

La Harpe Elementary and Junior High School

Return to School Plan

2023-2024



#eaglestrong

Introduction:

La Harpe Elementary and Junior High School is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy school environment. This plan was created as an aid in navigating the reopening of our school where employees, students, and families feel safe and to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our school community. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Regular updates will be made to this plan based on information provided by ISBE, IDPH, CDC, and applicable local agencies. **This plan is subject to change.**

Students and Staff:

La Harpe Elementary and Junior High School will return to 100% in-person instruction for the 2023-2024 school year with students attending their first day on August 17th. Remote instruction will only be made available for non-vaccinated or vaccine ineligible children who are under quarantine as directed by the local health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health.

La Harpe Elementary and Junior High School will follow the CDC/IDPH/ISBE guidance which includes:

- Fully vaccinated individuals are no longer required to wear masks while in the school building. Vaccinated individuals may continue to choose to wear masks at any time.
- Masks are strongly recommended to be worn inside by students and staff members who are not fully vaccinated.
- Masks are not required while students and staff are outside when physical distancing can be maintained.

Although masks are only strongly encouraged, families should carefully weigh the benefits of masking when making decisions for their children. Under the current definition of close contact in schools, when combined with physical distance at a minimum of 3 feet, masking

is one strategy that allows students to potentially avoid quarantine when exposed to COVID-19.

Vaccinations are not required. Individuals will not be required to disclose their vaccination status. *Parents, students, and staff may wish to voluntarily disclose their vaccination status to avoid potential mandatory quarantine for close contact with a COVID positive person.*

School buses are considered public transportation and are currently under a federal mandate for masking.

Symptoms of COVID-19 may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have become infected with COVID-19: Fever (100.4 degrees F or higher), new onset of moderate to severe headache, shortness of breath, new cough, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of sense of taste or smell, fatigue from unknown cause, muscle or body aches from unknown cause. Students or staff members who experience these symptoms should stay home and contact their healthcare provider for medical evaluation and testing.

Students and Staff members who test positive for COVID-19, and those individuals considered close contacts, may be mandated to quarantine in accordance with health department guidelines.

The COVID-19 INTERIM EXCLUSION GUIDANCE Decision Tree from the Illinois Department of Public Health and consultation with the Hancock County Health Department will be used to help school officials make decisions regarding exclusion from work or school. Decisions

regarding quarantine or isolation will be up to healthcare providers and the health department. This document will be on our website as soon as there is an updated copy. It will also be sent home with students on the first day.

Individuals in our school environment who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 will immediately report to the sick room with a staff member who will report to the office via phone. Individuals will be sent home or quarantined in a supervised area while awaiting pickup. Parents should ensure that students who exhibit symptoms are picked up from school within 30 minutes of being notified. Students who are exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will not be allowed to ride a school bus home.

Student absences related to a COVID-19 isolation or quarantine will be considered excused. School work missed during such an absence can be requested and made up following the guidelines detailed in our Student Handbook on page 10 section 2.4.

La Harpe Elementary and Junior High will continue to support student social, emotional, mental health and other needs with our school mental health team including school counselor, psychologist, and social worker.

Parents of students who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, or weakened immune systems should contact the principal. Medical documentation may be required.

The Federal Government Families First Coronavirus Response Act which provided two weeks paid sick leave expired December 31, 2020. Therefore, staff absences related to a COVID-19 isolation or quarantine will follow the district's sick leave policy and related professional negotiations agreements. To ensure continuity of services, staff members should contact the principal to discuss support for social emotional, mental health, or other needs.

Staff members who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, weakened immune system, or a sincerely held religious belief or practice (covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) should contact the principal to discuss the issue. Medical documentation may be required.

To the extent allowable by privacy laws and other applicable laws, school officials will continue to collaborate with the Hancock County Health Department officials to confidentially provide information about people diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19, including making notifications to staff and parents as soon as possible regarding those considered a close contact.

Changes to our COVID-19 mitigation procedures, including masking, will be subject to recommendations or requirements from the Hancock County Health Department, CDC, IDPH, and/or ISBE.

Visitors:

The safety of our students and staff remains the district's primary concern. During the regular school day, La Harpe Elementary and Junior High School will not allow unannounced classroom or cafeteria visitation.

All visitors to the building who are unvaccinated will be required to self-certify they are symptom free and wear a mask while in our school. Visitors will be required to apply hand sanitizer before entering the building. Visitors will also be required to follow the Tier-Based Covid Mitigation Measures detailed later in this document.

Tier-Based Covid Mitigation Measures

	Low Transmission: Positivity rate increasing by <10% for two consecutive weeks in the community	Moderate Transmission: Positivity rate increasing by more than 10 and less than or equal to 19% for two consecutive weeks in the community	Substantial or High Transmission: Positivity rate increasing >20% for two consecutive weeks in the community
Screening	No health screening	Self-health screening required for all students and staff prior to attending school or work.	Self-health screening required for all students and staff prior to attending school or work.
Face Covering	Transportation: Recommended to wear face mask Instruction and Activities: Not required for vaccinated individuals. Face Coverings strongly recommended but not required for unvaccinated individuals.	Transportation: Recommended to wear face mask Instruction and Activities: Not required for vaccinated individuals. Face Coverings strongly recommended but not required for unvaccinated individuals.	Transportation: Recommended to wear face mask Instruction and Activities: Recommended for all students and staff.
Social Distancing	3 feet between students when practical.	3 feet between students when practical.	6 feet between students when practical. Students will not move from room to room during the school day.
Breakfast and Lunch	Cafe for all socially distanced 3ft apart facing one another as practical.	Cafe for all socially distanced 3ft apart facing one another as practical.	Students will eat breakfast and lunch spread out in classrooms and the Johnson building.
Quarantine	Per Hancock Public Health Department guidelines and requirements	Per Hancock Public Health Department guidelines and requirements	Per Hancock Public Health Department guidelines and requirements
Microwave for heating lunches	Available - With sanitation before and after use	Available - With sanitation before and after use	Unavailable
Lunchbox Cooler	Available - With sanitation before and after use	Available - With sanitation before and after use	Unavailable

Hand Washing	Staff and Students will sanitize upon entry to the school. Will clean hands multiple times with soap and water or hand sanitizer throughout the day.	Staff and Students will sanitize upon entry to the school. Will clean hands multiple times with soap and water or hand sanitizer throughout the day.	Staff and Students will sanitize upon entry to the school. Will clean hands multiple times with soap and water or hand sanitizer throughout the day.
Cleaning Protocols	Standard Cleaning Procedures	Standard Cleaning Procedures	Enhanced Cleaning Procedures and Protocols
Sports	No Screening	Self health screening required for all students and staff prior to participation	Staff administered health screening required for all students and staff prior to participation

Definitions

1. **Levels of Community Transmission:** Where this number comes from and how this number is figured will be determined at the August 17, 2021 board meeting. The plan will be updated on August 18, 2021. We are currently planning on beginning school in the moderate tier level 10-19%.
 - a. Low = 0-9%
 - b. Moderate = 10-19%
 - c. Substantial/High = greater than 20%

2. **Enhanced Cleaning Protocols:**
 - a. Cleaning of high touch surfaces and objects (ex. Door handles, sink handles, water fountains, etc.) within the school and on school transportation multiple times a day
 - b. Prevent sharing of objects that are difficult to regularly clean such as electronic devices, pens, books, lab equipment, art supplies, etc.
 - c. If certain conditions apply (ex. low mask usage or high community transmission), difficult-to-clean shared objects will not be used for 72 hours between individual students or staff members. If items must be reused, the item will be disinfected first.
 - d. Staff should wash hands after removing gloves or after handling items used near individuals who are unmasked.
 - e. Regularly clean surfaces using disinfectant or detergent.

3. **Health Screening Self or done by families:**

Sick students and staff, no matter the illness, should not be at school. Symptoms of COVID-19 may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have become infected with COVID-19: Fever (100.4 degrees F or higher), new onset of moderate to severe headache, shortness of breath, new cough, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of sense of taste or smell, fatigue from unknown cause, muscle or body aches from unknown cause.

Any individual who experiences these symptoms should stay home and contact their healthcare provider for a medical evaluation and testing.