

Germantown Hills School District #69  
Back-to-School Plan  
2021-2022



Approved by the Board of Education  
August 9, 2021

## **Introduction**

The safety and security of our students and staff has been and will continue to be the top priority of Germantown Hills School District #69. Our District understands that students learn best when in person; therefore, we will begin the 2021-2022 school year with students attending full days, five days a week. Based on the most recent CDC/IDPH guidance, which recommends implementing layered prevention strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we have developed the following plan to ensure that our students can achieve to their fullest potential while providing a safe learning environment during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Our plan includes Tiered Mitigation Levels that will be implemented based on school and county COVID-19 data (see Appendix A).

## **COVID-19 Vaccinations**

Achieving high levels of COVID-19 vaccination among eligible students as well as teachers, staff, and household members is one of the most critical strategies to help our District safely resume full operations. Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection. A growing body of evidence suggests that people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are less likely to have an asymptomatic infection or transmit COVID-19 to others than people who are not fully vaccinated. If your child is eligible for a vaccination, please consider getting him/her vaccinated prior to the start of the school year.

## **Remote Learning**

The use of Remote Learning will be limited in accordance with ISBE's declaration:

*"Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, all schools must resume fully in-person learning for all student attendance days, provided that, pursuant to [105 ILCS 5/10-30](#) and [105 ILCS 5/34-18.66](#), remote instruction be made available for students who have not received a COVID-19 vaccine or who are not eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine, only while they are under quarantine consistent with guidance or requirements from a local public health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health."*

Medically fragile refers to those students who are at an increased risk of severe illness or live with someone at an increased risk of severe illness. For the 2021-22 school year, students who are medically fragile (or live with someone who is) and have a verified doctor's note will be able to participate in a remote learning program. Medically fragile remote learners will be assigned a tutor for five hours a week to assist in collecting work and provided instruction.

Student absences due to quarantining at any level will be treated as normal absences. Student work will be sent home and the teacher(s) will work to recoup any lost learning upon the student's return. Students will be given two days for every day missed in order to complete work.

### **Masks**

Pursuant to Executive Order 2021-18 issued by Governor Pritzker on August 4, 2021, all students, staff and visitors must wear masks while indoors regardless of vaccination status.

Once the Governor's mask mandate expires, our District will determine with which Mitigation Tier we will continue. If it is Mitigation Tier 1, parents will choose whether or not their child will wear a mask while indoors; however, if our local and/or school data COVID-19 data necessitates, we may continue to require all individuals to wear masks while indoors (see Appendix A).

***While on a school bus, all individuals must wear a mask. Students will not be allowed on a school bus without a mask. This includes bus rides for extra curricular activities.***

## **Physical Distancing**

We will strive to maintain at least three feet distance to the greatest extent possible while indoors; however, there will be times, such as during lunch, where maintaining three feet will be difficult.

## **Screening Testing to Identify Cases, Clusters and Outbreaks**

Screening testing identifies infected people, including those with or without symptoms (or before development of symptoms) who may be contagious, so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission. Our District may be partnering with SHIELD Illinois out of the University of Illinois to provide a saliva-based test for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

The SARS-CoV-2 screening may also be used to shorten quarantine periods.

## **Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette**

We will continue to promote frequent handwashing and/or use of hand sanitizer. We will also continue to reinforce proper respiratory etiquette such as covering coughs and sneezes.

## **Symptom Screenings and Staying Home When Sick**

By sending their children to school, parents and guardians are certifying that they have conducted a daily symptom screening of their child(ren). Parents and guardians must keep their child home if he/she exhibits one or more of the following COVID-like symptoms: fever (100.4 degrees or higher), new onset of moderate to severe headache, shortness of breath, new cough, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of taste or smell, fatigue from unknown cause, or muscle or body aches from unknown cause.

Siblings of symptomatic children must be kept home as well.

If the District moves to Mitigation Level 3, staff will conduct temperature checks on students upon entering the building.

## **Isolation, Quarantining & Contact Tracing**

In Illinois, contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine is required per Part 690 Control of Communicable Disease Code, Subpart I. Further, the Communicable Disease Code also requires mandatory reporting of any suspect, confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 to the local health department immediately (within 3 hours).

Students who test positive or are symptomatic for COVID-19 must isolate per CDC/IDPH Guidelines. Parents will be notified if their child has been identified as a close contact to a confirmed positive COVID-19 case. While indoors, close contacts will be determined if an individual was within six feet of a confirmed or probable positive COVID-19 case for a cumulative 15 minutes within a 24 hour time period. However, if both the close contact and the confirmed or probable positive individuals were both properly wearing masks the distance in determining a close contact is 3 feet.

Fully vaccinated persons who remain asymptomatic and those with a documented COVID-19 infection within the past 90 days will not be identified as close contacts.

## **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

Classrooms will be sanitized daily using sanitation sprayers and E15 solution. Water bottle filling stations and door handles will be disinfected throughout the day. Students are encouraged to bring a personal water bottle to be kept at school.

## **Students with Disabilities**

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 their student's case manager to discuss his/her need(s).

Students who are medically unable to attend school for an extended period of time will need to follow the procedures for home/hospital services pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/14-13.0.

### **Starting the School Day**

All students, pre-k through eighth grade, will continue to go to their classroom/first-hour class upon arrival to school. There will not be any mass congregation in gymnasiums or other common spaces before the school day begins. Middle School doors will open at 7:20 AM and Elementary doors will open at 8:15 AM.

### **Middle School Bell Schedule**

Beginning the 2021-2022 school year, the middle school will return to a traditional bell schedule of nine class periods.

### **Lockers**

Beginning the 2021-22 school year, the use of lockers at all building levels will resume.

### **Lunch & Recess (K-8)**

Students will resume eating in the multi-purpose room and commons areas during the 2021-22 school year. Students will be socially distanced to the greatest extent possible. All lunch/recess periods for grades K-8 will be 40 minutes in length. Elementary students will receive an additional 15 minutes of recess every morning. Lunch procedures may be modified if our District moves to Mitigation Tier 2 or 3 (see Appendix A).

### **Elementary Specials Subjects**

Elementary Music, Library, Art, and Computers classes will resume regular programming during the 2021- 22 school year. Specials Teachers will resume classes in their own classrooms.

### **Middle School Band, Music, and Choir**

Middle School music programs will resume regular programming for the 2021-22 school year. This will include competitions (as available), concerts, and programs. After-school programming or meetings related to music may continue to take place indoors and parents will be able to attend as it is after school hours.

### **Visitors**

Visitors will not be permitted beyond school offices during school hours until vaccines are available for all students.

### **Field Trips & All-School Assemblies**

Field trips that align with instructional outcomes and/or are an extension of the learning environment will be permitted during the 2021-22 school year. All-school assemblies will not be permitted until vaccines are available for all students.

## **DISCLOSURE**

**The contents of this Back-to-School Plan are subject to change based on Federal, State, or Local guidance and/or conditions. Any changes will be communicated via email, posted to the district website, or via phone message if appropriate.**

## **APPENDIX A**

### **TIERED MITIGATION LEVELS**

The Mitigation Levels outline how our day-to-day operations will function over the coming school year. Please note that changes in our mitigation levels will be dependent upon the weekly analysis of school and IDPH metrics for school determination of community spread. The District may modify the criteria and mitigations at any time.

#### **Mitigation Tier 1- MINIMAL TRANSMISSION**

- Masks are recommended but not required for unvaccinated individuals if closer than 3 feet for more than 15 cumulative minutes.
- Physically distance 3 feet to the greatest extent possible.
- Implement remote learning for classes, grade level, school or building as needed.

#### **Mitigation Tier 2- MODERATE TRANSMISSION**

*All four metrics for school determination of community spread are at moderate or substantial levels AND 20% - 30% increase in new positive cases amongst staff and students over 2 consecutive weeks*

- Students and staff may be required to wear masks temporarily regardless of vaccination or immunity status, within a particular part of the school, or the entire school.
- Physically distance 3 feet to the greatest extent possible.
- Implement remote learning for classes, grade level, or building if needed.
- Self-certification to screen for symptoms.
- Field trips and some programs may be canceled or postponed.

#### **Mitigation Tier 3 – SUBSTANTIAL TRANSMISSION**

*All four metrics for school determination of community spread are at substantial levels AND greater than 30% increase in new positive cases amongst staff and students over 2 consecutive weeks*

- Students and staff may be required to wear masks temporarily regardless of vaccination or immunity status, within a particular part of the school, or the entire school.
- 3 feet between students in all circumstances.
- Implement remote learning for classes, grade level, or building if needed.
- Self-certification to screen for symptoms and temperature screening required for entry.
- Field trips and some programs will be canceled or postponed.
- More stringent mitigations may be developed if the school or county COVID-19 data necessitates them.