possible, e.g., in hallways, lunch lines, restrooms, etc.

Lunch

Students will follow a regular lunch schedule and we will return to a closed campus policy. Students will be able to eat lunch in supervised areas outdoors, and accommodations will be made for students who need them.

Closed Campus

There will be no open campus during 2021-22. As in 2019-20, students will not be permitted to leave campus during the school day without permission from their parents or guardians.

Students without a scheduled class will be assigned a study hall during 2021-22. Permission forms will be developed so that parents and guardians can give their students permission to opt out of attending study hall at the beginning or end of the school day.

Buses, Driver’s Education Vehicles

The CDC has jurisdiction over public transportation and issued [an order on January 29, 2021](#) that masks be worn on all public transportation. School buses and driver’s education vehicles are considered public transportation and accordingly, masks are required on school buses and in driver’s education vehicles.

Mitigation Strategies

Mask wearing

See “Mask Wearing” above.

Screening testing

SHIELD testing will be made available to all students and staff on a voluntary basis. SHIELD testing will be required for unvaccinated students as a condition to participate in extracurricular activities. SHIELD testing will be conducted in the schools and will be at no charge to families. Data from IDPH and LCHD indicate that the greatest level of transmission in the 2020-21 school year occurred in athletics, and that is consistent with D113 data for our schools.

Ventilation

The HVAC systems will continue to maximize the amount of fresh air introduced into the buildings. This will be accomplished by utilizing the fresh air intakes on the existing mechanical units. Also, all HVAC systems will run 24/7 to ensure the air is refreshed as much as possible. Ultraviolet and HEPA air filtration systems will continue to be used in high risk areas such as the health office.

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette will continue to be encouraged throughout District 113 schools and buildings. All bathrooms are equipped with touchless faucets and paper towel dispensers. All classrooms will be provided with hand sanitizer, and hand sanitizer will be available in many common areas.

Staying home when sick and getting tested

Students and staff should stay home when they are not feeling well. As the guidance indicates, those who are exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should get tested and consult with a medical professional.

Contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation

LCHD will continue to contact trace all positive cases within the District 113 community. The Health Office in each building will support LCHD's contact tracing effort by providing contact information as required.

LCHD has the legal authority to determine whom to place into quarantine and isolation and to determine the duration of quarantine and isolation.

Cleaning and disinfection

All building spaces will be cleaned and disinfected each night by the building's custodial staff. The cleaning products being used are listed on the [EPA's website](#) and have been proven to be effective in disinfecting surfaces that may have been contaminated by COVID-19.

Notification

LCHD has indicated that school districts no longer need to notify the entire school community of each confirmed case. As such, District 113 will discontinue the practice of emailing confirmed case notices. District 113 will continue, however, to notify staff, students and their parents/guardians of a confirmed case only when appropriate.

Quarantine and Isolation Procedures for Confirmed Cases

As stated above, LCHD has the legal authority to determine whom to place into quarantine and isolation and to determine the duration of quarantine and isolation.

Per the exception cited for quarantine by CDC as adopted by IDPH, when universal masking is required, any positive case of COVID-19 in a typical instructional setting will result in no contact tracing or quarantining of students in that classroom. Each positive case is unique, and the LCHD determines quarantine requirements by considering the circumstances of each case. Refer to the latest IDPH guidance regarding testing and quarantine.

Schoology

The expectations for Schoology use initiated in 2020-21 will continue with limited modifications.

Extracurricular Activities and Athletics

As long as we are in Level B, to participate in extracurricular activities or athletics, students must either be vaccinated against COVID-19 or if unvaccinated, their parent/guardian must give consent for them to be tested once per week using the SHIELD test. SHIELD testing will be conducted in the schools and will be at no charge to families. As said above, data from IDPH and LCHD indicate that the greatest level of transmission in the 2020-21 school year occurred in athletics, and that is consistent with data from D113 schools.

Metrics, Thresholds

The Illinois Department of Public Health indicated on July 9 that schools “should monitor community transmission of COVID-19...to guide decisions about the layered prevention strategies being implemented.” In its [weekly message issued July 13](#), ISBE indicated that “local conditions” were the basis for making decisions to remove “prevention strategies.” School districts had to determine what their “community” is, what data to monitor, and how to apply the thresholds in making operational decisions.

Until additional guidance is received requiring us to use a larger catchment area, we are defining “local conditions” as the ZIP codes of our schools. Before a vaccine against COVID-19 was widely available, we used a larger catchment area. Now that a vaccine is widely available and until guidance requires us to change, we will monitor the seven-day new case count per 100,000 persons in our ZIP codes (60015, 60035 and 60040). Data reported by LCHD on their [dashboard](#) show the seven-day rolling average, not the total new case count per 100,000 persons in the past seven days. In order to align our reporting by ZIP code with CDC reporting for the county, we will use data provided by [Northwestern University](#) to report the new case count per 100,000 in our three ZIP codes.

We will track and report new cases of COVID-19 in our schools and in our ZIP codes at each Board meeting.

In its July 26 FAQs, IDPH identified vaccination coverage levels. Schools can review data from the CDC or IDPH to find recent information on the number and proportion of residents in their county who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. CDC data reporting shows county-level vaccine coverage data according to the following tiers: 0-29.9%, 30-39.9%, 40-49.9%, 50-69.9%, and 70%+.

Teachers and Quarantine

Not all children of our teachers are eligible for a vaccination against COVID-19, either because of a medical condition or because their children are younger than 12. Not all teachers are eligible for a vaccination due to medical reasons or because they have medical conditions that prevent the vaccine from protecting them. In the event teachers have to stay home due to a quarantine ordered by a local health department, every effort will be made to ensure the continuity of instruction in those classrooms for the length of time the quarantine order is in effect.

