

Whiteside Return to School and Instruction Plan

Introduction

Whiteside School District is committed to providing a safe quality education during the upcoming school year while the pandemic continues in our community. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) provided guidance to schools and they continue to update this guidance as school districts move to a return to in-person instruction in the fall. District 115 continues to monitor these changes and communicates with the local health department as we engage in the planning process to a return to in-person instruction. School is scheduled to begin for all students at both Whiteside Elementary and Whiteside Middle Schools on Monday, August 17th. Instruction will be offered as either in-person or online/remote. Please understand that in-person instruction will have different aspects during the ongoing pandemic. Our goal is to provide a framework for the safety and health of students and staff to provide instruction during this time. As per guidelines, we will be prepared if there is a return to remote instruction in the event of a resurgence of the virus or a second wave.

Phase 4 Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Guidelines

In-person instruction will follow the Phase 4 Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Guidelines:

- Require use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings
- Prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one 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 school buildings
- Require an increase in schoolwide cleaning and disinfection

Schools and districts are encouraged to provide as much in-person instruction for all students in Phase 4, provided that the school is able to comply with capacity limits and implement social distancing measures.

ISBE is allowing school districts to now utilize “**Remote**” and “**Blended Remote Learning Days**”.

Schools and districts should also prepare for a return to remote instruction in the event of a resurgence of the virus or a second wave of it in the fall.

Whiteside School District's Return to Learn Options/Schedule

Option 1

In-person Instruction

- 5 days a week for 4.5 hours a day at school with 1 hour of work assigned to be completed outside of school (lunch will be served)
- Students will be allowed to arrive and enter at 8:00 a.m. (Breakfast served 8-8:30 am)
- Academic In-Person Sessions
 - Middle School: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. with 1 hour of work assigned to be completed outside of school
 - Elementary School: 8:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m. with 1 hour of work assigned to be completed outside of school
 - Students at both the elementary and middle school will receive specials during the school day.
 - Recess times and playground availability will be affected by scheduling and cleanings.
 - Lunch will be served at both schools in accordance with ISBE and IDPH guidelines.
 - During lunch masks will be placed on a lanyard or left on the desk while the student is at lunch.

Option 2

Online/Remote Instruction

- 5 days a week with 5 hours per day of remote work
- Academic Remote/Online Session:
 - Middle School
 - *Students will be offered Math, ELA, SS, and Science, and Specials
 - Teachers will be posting assignments, video lessons, and available for google meets sessions and email correspondence from 1-3:30 p.m.
 - Student expectations will be very similar to in-person instruction. Students will be expected to cover similar curricular material, items will receive a grade that corresponds to the district grading scale, and assignments will be submitted by specified times.
 - Elementary School
 - *Students will be offered Math, ELA, SS, and Science, and Specials
 - Teachers will be posting assignments, video lessons, and available for google meets sessions and email correspondence from 1:15 - 3:30 p.m.
 - Student expectations will be very similar to in-person instruction. Students will be expected to cover similar curricular material, items will

receive a grade that corresponds to the district grading scale, and assignments will be submitted by specified times.

Online/remote students must be able to show the district that they have adequate internet access prior to being provided this option.

Parents will have until July 31st to let the school district know which option you choose for each of your children. If the online/remote (Option 2) is selected, students must remain online/remote for the 9 weeks (1 quarter) period. Due to staffing constraints and planning needs, students will not be allowed to return to in-person instruction until the quarter ends. Students wishing to move to online/remote only may request this at any time during the quarter. District administration will make the final determination on that request.

Students with medical concerns will need to contact the building level administrator for further details or questions regarding school options.

The school district will be providing a form to parents wishing to select Option 2 remote/online by July 24.

Whiteside School District has adopted the following guidelines that have been issued by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) for in-person instruction.

Facility and Instruction Information

- Face masks are required (Per ISBE) and must be worn at all times
- Sanitize/ wash hands upon entering and exiting the classroom
- Regularly clean surfaces, routine at the end of the class period before the transition if needed
- Assigned seats for all students
- No flexible seating or grouped seating. Individual desks should be placed in rows, facing forward.
- Allow for 6ft of distance as much as possible
- Create directional markings for flow through classroom
- Refrain from using shared supplies. If necessary, disinfect between uses
- Utilize first aid kits in class for minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises.
- Use Google Meets for students who need to access remotely.
- Utilize the Google Classroom video platform for lessons.
- All grade levels district wide will rotate teachers when applicable
- Limit who is in classrooms to those required for instruction
- Students will be assigned a homeroom for all classes this will also include lockers assignments, attendance, Chromebook checks, log-ins, and character education/ SEL
- Provide time and supplies to set up classrooms
- Communicate with parents of younger students to discourage their children from bringing any toys from home to school
- Encourage parents to label student personal items

Hallways/Lockers/Traffic Flow Information

- Face masks are required (Per ISBE) and must be worn at all times
- One way, directional in hallway as possible
- Split hallway with midline tape in the event one-way traffic is not viable
- Signage and floor markings promoting social distancing
- No hallway seating or areas in the hallway to allow for congregation
- No water fountains; bottles acceptable
- Bottles must be taken home and washed daily (no glass)
- No student congregating, supervision by staff to promote movement
- Limit students in the restroom at one time at applicable amounts
- Locker assignments alternate by homeroom to promote spacing. One or two classes use lockers at one time

- Adhere to social distancing requirements and IDPH limitations on gathering sizes when possible
- Limit the number of persons within hallways at any given time to the greatest extent possible.
- Limit required movement of students between classes

Library Services

- Library services will be limited at each school
- Students will select books electronically
- Books delivered to the classroom for students
- Book drops and classroom return procedures utilized
- Books disinfected and will not be allowed into circulation for 72 hours
- Services will be monitored and adjusted during the school year

Cafeteria/Food Service Information

- Sanitize/ wash Hands upon entering and exiting in the cafeteria
- Utilize normal tables with students seated at each socially distanced per IDPH guidance.
- Utilize additional tables as needed
- Elementary School Students will be served at their tables with individually prepared meals. Curtains utilized to provide an additional space and capacity.
- Middle School Students will use the kitchen service line, social distancing as they proceed through the line. Curtains in the MPR, Gym, as well as the Chorus room possibly utilized to provide space as needed.
- Assigned seating for all students, grouped by classroom cohorts when possible.
- Use of disposable trays and utensils
- No joint use service (salad bars) and condiments provided individually
- Plexi-glass barriers added in serving locations and around the cashier
- During lunch masks will be placed on a lanyard or left on the desk while the student is at lunch when applicable.

Administrative Offices and Staff Work Area Information

- Sanitize/ wash Hands upon entering and exiting office and staff areas
- Facemasks required unless alone in office space
- Transactions conducted through the safety window, maintaining social distance
- No visitors in the offices
- Encourage payment and form submission to be done on-line
- Limit student personal items allowed in the offices (lunch drop off)
- No sick students in the offices; use isolation rooms or nurse's office
- RegProvide cleaning materials and hand washing supplies

- Provide each employee with a personal supply of office supplies
- Clearly clean commonly used surfaces
- Students should be called to the office as directed or classrooms/nurses offices communicate the need when sending a student or a student requests to go to the office
- Plexiglass barriers installed in high traffic areas (student entry point and principal desks)

Visitors Information

- Limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations during the school hours, evening, and weekends
- If a visitor is allowed to enter the office, face masks must be worn and the visitor must submit to COVID safe workplace procedures
- Restrict where visitors can go in the building.
- Hand hygiene for visitors
- Maintain accurate records of visitors
- Consider outside drop off for items
- Conduct as many face to face meeting outside
- PTC will be organizing parties for teachers to conduct with limited contact

Physical Education, Gymnasiums, and Locker Rooms

- Sanitize/wash hands upon entry and exit of the gym
- Maintain 6ft of distance as possible
- No contact games/ activities
- Try to be outdoors or separated if indoors
- No use (very limited) of shared equipment. If shared equipment is used it will be cleaned between use.
- Masks are worn as possible, depending on the activity
- Locker rooms not utilized
- Students will be not be required to change for physical education

Recess / Playground

- Sanitize/wash hands before and after recess
- No contact games
- No shared equipment
- Limit groups of students on outdoor equipment (**principals/teachers will develop a weekly rotation on playground equipment as needed**)
- Equipment will be cleaned on a routine basis **as well as between group use**
- **Cleaning supplies will be available for student staff use at recess as needed**
- **Hand Sprayers used to apply proper cleaning supplies**

- During recess masks will be placed on a lanyard or left on the desk while the student is attending recess when applicable.

Student Transportation Information

- All individuals on a bus must wear a face mask at all times
- No more than 50 individuals should be on a bus at one time
- Additional routes may be added or the need to adjust or add additional pick up or drop off times
- Social distancing must be maintained to the greatest extent possible.
- Drivers and monitors must wear approved and appropriate PPE and perform regular hand hygiene and agree to personal symptom checks
- Sanitization should be completed daily or between use on all vehicles used for student transportation completed per the bus company
- Place PPE reminders on buses
- Develop seating charts if needed

Arrival / Dismissal

- Parents/guardians will agree to a daily self-certification for all students attending
- Any student testing above 100.4 will be isolated and sent home
- Isolation rooms established separately from the nurse's office
- Elementary and Middle School Entry will have grade designated doors
- Sanitize upon all student entry
- Students will arrive and proceed to pick up breakfast and eat in their assigned classroom
- Stagger bus routes as needed which will adjust arrival times
- Students report to classrooms at both schools upon arrival
- Any student appearing to display symptoms must undergo COVID checks as requested by district staff

Other Items for Parents to Consider when returning to In-person

Instruction:

It is expected that students will follow IDPH and CDC guidelines for the use of PPE (face coverings) and submit to screening procedures in order to attend school on an in-person basis. The district will not take adverse disciplinary action (write-ups, detention, suspension) for students who do not wear face coverings or maintain social distancing. Facemasks will be handled similar to IDs and dress code in the district. Staff will promote, remind, and redirect students to follow guidelines. In the event a student refuses or is unable to comply with guidelines, a parent conference will be held with the principals and the student may be recommended for a remote learning program.

The District will provide technology for students if needed in the event of a return to a remote learning platform. The availability of Chromebooks is currently limited. Chromebooks will be issued to students who do not have any type of device. If you are provided a school issued Chromebook, students/ parents are responsible for the cost of replacement if the Chromebook is damaged or lost and also responsible for any repair costs deemed to be not due to normal use. All personal devices must have the ability to access Google Chrome.

Parents will not be allowed to enter the school buildings as in the past in an effort to limit possible exposures and infections.

Staff will self-check for fever and symptoms on a daily basis. Staff will be required to do a temp check upon entering the building and will log the results daily. Staff is highly encouraged to self-check at home, allowing enough time for a substitute to be secured if needed.

Whiteside's Pre-K program will continue with an am and pm session and will not offer a remote/online option. The schedules for this program may be reduced by 30 minutes and will be dependent upon bus transportation.

ESP enrollment (Before and after school programs) will be reduced due to the need for additional space and supervision requirements. ESP will begin after the conclusion of the in-person daily session.

Special education students may need to stay for extended periods to meet their different educational needs.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the local health departments have issued the following guidance that the Whiteside School District will be employing during the school day to meet the requirements for a safe return to learn for in-person instruction. The following information is a summary of these recommendations and protocols. Please understand that this information is subject to change as more information is known regarding the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

Sanitation procedures per recommendations of the CDC, IDPH, and local health departments.

- Clean visibly dirty areas
- Clean frequently touched areas
- Cloth toys or other cloth material items that cannot be disinfected should not be used
- Determine means to sanitize soft surfaces, such as carpeted areas, rugs and curtains
- Consider posting scheduled cleaning times and maintain appropriate documentation upon the completion of cleaning
- Outline cleaning protocols and schedules
- Order/Retain appropriate cleaning materials
- Order/Retain additional PPE

Health and Safety Protocols IDPH Guidance

- Communicate with families and staff that any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 or who shows any signs or symptoms of illness should stay home. Communication must meet all HIPPA requirements established by law.
- Families and staff should also report possible cases to the school where the individual attends school or works to initiate contact tracing.
- Collect symptom reports when absences are reported
- 72 hours must elapse from resolution of fever without fever reducing medication and 10 days must pass after symptoms first appeared.
- Those who had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19 infection should isolate at home and monitor for symptoms for 14 days.
- Students or staff returning from illness related to COVID-19 should call to check in with the school nurse or building administrator (if a nurse is unavailable) following quarantine.
- Distribute symptom checklists for families and staff to use to determine if they are well enough to attend that day (self-certify).
- Develop process and location to isolate anyone showing symptoms

Hand Hygiene

- Encourage frequent and proper handwashing
- Ensure availability of supplies, such as soap and paper towels, hand sanitizer, tissues, etc., for all grade levels and in all common areas of the building
- Review protocols in guidance document (page 32)
- Order supplies and distribute
- Post signage

Face Coverings

- Everyone must wear a face covering at all time 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; students with medical conditions must have a excused form completed and signed by a doctor along with reasoning
- 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 distancing is maintained
- Maintain a supply of disposable face coverings in the event that a staff member, student, or visitor does not have one for use.
- Determine if the school is ordering face coverings and type (masks, cloth coverings, shields) and quantities for students, staff, and visitors
- Update policies to require the wearing a face covering while on school grounds and handle violations in the same manner as other policy violations

Social Distancing

- Districts should develop procedures to ensure 6-foot physical distance from other persons as much as possible in all areas
- Staff and students should abstain from physical contact, including, but not limited to, handshakes, high fives, hugs, etc.
- Post visual reminders throughout school buildings and lay down tape or other indicators of safe distances in areas where students congregate or line up
- Consider social distancing when building schedules

Symptom Screenings

- Individuals who have a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius or currently known symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, the new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, may not enter buildings.
- Develop a process for temperature and symptom screenings upon arrival or self-certification

Personal Protective Equipment

- Ensure that appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is made available to and used by staff, as needed, based on exposure risk.
- Order PPE
- Provide training to staff prior to the start of student attendance on the proper use and disposal of PPE.