

2020-2021 Regional Safe School Program & Academy Back-to-School Plan



DRAFT UPDATED 08.07.2020

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All items in this document will temporarily supersede any similar items in the Student Handbook while the COVID-19 Pandemic is active. If you have questions about school operations that are not clearly defined in this document, please refer to the “2020-2021 Student/Parent Handbook” located on the roe53.net website. This plan is subject to change as updates are made to the Restore Illinois Plan according to the Governor and guidelines that continue to be released from ISBE/IDPH.

Health and Safety Protocols

Health & Safety Guidelines

Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has released several documents providing guidelines for Illinois schools to help plan remote learning and summer programs. On June 23, 2020, the ISBE, in conjunction with IDPH, released a third document entitled "[Starting the 2020-2021 School Year](#)". According to ISBE and IDPH, all public and nonpublic schools in Illinois serving pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students are required to follow these guidelines.

During Phase 4 of Governor Pritzker's Restore Illinois plan, IDPH guidelines will:

- Require the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings;
- Prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one indoor space;
- Require social distancing be observed, as much as possible;
- Require that schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require that individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering the school building; and
- Require an increase in schoolwide cleaning and sanitizing.

In addition to the ISBE/IDPH Guidance, ROE 53 Safe School and Academy is relying heavily on guidance issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics, which strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the upcoming school year should start with the goal of having students physically present in school.

General Safety Protocols

Face Covering Requirements

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, evidence continues to mount on the importance of universal face coverings in interrupting the spread of COVID-19. ISBE/IDPH guidance states that all individuals in school buildings and on school buses must wear face coverings at all times unless they are younger than 2 years of age; have trouble breathing; or are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance. Face coverings must be worn at all times in school buildings even when social distancing is maintained. Face coverings do not need to be worn outside if social distance is maintained. If a student has a medical condition that prevents them from being able to wear a face mask, a physician's note is required for them to be in compliance with ISBE regulations. Parents are encouraged to have their child use a face shield if a medical exemption from a face mask is necessary. ROE 53 Safe School and Academy recognizes how difficult it will be for our youngest students to wear a mask. We will address students not wearing masks on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Parent/Student Handbook.

In a few isolated teaching instances staff may be permitted to use a face shield in lieu of face masks when it is necessary for students to see the instructor's mouth form words or facilitate language acquisition. It is acknowledged that face shields do not provide adequate protection and should be limited in use and the 6-foot social distancing guidelines should be strictly followed.

In order to be most effective, face coverings should fully cover the mouth and nose and fit snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps. Parents are encouraged to reinforce this at home. Reusable face coverings should be machine or hand washed and allowed to dry each evening. ROE 53 Safe School and Academy has a limited number of disposable face coverings if a staff member, student, or visitor does not have one for use. For additional information, visit CDC: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)-Cloth Face Covers. Additionally, pay special attention to putting on and removing face coverings for purposes such as eating. After use, the front of the face covering is considered contaminated and should not be touched during removal or replacement. Hand hygiene should be performed immediately after removing and after replacing the face covering.

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/hai/pdfs/ppe/PPE-Sequence.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-covering.pdf>

Safety Policies

Daily compliance with the following items is required by all individuals.

- Allow for symptom screening upon arrival (unless a self-certification is provided).
- Provide accurate identification upon request.
- Wear a face mask or approved facial covering at all times while inside the building.
- Maintain social distancing and avoid physical contact to limit the spread of germs.
- Use social distancing markers placed on the floor to aid in distancing protocol.
- Wash or sanitize hands regularly throughout the day, specifically at the following times:
 - Before leaving for school
 - Arrival to school
 - Entering a classroom, office, gym/cafeteria, etc.
 - Exiting a classroom, office, gym/cafeteria, etc.
 - Using the restroom
 - Before and after lunch
 - After accidental physical contact with another individual
 - After coughing, sneezing, using a tissue, or touching the facial area (includes outside of face mask)

Daily Symptom Screenings for Students

In an effort to maintain some normalcy for our students, we ask that parents and guardians utilize the ISBE/IDPH self-certification guidelines for symptom checks to prevent the need for a full symptom screening to be done for each child prior to entering the building. All students entering the building will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms as well as have their temperature taken unless a daily, self-certification form is completed. If a student presents a self-certification form, then only the student's temperature will be taken.

Because of the difficulty in doing a symptom screening prior to getting on the bus, we ask that parent do a symptom screening at home as well if their child is riding the bus.

Self-Certification of Symptoms

Self-Certification will only be accepted from **individuals over the age of 18**. Even with self-certification, a temperature check will be conducted upon arrival.

By completing a self-certification form, you are certifying that your child is free of the following symptoms:

- Temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle and body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea
- Vomiting or diarrhea

General Classroom Guidelines

Students and staff will be provided with resources that include instructional videos, information from the CDC and local health organization, posters, digital and print materials, etc. related to COVID-19 related symptoms, social distancing, face masks, and hand hygiene. The items below are examples of how these guidelines may differ amongst the varying age groups.

Regional Safe School and Academy

Teachers will establish procedures and routines to teach students proper virus protection habits.

- Utilize information or resources provided by Regional Office of Education.
- Assign seats or spaces, textbooks, devices, etc. to individual students to avoid the incidence of sharing.
- Discuss and provide adequate practice with social distancing, handwashing, hygiene, face mask wearing and removal, etc.
- Provide designated spots to aid students in maintaining social distance when lining up.
- Establish a “flow of traffic” in your classroom or designated space to avoid clear physical contact.
- Provide verbal and nonverbal cues to students for social distancing, physical contact, and face mask usage.
- Report any refusal of face mask usage, social distancing, and avoidance of physical contact to the administration.
- Establish a routine for sanitizing student areas and contact surfaces between student use.
- Offer individualized activities that could also promote socialization and collaboration when appropriate.

Daily Sanitation Practices

Most cleaning and sanitation will be conducted by the building custodial staff; however, teachers will have classroom disinfection supplies in order to routinely disinfect areas touched often such as door handles, pencil sharpeners, and any shared supplies, etc. All individuals in the building are encouraged to ensure their supplies and “space” are visibly clean. DISTRICT 69 will provide proper sanitizing supplies for this purpose. While keeping our students and staff safe is critical, we do not want cleaning/sanitation efforts to interfere with anyone’s physical, mental, or educational well-being. All the protocols listed below have been developed with this in mind. Aside from regular cleaning procedures, Regional Safe School Program and Academy staff will follow the following protocols:

- All bathroom facilities, water fountains, doorknobs and other frequently touched surfaces will be sanitized approximately every 2 hours unless needed more often.
- Interior doors will remain open when possible to avoid excessive touching of doorknobs throughout the day.
- Cafeteria service areas will be wiped down with a sanitizing agent before and after each use. All other surfaces within the cafeteria area will be sanitized as deemed necessary.

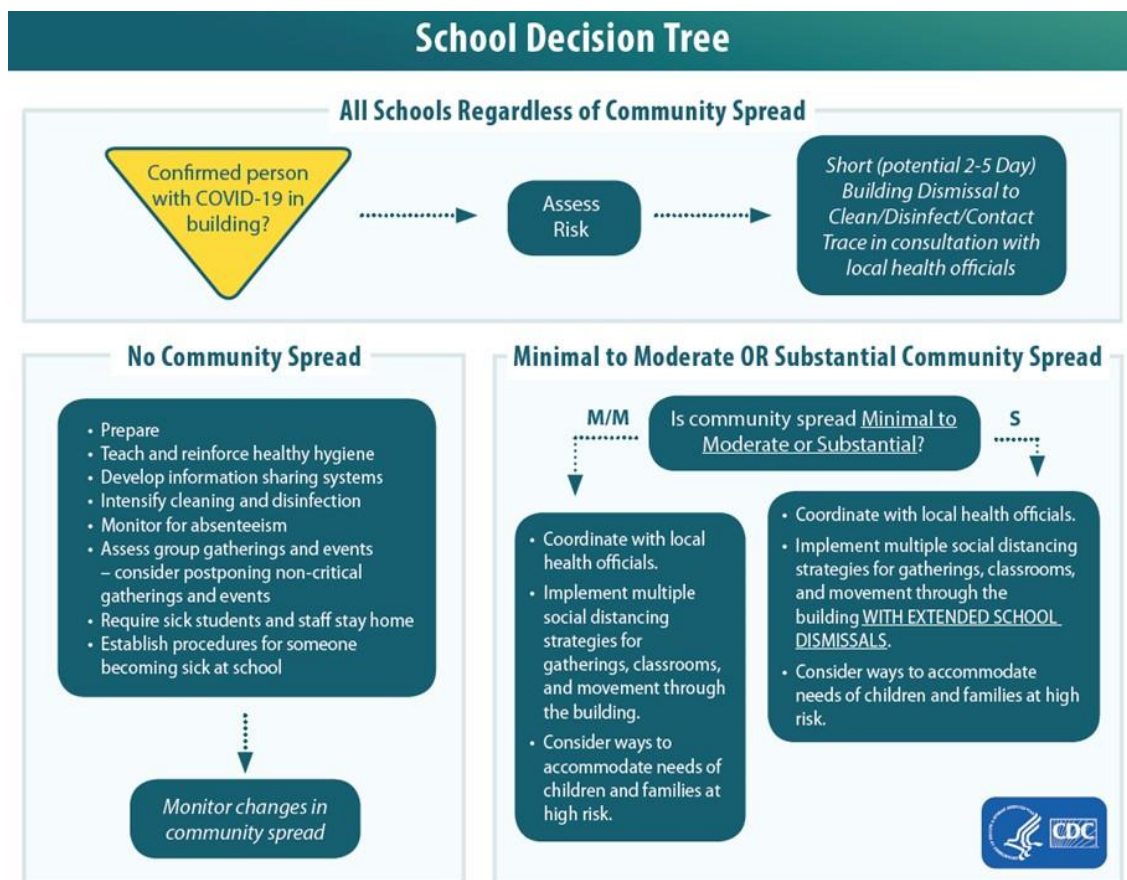
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- Exterior doors will be sanitized after morning arrival, outdoor activities, and dismissal.
- Any other surfaces or supplies will be sanitized upon request of administration, staff, students or visitors.

School Closure Plan

As the Regional Safe School Program and Academy prepares to return to in-person student instruction, we must also prepare for the unexpected need for a short-term or long-term closure due to an isolated case or larger outbreak of COVID-19 in the school community. The school community is defined as Regional Safe School Program and Academy employees, their families and referring district's students and their families. The CDC recommends the following procedures regardless of the level of community spread in the event an infected person has been in the school building. Regional Safe School Program and Academy plan to use these decision-making procedures in the unfortunate event that a school community member tests positive for COVID-19.

In a newly released document from the United States Department of Education (DOE) pertaining to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the DOE explained that the Health or Safety Emergency exception allows school districts "disclosure of personally identifiable information (PII) from student education records to individuals and entities that may not have access to that information". The information Regional Safe School Program and Academy releases will be minimal, only when deemed absolutely necessary for contact tracing of COVID-19 or other serious illnesses and limited to local health care officials.



For more information on this graphic, you can visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>.

Communication with Local Health Officials

If a student or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19, Regional Safe School Program and Academy will immediately contact the local health department by county. We will utilize Woodford County due to the physical location of the building. The local health department will assist the administration in determining the best course of action for our school community. Local health officials will also be used to confirm the positive test result that was reported.

Communication with School Community

After communication with the local health officials, the Regional Safe School Program and Academy administrative team will meet to determine the level of risk to our community based on the CDC guidelines shown above prior to any information being released to the school community. The information released to the school community members will be limited to the acknowledgement of a positive COVID-19 case existing and an overview of the district's decision on a school closure or restriction.

Information pertaining to individual student or classroom exposure will be announced to those affected in hopes that this information will not be used to identify the person or persons who have tested positive. We encourage families to respect the privacy and well-being of your fellow community members and keep information confidential.

School Dismissal

Following a confirmed positive COVID-19 case within the school community, the school, grade level or class may be dismissed for 2-5 days. During this short-term dismissal period, Regional Safe School Program and Academy, with the help of local health officials will investigate the unique circumstances of the COVID- 19 situation and how it may impact the school. With the help of the local health officials, we can determine appropriate next steps, which may include an extended dismissal period when necessary. School administrators are not expected to make decisions based on dismissal of school or events on their own. We will strongly consider all recommendations made by the Woodford, Tazewell, and Mason County Health Department and other state and local health officials for the scope (i.e., building, classroom, section, etc.) and duration of school dismissals will be made on a case-by-case basis using the most up-to-date information.

During any school dismissal,

- Staff, students, and their families are discouraged from gathering or socializing anywhere (including group childcare arrangements, friends and extended-family gatherings, eating at restaurants, or nonessential shopping),
- Our Remote Learning Plan will be implemented on all regular school days during school hours, and
- During Remote Learning a student's home district will provide meal opportunities.

Cleaning Protocol

In the event of a school dismissal, Regional Safe School Program and Academy custodial staff will follow these procedures (based on ISBE/IDPH/CDC recommendations) for cleaning and disinfection.

- Upon communication of exposure, the affected areas will be immediately closed off. The area should remain closed up to 24 hours before cleaning and sanitation efforts are made.
- If 24 hours is not feasible, custodial staff will delay vacuuming, or using other machines that might circulate hazardous particles, until the building has been fully vacated of nonessential individuals and the HVAC system to that room has been disabled to prevent the spread to other areas of the school.
- Custodial staff will clean and disinfect all areas of the school potentially used by the infected person (i.e., main office, classroom(s), bathrooms, etc.), focusing specifically on frequently touched surfaces
- If any surface appears dirty, staff must clean the area with detergent, or soap and water, prior to disinfection.

These areas will be opened for use by individuals who did not have close contact with the infected person once it has been appropriately disinfected. Cleaning products will be stored and used a safe distance away from children and staff. Any individual who had close contact with the infected person or is suspected of having COVID-19 infection should isolate at home and monitor for symptoms for 14 days. Close contact is defined by ISBE/IDPH as “the individual was

within 6 feet of the individual with symptoms for more than 15 minutes”. The areas are deemed “safe” without disinfection if the infected person has not visited the area for more than seven (7) days.

Option 1: In-Person Learning Plan

~~Regional Safe School Program and Academy will begin the 2020-2021 school year with the option for all students to attend school five days a week. This is aligned with the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation. However, Regional Safe School Program and Academy recognizes that there will be students whose families do not want them to attend school for various reasons. Parents who choose not to send their child to school may opt to homeschool or participate in Remote Learning utilizing Edgenuity. Students who participate in Remote Learning will be required to meet attendance and work completion expectations and are committing to doing so for the entire semester.~~

School Operations

Transportation

- Students must follow their home district’s transportation plan.

Arrival Procedures

- One bus will enter the school at a time
- Car riders will continue to enter at Door #15
- Temperature checks and symptom screenings will be given to all students and staff upon entering the building unless a daily self-certification form is provided in which only a temperature will be taken.
- Students who have a fever or are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will be placed in a supervised waiting area until the student can be picked up by a parent or guardian.

Hallways

- Arrows for Traffic Flow
- Monitor students in hallway to ensure social distancing compliance

Bathrooms

- Limit number of students in restroom to 2
- Post signs for handwashing, etc.

Drinking Fountains

- Fountains may be shut down for sanitation purposes
- Water bottles will be available upon request

Classrooms

- Limit amount of furniture in the classroom to provide adequate space for distancing
- Keep windows open when appropriate to allow air circulation and ventilation
- Doors should remain open as often as possible to avoid unnecessary touching
- Desks should be spaced 6 feet apart when possible
- Limit shared items as soon as possible
- Supplies that require sharing should be sanitized between use - sanitized/used bins to keep track of used supplies
- Staff and students should avoid physical contact - handshakes, high fives, fist bumps, hugs, etc.

Physical Education

- The Regional Safe School Program and Academy will have daily PE outside as much as possible
- Promote individual activities when possible
- There will be no sharing of equipment

Grading

In Part 3 of the ISBE/IDPH guidelines, the grading practice based on the principle of “do not harm” was revoked. Schools and districts are required to transition back to their traditional grading practices (Refer to “2020-2021 Student/Parent Handbook” located on the Regional Office of Education 53 website or contact a member of the Regional Safe School Program and Academy office staff for more details.) Administrators are now being encouraged to re-evaluate and modify traditional grading policies and practices, as needed, to plan for a return to a somewhat traditional school format.

ISBE strongly recommends that any return to traditional grading policies ensures that students have all the necessary tools, technology, and teacher support at school and at home to complete all assignments, take assessments and complete projects in a timely manner. This may mean ensuring that all students have devices and connectivity opportunities at their homes before resuming traditional grading practices.

Per the School Code, grading policies are the exclusive responsibilities of local districts (105 ILCS 5/10-20.9a). ISBE does not require any specific grading practice, policy, or philosophy, but we suggest that you may want to include any successful strategies or modifications implemented during remote learning as part of the planning and transition to in-person instruction and/or blended remote learning.

Attendance

Daily attendance and engagement of students will be expected whether students are participating in classes in-person or remotely. Regional Safe School Program and Academy staff will endeavor to make daily contact with all students and families, especially those who are not in attendance or not engaging in classes, whether in-person or remotely.

During Remote Learning, attendance will continue to be submitted to ISBE in the same manner as prior to the COVID-19 pandemic – via the Student Information System.

The primary purpose of attendance during this time is to account for the instructional learning days and to keep students engaged. Our students’ overall well-being is always our highest priority.

The preferred method of collecting attendance is always a one-to-one daily connection between the teacher and the student. However, we recognize that this method is not available or practical for all districts and student scenarios under the COVID-19 conditions. We encourage and suggest several ideas for how classroom teachers can collect and count a student as present when the one-to-one daily connection is not practical:

- Video conference “check-ins”
- Wellness checks coupled with a question on student engagement/participation in lessons
- Phone calls coupled with a question on student engagement/participation in lessons
- Email communications coupled with a question on student engagement/participation in lessons
- Assignment completion

For example:

- If the attendance method covers a multiple days, then once the assigned work comes back completed the student should be marked present for each of the days the assignments were intended to cover.
- If the phone call or text message occurs every other day and the interaction is coupled with a question on student engagement/participation in lessons covering the same timeframe, then attendance should be recorded for the same number of days.

If Regional Safe School Program and Academy staff cannot ensure student attendance through supportive measures, it is recommended that school personnel follow the normal procedures of referring students to your school’s regional truancy officer as outlined in the Illinois School Code, Section 26-2a: “A ‘truant’ is defined as a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause, as defined under this Section, from such attendance for more than 1% but less than 5% of the past 180 school days.”

We also recommend continued efforts to note when students are engaging with the school. This can be used as a means to record attendance, interaction with the school, or both.

Lunch

- Regional Safe School Program and Academy will eat lunch in a designated area the allows for social distancing while masks are removed.
- Handwashing procedure prior to lunch (soap and water preferred over hand sanitizer).

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- Face masks will need to be removed and placed in a clean, dry location and returned when finished.

Visitors

- All visitors including parents will have to enter at door #15
- Visitors will be limited to essential business only
- Visitors must be symptom-free and must sanitize hands prior to entering the main office
- Visitor logs will be maintained accurately and kept in the District office for contact tracing purposes as well as record keeping.
- Visitors delivering items will be encouraged to leave them outside the office when appropriate
- Any nonessential visitors will not be permitted

Symptomatic Students

- Students exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms while at school will supervised in until a parent/guardian can arrive
- Students will be required to have face masks on at all times unless they are experiencing difficulty breathing.
- Make note of time, date, arrival procedure, and all symptoms to help identify student and adult contact
- Notify parent/guardian immediately and require immediate pickup
- Parents will be asked to report any pending or confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the household
- Any positive COVID-19 cases will be released to the school community and information for contact tracing will be released to the local health department while maintaining confidentiality

Symptomatic Employees

- Report symptoms to the office/administration ASAP
- Perform temperature check daily upon entering the building
- Report pending or confirmed cases of COVID-19 to an administrator
- If at work, contact the front office and isolate as soon as possible
- Any positive COVID-19 cases will be released to the school community and information for contact tracing will be released to the local health department while maintaining confidentiality

Procedural Expectations

Administration/Office Staff

All administrative office staff will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Certify symptom-free status prior to entering building
- Temperature check as necessary
- Use hand sanitizer prior to entering and exiting a classroom.
- Communicate changes to procedures and protocols to staff, students, parents, school districts and other community members, as appropriate, in a timely manner.

- Develop a partnership with the local health department to ensure Regional Safe School Program and Academy has the most up-to-date information on health regulation and support contact tracing as needed

Teaching and Support Staff

Teachers and support staff will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Certify symptom-free status prior to entering the building.
- Allow district staff to check temperature if requested
- Develop classroom policies and procedures that teach social distancing, proper face mask usage, etc.
- Any staff member exhibiting a fever or other COVID-19 related symptoms must notify the administration immediately.

Students

Students will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Maintain social distancing whenever possible to avoid physical contact with adults and other students.
- Communicate changes to their health to a teacher or office staff member as soon as possible.
- Practice proper hand washing procedures and avoid touching their face, mouth or eyes.
- Adhere to the CDC guidelines when coughing and sneezing to prevent the spread of potentially dangerous germs.
- Keep all personal items and supplies clean and refrain from sharing with other students unless given permission and proper sanitation protocols are followed.

Parents & Guardians

Parents and guardians will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Supply your child with a face mask (either reusable or disposable) daily.
- Check your child for potential COVID-19 symptoms each morning.
- Report any absences and corresponding symptoms to a member of the office staff.
- If COVID-19 symptoms are suspected, contacting your child's medical provider is strongly encouraged.
- Report all pending or positive COVID-19 test results to a member of the office staff as soon as possible.
- Water bottles will be available upon request
- Maintaining a continuation of the learning environment at home in the event your child needs isolation due to an illness is encouraged.

- Keeping your child home for 72 hours symptom free if exhibiting a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms unless a doctor's note stating that the symptoms are related to another illness is provided.
- Keeping your child home for 14 days if COVID-19 positive or if exposed to someone who is positive for COVID-19 unless a negative test result can be produced.
- Remote Learning will be made available for any student who is required to stay home due to COVID-19 related issues.

Option 2: Blended Remote Learning Plan

This Blended Remote Learning Plan was adapted from the In-Person Learning Plan version above. To make this plan effective for students in the classroom, as well as students at home, necessary changes were made.

School Operations

Student Considerations

~~In the event that a **Blending Learning Plan** is essential (i.e., Governor moves back to Phase 3 of the Restore Illinois Plan, new outbreak of COVID-19, etc.), ISBE strongly encourages districts to give higher priority to specific subgroups of students based on their education needs.~~

Highest Priority will be given to students with following:

1. Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
2. 504 Plans
3. Specific Language Barriers (ELL)
4. Tier III instructional needs (or are deemed "high-risk" due to educational loss during the closure)
5. Under the age of 13, whose families require childcare for essential employment purposes.

**During Blended Learning, Regional Safe School Program and Academy will continue to strive to maintain In-Person Learning for as many students as we can allow per ISBE/IDPH guidelines.

Student Attendance

Daily attendance and engagement of students should be expected whether students are participating in classes in-person or remotely. Districts, schools, and teachers should make daily contact with all students and families, especially those who are not in attendance or not engaging in classes, whether in-person or remotely.

During Remote Learning, attendance should continue to be submitted to ISBE in the same manner as prior to the COVID-19 pandemic – via the Student Information System.

The primary purpose of attendance during this time is to account for the instructional learning days and to keep students engaged. Our students' overall well-being is always our highest priority.

The preferred method of collecting attendance is always a one-to-one daily connection between the teacher and the student. However, we recognize that this method is not available or practical for all districts and student scenarios under the COVID-19 conditions. We encourage and suggest several ideas for how classroom teachers can collect and count a student as present when the one-to-one daily connection is not practical:

- Video conference "check-ins."
- Wellness checks coupled with a question on student engagement/participation in lessons.
- Phone calls coupled with a question on student engagement/participation in lessons.
- Text messages or email communications coupled with a question on student engagement/participation in lessons.
- Grading of assignments

If schools cannot ensure student attendance through supportive measures, it is recommended that school personnel follow the normal procedures of referring students to your school's regional truancy officer as outlined in the Illinois School Code, Section 26-2a: "A 'truant' is defined as a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause, as defined under this Section, from such attendance for more than 1% but less than 5% of the past 180 school days."

We also recommend continued efforts to note when students are engaging with the school. This can be used as a means to record attendance, interaction with the school, or both.

Calendar Changes

In the event of a sudden need to shift to a **Blended Remote Learning Plan**, emergency Teacher Institute Days may be utilized to provide district staff the time to plan for changes to their instructional plans. ISBE allows districts to use up to five (5) planning days for this purpose.

Procedural Expectations

Administration/Office Staff

All administrative office staff will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Provide additional time and support to staff to address new workload requirements.

- Communicate all changes to the staff, students, parents, and other school community members as soon as possible.
- Demonstrate flexibility when appropriate to meet the needs of the staff, students, parents, and other school community members.
- Pay careful attention to the mental, physical, and emotional health and well-being and provide the needed support when appropriate.

Teaching and Support Staff

Teachers and support staff will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Maintain a focus on the Illinois Learning Standards
- Spend time familiarizing students with your remote learning plan, expectations, and how to access and use the online tools and programs
- Maintain an accurate record of all student work done at home or in-person.
- Pay careful attention to the mental, physical and emotional health and well-being and provide the needed support when appropriate. (Mandated Reporting requirements remain in effect.)
- Maintain communication with administration, students, and parents to aid in this transition.
- Seek help when needed.

Students

Students will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Maintain regular attendance even during remote learning days.
- Communicate with staff and administration regularly
- Communicate technology issues to parents and staff to avoid loss of instructional time.
- Maintain appropriate behavior during online learning sessions.

Parents & Guardians

Parents and guardians will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Encourage your child to maintain regular attendance and work completion.
- Report any concerns or issues to the staff/administration when needed.
- Maintain an open line of communication with the district staff.

Option 3: Remote Learning Plan

This Remote Learning Plan was adapted from the version that was created during the Spring of 2020 school closure based on the ISBE guidelines at that time. To make this plan compliant with the Part 3 of the ISBE/IDPH Guidelines released in June of 2020, necessary changes were made.

Grades Sixth through Twelfth

Teachers will utilize Edgenuity, email, and the google classroom to communicate assignments to students. Remote Learning opportunities will be primarily focused on advancing students' skills in English/Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and P.E./Health. Opportunities for remediation and enrichment will be provided to students based on their individual needs.

Regional Safe School Program and Academy during times of Remote Learning will seek assistance from the student home district for internet access. Technology is available upon request.

Teachers will be available to communicate with students and parents via email, Google Hangouts or another platform specified by the teacher from 9:00AM – 2:00PM Monday through Friday during normal school attendance days.

Grading

In Part 3 of the ISBE/IDPH guidelines, the grading practice based on the principle of “do not harm” was revoked. Schools and districts are required to transition back to their traditional grading practices (Refer to “2020-2021 Student/Parent Handbook” located on the Regional Safe School Program and Academy website or contact a member of the Regional Safe School Program and Academy office staff for more details.).

Administrators are now being encouraged to re-evaluate and modify traditional grading policies and practices, as needed, to plan for a return to a somewhat traditional school format.

ISBE strongly recommends that any return to traditional grading policies ensures that students have all the necessary tools, technology, and teacher support at school and at home to complete all assignments, take assessments and complete projects in a timely manner. This may mean ensuring that all students have devices and connectivity opportunities at their homes before resuming traditional grading practices.

Per the School Code, grading policies are the exclusive responsibilities of local districts (105 ILCS 5/10-20.9a). ISBE does not require any specific grading practice, policy, or philosophy, but we suggest that you may want to include any successful strategies or modifications implemented during remote learning as part of the planning and transition to in-person instruction and/or blended remote learning.

When possible, allow students who receive an “Incomplete” and give the opportunity to make up content.

Attendance

Daily attendance and engagement of students should be expected whether students are

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participating in classes in-person or remotely. Districts, schools, and teachers should make daily contact with all students and families, especially those who are not in attendance or not engaging in classes, whether in-person or remotely.

During Remote Learning, attendance should continue to be submitted to ISBE in the same manner as prior to the COVID-19 pandemic – via the Student Information System.

The primary purpose of attendance during this time is to account for the instructional learning days and to keep students engaged. Our students' overall well-being is always our highest priority.

The preferred method of collecting attendance is always a one-to-one daily connection between the teacher and the student. However, we recognize that this method is not available or practical for all districts and student scenarios under the COVID-19 conditions. We encourage and suggest several ideas for how classroom teachers can collect and count a student as present when the one-to-one daily connection is not practical:

- Video conference “check-ins.”
- Wellness checks coupled with a question on student engagement/participation in lessons.
- Phone calls coupled with a question on student engagement/participation in lessons.
- Text messages or email communications coupled with a question on student engagement/participation in lessons.
- Electronic monitoring of Edgenuity accounts.
- Packet collections by school personnel.

If schools cannot ensure student attendance through supportive measures, it is recommended that school personnel follow the normal procedures of referring students to your school’s regional truancy officer as outlined in the Illinois School Code, Section 26-2a: “A ‘truant’ is defined as a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause, as defined under this Section, from such attendance for more than 1% but less than 5% of the past 180 school days.”

We also recommend continued efforts to note when students are engaging with the school. This can be used as a means to record attendance, interaction with the school, or both.

Calendar Changes

In the event of a sudden school closure requiring the use of a full **Remote Learning Plan**, emergency Teacher Institute Days may be utilized to provide district staff the time to plan for changes to their instructional plans. ISBE allows districts to use up to five (5) planning days for this purpose.

Procedural Expectations

Administration/Office Staff

All administrative office staff will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Provide additional time and support to staff to address new workload requirements.
- Communicate all changes to the staff, students, parents, and other school community members as soon as possible.
- Demonstrate flexibility when appropriate to meet the needs of the staff, students, parents, and other school community members.

- Pay careful attention to the mental, physical, and emotional health and well-being and provide the needed support when appropriate.

Teaching and Support Staff

Teachers and support staff will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Spend time familiarizing students with your remote learning plan, expectations, and how to access and use the online tools and programs (i.e., virtual boot camp)
- Maintain an accurate record of all student work done at home or in-person.
- Pay careful attention to the mental, physical, and emotional health and well-being and provide the needed support when appropriate. (Mandated Reporting requirements remain in effect.)
- Maintain communication with administration, students, and parents to aide in this transition.
- Seek help when needed.

Students

Students will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Maintain regular attendance even during remote learning days.
- Communicate with staff and administration regularly
- Communicate technology issues to parents and staff to avoid loss of instructional time.
- Maintain appropriate behavior during online learning sessions.

Parents & Guardians

Parents and guardians will be responsible for the following procedural expectations:

- Encourage your child (to maintain regular attendance and work completion.
- Report any concerns or issues to the staff/administration when needed.
- Maintain an open line of communication with the district staff.

Transition Back to School

The Regional Safe School Program and Academy Leadership Team will collaborate and develop strategies for our staff to assist everyone upon returning to school. Strategies to assist this transition process will strive to address assessment, differentiation, review of content, recognizing and identifying students who need additional support, meeting goals for students with disabilities, and how to provide ongoing support for staff. These strategies will be provided to staff and may vary depending on the date of return, subject area, and/or grade level.