



Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Public Schools

SAFE RETURN TO LEARN PLAN Staff Guidance 2021-2022

The Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted (HLWW) School District is committed to maintaining the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and community members and will follow the below recommendations and safety protocols during the 2021-2022 school year, barring any changes to guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), and the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

As of ~~August 9, 2021~~ **March 9, 2022**, the following protocols are part of the established guidelines and recommendations by MDH, MDE, and the CDC and were approved by the HLWW School Board. Should these guidelines change, HLWW Schools will update its plan accordingly.

It is important to note that whether it is COVID-19 or any other illness that can be spread and infect others, that staff **be diligent** about monitoring themselves for illness and **DO NOT come to school if they are sick**. Working together as a team (student, parent, and school) will help make this plan the best it can be for everyone.

(A) Face Coverings:

~~-MDE, MDH, the CDC, and HLWW Public Schools recommend face coverings for staff when indoors, but HLWW Public Schools is not requiring that staff wear face coverings.~~

~~-Face coverings are **REQUIRED** of all staff **on school transportation vehicles**. (CDC requirement for public transportation). This includes bus drivers, coaches, advisors, etc.~~

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including but not limited to masks, shields, gloves, etc., will be provided to staff members who request it.

~~(B) **Physical Distancing**: Due to our facility and building sizes, and our plan to create the best learning environment possible by returning all the educational materials and items that were removed during the 2020-21 school year, physical distancing of 3 feet minimum **may not** always be possible when holding in-person instruction, but will be used wherever possible.~~

Because we cannot guarantee maintaining physical distancing in our district during all in-person instruction, we ask that staff be diligent in self-screening measures.

~~Staff are recommended to keep 6 feet of social distance from students and other staff as much as possible and not within that space for times of 15 minutes or more (cumulative).~~ Plexiglass barriers will be provided to staff who request them.

~~Staff should also structure their classroom teaching to limit exposure among students as much as possible, considering the activity. Activities where students are working together should be kept to short time frames as much as possible.~~

~~Student desks should be kept in rows as much as possible, to begin the school year. If a teacher would like to consider other seating arrangements which may group students, they should meet with their building principal to approve the arrangement to ensure spacing recommendations are met as much as possible. Also, while at the elementary level we used desk dividers last year, we will not be using them this year.~~

Seating charts continue to be an important factor in determining and assisting the health office staff in determining in-classroom close contacts, **if needed**. ~~If you have short amounts of group work happening in your classroom,~~ **please keep a daily, or even hourly,** record of which students worked together.

(C) **Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette:** The HLWW School District will continue to provide hand sanitizer in each classroom and at the entrances of school buildings and other highly frequented locations. The district will encourage frequent handwashing.

We will implement measures to prevent the spread of respiratory infections from anyone in an educational setting with signs or symptoms by doing the following:

- 1) Post signs at entrances asking students, staff, and visitors to self-screen for symptoms before entering the building.
- 2) Ask students and staff to follow respiratory etiquette such as the following:
 - a) Cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
 - b) Wash hands or use a hand sanitizer every time there is contact with a mouth or nose.
- 3) Provide tissues, PPE, and no-touch receptacles.
- 4) Provide resources for performing hand hygiene in or near waiting areas, classrooms, and other highly frequented locations.
- 5) Offer masks to those that become symptomatic while in the building.
- 6) Provide space and place symptomatic students in the health office while waiting for someone to pick them up.

(D) **Cleaning and Maintaining Facilities:** The District will continue to clean and disinfect school buildings and locations on a consistent basis as normal. When custodial staff is unable to provide cleaning of building locations, disinfecting of high touch surfaces will be prioritized.

Disinfectant spray and towels will be provided to classrooms as another disinfecting tool, when needed.

Desks and chairs do not need to be cleaned by staff after each class period or the end of the day. Custodial staff will use a spray cleaner in classrooms and other spaces, on a rotation basis, 2 times per week.

HVAC filters will be consistently replaced to improve building ventilation, and ventilation system operations will be set to allow maximum fresh air circulation.

It is **recommended** that staff review the use of shared school supplies and items within their classroom. Whenever sharing can be avoided, please do so. If, in the staff member's judgement, items need some cleaning, please do so.

~~(E) **Contact Tracing, Isolation, and Quarantine:** Contact tracing will be conducted for *indoor classroom school settings*. In the event of a positive case and exposure of persons within 6 feet for 15 minutes (cumulative over a 24-hour period), the staff members will be notified **by the health office** if they were exposed to **if they have** a positive COVID-19 case **in their classroom**. Staff members will also assist in determining student close contacts.~~

Situations that will **REQUIRE** ~~a quarantine~~ **the isolation** of a staff member are as follows:

Situations that will **REQUIRE** a quarantine or isolation of a staff member are as follows:

- a 5-day isolation for anyone who tests positive for COVID,
- a 5-day quarantine for those who are unvaccinated and exposed to a positive COVID case in their household, **AND**
- strict adherence to masking for five additional days beyond the 5-day isolation and quarantine is **REQUIRED**.

This change from the current 10-day isolation and quarantine period follows approval from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), which is aligned with CDC guidelines for shortened isolation for asymptomatic and mildly ill people.

- **ISOLATION** may end after five days for **anyone who tests positive** and has no symptoms (asymptomatic), or if other symptoms have improved, including being fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
 - **Day 0** is the day symptoms began or the day of the positive test (not necessarily when results were received) and **Day 1** is the first full day after the test. Isolation period ends after

five full days.

- QUARANTINE (for persons who are unvaccinated and exposed to someone with COVID in their household) may end after 5 full days.
 - **Day 0** is the last date of exposure to a positive case and **Day 1** is the first full day after the last exposure date. You can leave quarantine after five full days, and mask for days 6-10.

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- Persons currently in the District's 10-day isolation or quarantine may return to work, school or activity five (5) full days from their positive test or exposure to a positive case. They are no longer required to complete the 10-days if they are in days 6-10 of the protocol. PLEASE CONTACT THE HEALTH OFFICE TO CONFIRM BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL/WORK.
- If an asymptomatic person develops symptoms after testing positive or exposure, the 5-day isolation period is in effect from the date of the test.
- This new guidance does not apply to persons with severe COVID-19 or with weakened immune systems (immunocompromised). A full 10 days is required.
- For household close contacts, it is highly advised that the close contact isolate from the positive case. If isolation is not possible, it is highly recommended that a full 10- day quarantine be followed, testing before returning, and masking for 5 days upon returning.
- If the staff member is fully vaccinated and has no symptoms, they are not required to quarantine for a positive case in the home. We would still recommend masking for the 10 days and watching closely for symptoms.
- Upon return to school or work, staff should try to keep 6 feet of social distancing as much as possible and while doing such things as eating or drinking, return to wearing a mask as soon as possible.
- TEST KITS ARE AVAILABLE FROM HEALTH OFFICE STAFF. PLEASE CONTACT THEM IF YOU NEED ONE.

With the recommended shorter isolation and quarantine periods, it is critical that people continue to wear well-fitted masks and take additional precautions for five days after leaving isolation or quarantine.

~~– Any staff member who tests positive for COVID-19, **MUST QUARANTINE ISOLATE.**~~

~~– Any staff member who lives in the **same household** with a person who tests positive, **MUST QUARANTINE**, unless they are vaccinated or had COVID-19 in the past 90 days, and it is recommended that you get a COVID-19 test 3-5 days after the exposure and consider wearing a face covering for 14 days.~~

~~* It is **recommended** that a staff member who is a close contact **in an indoor classroom school setting**, **QUARANTINE**, unless they are vaccinated, or were wearing a face covering at the time of the contact, or had COVID-19 in the past 90 days, and it is **recommended** that they get a COVID-19 test 3-5 days after the exposure and consider wearing a face covering for 14 days.~~

~~* It is possible that depending upon cases of COVID-19 spread in school close contacts, the District may need to institute **required** quarantining of staff as it did in 2020-21.~~

* Staff will need to use sick leave for **isolations and** quarantines. COVID leave no longer exists.

(F) **Diagnostic and Screening Testing:** If you're sick, stay home. All people entering HLWW facilities are expected to perform a self-health screening prior to entering the building.

Screening Tool: I understand that prior to me returning to school on-site, I am required to daily self-certify:

- a) I am not exhibiting any of the following symptoms associated with COVID-19:
 - i.) New onset cough; OR
 - ii.) Fever (100.4 or higher); OR
 - iii.) Shortness of breath by themselves; OR
 - iv.) New loss of sense of smell or taste: OR
 - v.) 2 of the following:
 - chills
 - muscle pain
 - sore throat
 - severe or very bad headache
 - new nasal congestion or runny nose
 - gastrointestinal symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea
- b) I will notify the District Nurse or health office staff that I will be out of school because someone in my home has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- c) I will immediately notify the District Nurse or Health Office Staff at my school, if I am unable to self-certify for any of the above reasons myself. I also understand that in the case that I am notified that I may have been exposed to COVID-19 or start to exhibit any of the symptoms above while at school, I will immediately go home.

*** Staff who come to the health office, WILL BE REQUIRED to mask while in the health office.**

(G) **Accommodations for Staff with Disabilities:** Staff with disabilities seeking accommodations with respect to health and safety should be in direct contact with their supervisor and the human resources department in the District Office. Accommodations can then be discussed with the employee.

(H) **Coordination of State and Local Health Officials:** The School District will continue to monitor federal, state, and local guidance in regards to COVID-19 protocols. As guidance changes, communication will be provided to our staff.

(I) **Continuity of Services:** The school district will continue to provide services to address the staff in terms of social, emotional, mental health, and other needs.

(J) **Vaccinations:** COVID-19 vaccinations are recommended for eligible individuals by MDH and the CDC.

COVID-19 vaccinations are not a requirement to work at school.

The District is asking staff to voluntarily report to the school district nurse, if the staff member has been vaccinated for COVID-19 and to provide a copy of your vaccination record, **if you choose to.**

This information will be kept confidential within the health office and the human resources department. Having this information will allow the health office staff to determine, more quickly and efficiently, close contacts.

(K) **On-line Learning 2021-22:** It is possible due to increased COVID-19 cases in our schools, that District administration, in consultation with the school district nurse and county and state health officials, may implement an online learning schedule for a classroom, grade level, school building or the entire district. The length of this would be determined based on case rates and other factors regarding COVID-19 spread. A schedule for what the online learning day will look like, will be published near the start of the school year, through collaboration with the District Leadership Team and school administration.

(L) **Visitors:** Visitors to the school building are not required to wear a face covering if visiting for a meeting, to pick up a student or school materials. ~~It is recommended that *volunteers* who will be interacting with students and/or staff in the classroom or educational setting wear a face covering.~~

(M) **Plan Changes:** A review of this plan will take place on a regular basis by school administrators and health office staff. Changes to the plan will involve the feedback of the District's COVID-19 Council, made up of staff members and parents.

(N) **Accommodations:** Upon request by a staff member who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, this plan can be provided in an alternative format.

If you have questions about the HLWW Safe Return to Lean Plan for staff, and how it applies in your school, please contact the building principal.