



# Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Public Schools

## SAFE RETURN TO LEARN PLAN Student 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 14, 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 parents/guardians **be diligent** about monitoring their children for illness and **DO NOT send them 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.

In the event that a student becomes ill during the school day, **IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT** that parents have a plan, with back-ups, for arranging for their child to be picked up from school in a timely manner.

### (A) Face Coverings:

~~- MDE, MDH, the CDC, and HLWW Public Schools recommend face coverings for K-12 students when indoors, but HLWW Public Schools is not requiring that students wear face coverings in school.~~

~~- Face coverings are **REQUIRED** of all students **on school transportation vehicles**. (CDC requirement for public transportation - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/face-masks-public-transportation.html>)~~

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

- Face coverings, in particular to the student dress code and student conduct policies, shall not depict

images or wording that is considered offensive.

- School principals and staff will work with students in regards to their face covering choice and will work to create a school climate that will combat any stigma or bullying of students because of their mask choice.

(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 families to be diligent in self-screening measures.

(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.

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

~~(A) **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 parent(s)/guardian(s) of close contacts will be notified **via an email from the health office staff**, if their child has been exposed to a positive COVID-19 case. **PLEASE CHECK YOUR EMAIL OFTEN.** Parents will be notified of a positive case in their child's classroom at the Pre-K-Grade 4 levels via email.~~

~~(E)~~

Situations that will **REQUIRE** a quarantine or isolation of a student 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.

\* \* \* \* \*

- 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 student 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, students and 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.
- Students who were positive for COVID-19 will not be allowed to participate in activities for 10 days (as per MSHSL rule). If they were a close contact with someone who was POS in their home, they may begin participation on **Day 6**, but must mask when not participating (on the sidelines, bench, etc.)
- 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 student who tests positive for COVID-19, **MUST QUARANTINE ISOLATE.**~~

~~Any student 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 they 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 student 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 students as it did in 2020-21.~~

\* Homework and instructional materials will be provided for students who are absent due to quarantine **isolation**, similar to other student absence protocols. Students at the MS/HS should coordinate with their teacher, submission of completed work via Google Classroom, or by other means at the direction of the teacher. Paper copies of work completed may also be coordinated for pick up and drop off, at the direction of the teacher, through the school office. PLEASE ARRANGE FOR ANY ITEMS THAT NEED TO BE PICKED UP IN THE OFFICE, IN A TIMELY MANNER.

(F) Diagnostic and Screening Testing: **IF YOU'RE SICK, STAY HOME.**

The District understands that seasonal allergies and other chronic medical conditions can mimic COVID-19 symptoms; ~~however, students will be required to quarantine if they are sick, and we ask that you consider having your child tested as a precaution, unless a note from a physician or documentation of allergies or pre-existing condition can be obtained. We will not initially quarantine all the children in the family due to one having symptoms.~~ **Test kits are available through the health office for students or parents to pick up.**

We ask that parents closely monitor any other children in their family, for symptoms. If other children in the same household begin exhibiting symptoms, we ask that parents keep them home, consider getting them tested, and a quarantine of all school aged children in the family, may be required by the health office staff.

All people entering HLWW facilities are expected to perform a self-health screening prior to entering the building (screening for elementary children should be completed by an adult).

**Screening Tool:** I understand that prior to my student returning to school on-site, I am required to daily self-certify for each student:

- a) My student is 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 my child 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 child's school, if I am unable to self-certify for any of the above reasons for my students. I also understand that if I am notified my child is exhibiting any of the symptoms above while at school, I will immediately pick-up my student when contacted by the health office.

~~**\* Decision Tree for students who are sick:**~~

~~**<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf>**~~

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

(G) **Accommodations for Children with Disabilities:** Parents or guardians of children with disabilities seeking accommodations with respect to health and safety should be in direct contact with their child's case manager. Accommodations can then be discussed at the team level.

(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 families.

- (I) **Continuity of Services:** The school district will continue to provide services to address students' academic needs and emotional, mental health, and other needs which will include student health and food services.
- (J) **Vaccination:** COVID-19 vaccinations are recommended for eligible individuals by MDH and the CDC. COVID-19 vaccinations are not a requirement to attend school.

The District is asking families to report to the School District Nurse or health office staff, if your child(ren) has been vaccinated for COVID-19 and to provide a copy of the vaccination record, **if you choose to. This is not a requirement.**

This information will be kept confidential within the health office. 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.

- (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. ~~However, 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:**

- 1) 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.
- 2) Any changes to the plan will be submitted for public comment.

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

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