

2021-2022
Villa Grove CUSD #302

Return to School
COVID Mitigation Plan

IDPH/ISBE/CDC guidelines are ever-changing so modifications to this plan may be on-going. The plan will be reviewed by district administration as needed following the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

8/04/21

School Learning Plan

Villa Grove CUSD #302 will utilize the CDC and IDPH school guidelines related to COVID prevention and mitigation. All students are expected to attend in-school daily at all grade levels. Remote learning is not an option this school year. If a student has a medical condition that prevents him/her from attending in-person, contact the building principal.

School Learning Summary

- Five days per week
- Regular dismissal daily
- Universal masking
- Buses have no capacity limits but all riders must wear masks
- Breakfast and lunch served daily at school (no cost for 2021-22)

School Learning Plan Details

Changes in Plan

Changes in our school plan may be made at any time based on local COVID data in Villa Grove, Douglas County or specific to a school building or classroom. We need to be prepared for modifications in case an outbreak of COVID occurs or if the CDC/IDPH guidance changes. We will be in contact with our local health department prior to making decisions that would drastically alter our current plan.

Vaccination

Vaccines are currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID pandemic. While this is a personal choice and a family decision, getting the vaccination can also help schools safely return to and continue in-person learning, as well as, activities and sports. The CDC guidance differs for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals in schools. If you are not fully vaccinated Walgreens and our local health department both provide vaccinations. You may also visit www.vaccines.gov for more information.

Masking

Masks are **REQUIRED** to be worn indoors by all individuals at all grade levels. Masks do not need to be worn during school events, PE, or recess when held outdoors. Masks are **REQUIRED** to be worn by all bus riders. Individuals are responsible for providing their own masks while at school. We will have a limited number of disposable masks available in school offices and on buses. Mask breaks for classrooms will be taken as needed.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing will be maintained to the extent possible within school and classroom structures so that it does not exclude students from full day in-person learning. Physical distancing of at least 3 feet between students within classrooms is recommended when possible. This also includes other areas of the school (hallways, lunchrooms, labs) and is especially important for unvaccinated individuals while at school. Hallways will be divided to allow for one-way traffic on each side during passing periods. Aside from the cafeteria, additional spaces for mealtime seating will be utilized when available and feasible. Keep gatherings to a minimum throughout the school day.

COVID Testing/Screening

COVID testing may be used for individuals exhibiting COVID-like symptoms at school. COVID testing is not necessary for vaccinated individuals in most cases. COVID screening may be considered in the future.

Staying Home When Sick

Staying home when sick or exhibiting COVID-like symptoms is important for everyone. The expectation is that students not attend school if they have a fever of over 100.4 and/or have new COVID-like symptoms from an unknown cause. Based on current CDC guidance, individuals with symptoms that have been potentially exposed to a COVID positive individual or have been in an area with high COVID cases are not allowed at school and should self-quarantine at home. Unvaccinated individuals may return to school upon the presentation of a doctor's note with an alternative diagnosis, a negative COVID test or after ten (10) calendar days as long as no symptoms are present. Vaccinated individuals (with verified status) may return to school once symptoms have subsided for 24 hours or they have a negative COVID test. Student COVID-related absences are excused due to illness. Employees must use sick leave or other personal time.

Close Contacts and Quarantines

If a student or employee tests positive for COVID, all unvaccinated individuals that were in close contact (unmasked within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes or masked within 3 feet for more than 15 minutes) will need to self-quarantine to monitor symptoms. Unvaccinated close contacts may return to school after 14 days OR after 10 days with no symptoms and required masking, OR after 7 days with a negative COVID test and required masking.

Vaccinated individuals (with verified vaccination status) who are determined to be close contacts should wear a mask for 14 days, should get a COVID test 3-5 days after contact, and should monitor themselves for symptoms but are not subject to quarantine. Preliminary contact-tracing will be done at school and shared with the local health department - the health department has the final determination on quarantines.

Handwashing

Handwashing and/or hand sanitizing are basic hygiene practices that should always be practiced. Handwashing and sanitizing will occur multiple times per day. Water, soap, hand-dryers, hand-towels, and hand-sanitizer are available in all buildings.

Ventilation

Ventilation systems have been checked and filters changed over the summer. Filters will be monitored, cleaned, and changed as needed. All buildings are air conditioned which allows for constant air exchange over the course of the day and night. Bus windows should be open when possible to assist with ventilation.

Food Service and Water Fountains

Food service will be provided in cafeterias and other areas as needed – physical distancing will be practiced where possible. All lunch and breakfast will be FREE of CHARGE for all students for 2021-2022. Bringing breakfast/lunch from home is always an option for students. It is recommended that students bring water bottles to have during the school day. Water fountains can be used to fill water bottles. Drinking directly from water fountains will not be allowed.

Bus Routes/Student Drop-Off/Pick-Up at School

Bus routes will run daily. Students should be symptom free prior to entering a school bus. All individuals on the bus are REQUIRED to wear a face covering. Students not able or willing to wear a mask cannot ride regular route buses. Seats will be assigned.

The building is open at 7:45 am for students eating breakfast. To reduce gathering, all other students will be allowed to enter the buildings at 8:00 am. Students should leave the school building immediately upon dismissal and should not congregate in common areas, playgrounds, or school buildings after school.

Cleaning and Disinfection

School custodial staff and transportation staff will continue to clean and disinfect surfaces daily. To further reduce the risk of spreading infection, these staff will also use disinfectants on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency COVID-19 “List N” to disinfect spaces occupied by someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 24 hours.

Communication with Families

Communication updates will be provided as needed regarding modification of the return to school plan. If a COVID positive case occurs, an email will be sent to the parents. Individuals will not be named, but the school and grade level will be shared in order to provide some peace of mind for all involved. Preliminary contact tracing will be done at school and shared with the local health department – the health department has the final determination on quarantines. Parents of close contacts will be contacted by building administration or the school nurse.

Other Areas and Considerations

Athletic guidelines for IDPH/IHSA/IESA will be followed for practices, travel, and contests. Most outdoor activities will go on as normal. Indoor activities are subject to CDC guidance on recommended masking. Indoor instrumental music lessons and groups and the playing of instruments will continue to use bell covers. Chorus may hold class and is subject to CDC guidance on recommended masking. Back to School Events/Open Houses may go on as scheduled subject to CDC masking guidelines (masks required for all individuals).

Support for Our Schools

We appreciate the support of our schools at all times but especially since COVID created impact in March of 2020. We have worked with our faculty, staff, administration, parents, students and our community to continue to have our schools open while keeping the safety of all parties as a top priority. Our teachers have worked to maintain the high level of instruction that has been the expectation in our district. Our students and parents have proven to be flexible in all ways. While COVID is not gone and the Delta variant is looming in some areas, we look forward to the 2021-2022 school year with the fervent hope to return to some semblance of normalcy. Go Blue Devils!

Plan Review

7/29/21 – the plan reflects the most recent CDC guidance recommending masking for vaccinated individuals in high COVID areas, guidance on family exclusions when a member has COVID symptoms, to clarify return to school options for unvaccinated close contacts, to clarify instruction for quarantined students, to include optional other areas to be used during lunch.

8/04/21 – the plan reflects the most recent mandate from Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health for all individuals in P-12 schools to mask while indoors.

The plan will be reviewed regularly and future revisions will be issued as needed and will address most recently updated safety recommendation by the CDC and made publicly available on the district's website.