



Return to School Plan

Fall 2020



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Summary

Since the coronavirus pandemic began, Midwest Central CUSD #191 has been working on its Return to School Plan for the 2020-21 school year. The district prepared educational plans and operational protocols based on guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Department of Health (IDPH), Mason and Tazewell Health Departments, and the state's five-phase reopening plan, Restore Illinois.

<https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/sfc/servlet.shepherd/document/download/069t000000BadSOAAJ?operationContext=S1>

In addition, in June the district administered a survey to all parents in the district in which they could provide feedback about the reopening of school. The District Administrators have met with maintenance, food service, the transportation department and the union leaders in order to gain additional input.

This guide outlines the educational plans and some protocols in place for the entire school year, based on which phase the state of Illinois is in at any given time. Due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, it is possible the district will be in several of these phases over the course of the school year. It is important to note, during any phase in which students and staff are on campus, no one will be penalized for missing school for health related issues and we encourage those who are not feeling well to stay home. While school will look very different, the district's commitment to providing a high quality education to our students remains the same.

Note: Protocols outlined in this guide are subject to change as new guidance becomes available.

Phase 1: Rapid Spread

During this phase, strict stay at home and social distancing guidelines are in place. Only essential workers remain on school sites as necessary. All students and staff engage in Online or Remote Learning, which includes more rigorous guidelines based on feedback from the Spring 2020 experience.

Phase 2: Flattening

During this phase, strict stay at home and social distancing guidelines are in place. Only essential workers remain on school sites as necessary. All students and staff engage in Online or Remote Learning, which includes more rigorous guidelines based on feedback from the Spring 2020 experience.

Phase 3: Recovery

During this phase, social distancing guidelines are in place. Gatherings of 10 people or less in space are permitted. This means:

- Most students and staff engage in Online or Remote Learning, which includes more rigorous guidelines based on feedback from the Spring 2020 experience.
- Students in some special education programs may return to campus for learning.
- Staff is on site as required.
- The district follows IHSA and IESA guidelines for athletics.

Phase 4: Revitalization

During this phase, social distancing guidelines are in place. Gatherings of less than 50 people in a space are permitted. This means:

- All students and staff are on site, with the option of Distance Learning for some.
- The district follows IHSA and IESA guidelines for athletics.

Phase 5: Restored

During this phase, school resumes as “normal” with new public health guidelines in place.

On-Campus Protocols (Phases 3 and 4)

The health and well-being of our students and staff is a top priority. For this reason, during Phases 3 and 4 there will be strict protocols in place when students and staff are on campus. Midwest Central has divided these protocols into six categories:

- Health & Wellness
- Instruction
- Transportation
- Operations
- Human Resources
- Communications

Health & Wellness

Social & Physical Distancing

Midwest Central has developed procedures to ensure six feet of physical distance from other persons as much as possible. This expectation pertains to students and staff members in all areas and settings to the greatest extent possible. Visual reminders will be posted throughout school buildings and visuals will be designated as indicators of safe distances in areas where students congregate or line up (e.g., arrival and departure, lunchroom lines, hallways, recess lines, libraries, cafeterias).

Students will remain with their grade level or class to reduce mixing grade levels within the building as much as possible. We will stagger bus loading and unloading, hall passing periods, mealtimes, bathroom breaks, etc. to ensure student and staff safety. Staff and students should abstain from physical contact, including, but not limited to, handshakes, high fives, hugs, etc. Staff break areas will be arranged to facilitate social distancing. Break times will be staggered to minimize eating with masks off near others.

When six feet of space is not possible to maintain, Midwest Central will use physical barriers, such as plexiglass dividers, to separate students.

PPE and Face Coverings

Midwest Central understands physical distancing will not be possible for all circumstances. There is significant evidence that face coverings provide protection and decrease the spread of COVID-19. All individuals in school buildings must wear school appropriate face coverings at all times, unless they are younger than two years of age, are having trouble breathing, or are unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance. 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 distance is maintained. Midwest Central will maintain a supply of disposable face coverings in the event that a staff member, student, or visitor does not have one for use. After use, the front of the face covering is considered contaminated and should not be touched during removal or replacement. Hand hygiene should be performed immediately after removing and after replacing the face covering. Gloves or other PPE must be used as needed when assisting students require close contact. **Students will need to provide their own face coverings which must meet the CDC guidelines. All masks should be washed regularly. Disposable masks will be available on buses and at school to be used as needed. Face shields don't qualify as a mask.**

Midwest Central plans to provide students with regular snack breaks so that students may remove masks to eat. Midwest Central also plans to take students outside for learning on appropriate weather days so that students may remove masks.

Symptom Screening/Temperature Checks Daily

Schools are required to conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks before allowing students and staff to enter school buildings. All staff and students will have to complete a temperature check and wellness screening before entering the building. Parents will have to self-certify that students are symptom and temperature free for those students that ride the bus. The district will provide all parents with the approved self-certification checklist.

Only students and staff who are healthy should report for in-person learning. **It is important to note, students and staff will not be penalized for missing school for health related reasons and are encouraged to stay home when not feeling well.**

Students and staff with any of the following symptoms of COVID-19 must remain home:

- Cough
- Fatigue
- Fever or chills
- Headache
- Known close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19
- Measured temperature of 100.4 F/ 38C or greater
- Nausea or vomiting
- New loss of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat

Any student or staff member who begins to exhibit a high fever associated with COVID-19 like symptoms must report to the designated area in each building, following the building procedure. Please inform the school nurse.

Students will be provided a face covering and will remain in the quarantine area until a parent or guardian picks the student up or alternative transportation home is arranged. Staff will remain in the quarantine area until they are able to leave. These individuals must self-monitor and return to school according to the IDPH guidelines. A doctor's note may be required for staff returning to work. Staff who has **had close contact (defined as within 6 ft for 15 minutes)** with someone who is positive for COVID-19 must notify their building principal or supervisor immediately. Students who have had contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19 must follow the IDPH guidelines for self-monitoring and self-quarantine and notify the school immediately.

Hygiene

Frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing are key to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Staff members must clean hands as often as possible with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. Staff and students must avoid touching their mouths, eyes, and noses as much as possible. Hand sanitizer will be placed in common areas throughout each school building. Each building will place signage reminding everyone of the need for proper hand hygiene in the appropriate areas. If assisting a student requires close contact, hand washing or sanitizing must be done before and after contact with students. It is recommended that hand hygiene is performed upon arrival to and departure from school; after blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing; following restroom use; before food preparation or before and after eating; before/after routine care for another person, such as a child; after contact with a person who is sick; upon return from the playground/physical education; and following glove removal. Schools will post handwashing posters in the bathrooms, hallways, all common areas.

Training

Each staff member will be required to complete safety training related to Midwest Central's physical distancing, face covering, and hand hygiene procedures. Each building will provide training to staff that is specific to their unique circumstances. Hand hygiene and physical distancing will be included in the curriculum to help educate students on the importance of proper hand hygiene and personal safety. Employees will also be trained on the proper way to disinfect their individual workstations as needed.

How to Wear, Wash, & Clean Masks - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

Social distancing - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>

Training for those 15-21 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/toolkits/young-adults-15-to-21.html#young-adults-faqs>

Visitors

Visitors must be restricted to authorized personnel only. Higher discretion will be used when inviting visitors to schools. Visitors to any building must always wear an appropriate and approved face covering and report directly to the main office for a wellness screening, which includes a temperature check. Visitors will remain in the main office or other designated area for the duration of the visit.

Students or staff will be asked to meet the visitor to conduct business as needed. Visitors will not have access to the building in general to maintain physical distancing.

All visitors prior to entering the building must be asked the following questions:

1. Has the individual washed their hands or used alcohol-based hand sanitizer on entry?
 - a. Yes - proceed to question #2
 - b. No – please ask them to do so and then proceed to question #2
2. Ask the individual if they have any of the following symptoms
 - i. Cough
 - ii. Shortness of breath
 - iii. OR at least TWO of these symptoms
 - iv. Fever
 - v. Shaking with chills
 - vi. Headache
 - vii. Loss of taste or smell
 - viii. Muscle pain
 - ix. Sore throat, congestion, or runny nose
 - x. Vomiting
 - xi. Diarrhea **per IDPH**
 - b. If YES, restrict them from entering the building
 - c. If NO to all, continue to step #3
3. Check temperature, looking for a fever of 100.4F/38C or higher
 - a. If YES, restrict them from entering the building
 - b. If NO to all, continue to step #4
4. Allow entry to the building and remind the individual to:
 - a. Wash their hands or use hand sanitizer throughout their time in the building
 - b. DO NOT shake hands with, touch, or hug individuals during their visit

Pre-Kindergarten (PK) Classroom Guidance

- Clearly mark classroom areas to show where to sit, stand or line-up for six feet spacing, if possible
- Students will remain with the same classroom group throughout the day; services will take place in the classroom when feasible
- Clearly mark common areas to show where to stand or line-up for six feet spacing
- Maximize school's ventilation systems
- Schedule/coordinate restroom and hand washing breaks throughout the day
- Schedule/coordinate recess by classroom to minimize student mixing
- Sanitize hands whenever anyone enters the classroom
- Building staff must review student pick up and drop off procedures

Kindergarten-Grade 5 Classroom Guidance

- Arrange seating as far apart as possible and face the same direction where feasible. It is recommended teachers provide assigned seating for students and require students to remain in these seats to the greatest extent possible.
- Clearly mark common areas and tables to show where to sit, stand or line-up for six feet spacing, if possible
- Students will remain with the same classroom group throughout the day
- Schedule/coordinate restroom and handwashing breaks throughout the day
- Schedule/coordinate recess by grade level to minimize mixing student groups
- Sanitize hands whenever anyone enters the classroom
- Do not share school supplies between students or staff when possible

Grades 6–8 Classroom Guidance

- Arrange seating as far apart as possible, and face the same direction where feasible. It is recommended teachers provide assigned seating for students and require students to remain in these seats to the greatest extent possible.
- Clearly mark common areas and tables to show where to sit, stand or line-up for six feet spacing, if possible
- Students will remain with the same classroom group throughout the day as much as possible
- Stagger transition times and review schedules
- Encourage hand washing throughout the day
- Schedule/coordinate activities by grade level to minimize student mixing
- Sanitize hands whenever anyone enters the classroom
- Do not share school supplies between students or staff when possible

Grades 9–12 Classroom Guidance

- Arrange seating as far apart as possible and face the same direction where feasible. It is recommended teachers provide assigned seating for students and require students to remain in these seats to the greatest extent possible.
- Clearly mark common areas and tables to show where to sit, stand or line-up for six feet spacing, if possible
- Stagger transition times when possible and review schedules
- Encourage hand washing throughout the day
- Schedule/coordinate activities by grade level or class to minimize student mixing
- Sanitize hands whenever anyone enters the classroom
- Do not share school supplies between students or staff when possible
- Building staff must review student arrival and dismissal procedures

Hallways, Main Office, and Common Areas

- Maintain six feet physical distancing when possible
- Require face coverings for staff and students
- Clearly mark areas to indicate safe distancing for students
- Perform health screenings for visitors
- Display visible signage reminding everyone of physical distancing and face covering usage at entryways, hallways, classrooms, and common areas
- Provide access to school buildings to authorized personnel only. Visitor access will be as needed only and will be restricted to the main office area (clearly visible signage at each entryway)
- Restrict students to specific areas as identified by the building principal
- Clean high-touch areas throughout the day

Cafeteria

- Maintain six feet physical distancing when possible
- Clean cafeteria in between uses
- Allow students to eat in alternate locations or outside when possible
- Clearly mark areas to indicate safe distancing for students
- Require staff and student face coverings (if not eating or not outside)

Restrooms

- Maintain social distancing and limit number of occupants at the same time.
- Require face coverings for staff and students
- Clearly mark areas to indicate safe distancing for students
- Display clearly visible signage reminding everyone of physical distancing and face coverings
- Schedule/coordinate restroom and handwashing breaks when possible
- Clean high touch areas throughout the day
- Assign restrooms to student groups when possible

Shared Objects

Students and employees should restrict or limit borrowing or sharing of any items. The CDC recommends that electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids not be shared. Electronics, including, but not limited to, iPads, touchscreens, keyboards, remote controls, lunchroom keypads, door entry systems, etc., should be cleaned before and after use. Items that must be shared or communally used must be cleaned after each use and individuals must perform hand hygiene between use. Utilizing hand sanitizer before and after the use of books or library material is recommended. Do not use items like play food, dishes, and utensils. Instead use materials that can be thrown out, cleaned after one use, or labeled for individual child use. Machine-washable cloth toys should be used by one individual at a time and cleaned in between uses or not be used at all. Where possible manipulatives will be bagged for individual student use.

Preparing for When a Student or Staff Member Becomes Sick

Midwest Central will 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. Families and staff should also report possible cases to the school where the individual attends school or works to initiate contact tracing. Currently known symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. Attendance personnel should request specific symptom reporting when absences are reported, along with COVID-19 diagnoses and COVID-19 exposure. Information will be documented and shared with the health staff or other appropriate personnel and the local health department. In accordance with state and federal guidance, school community members who are sick should not return to school until they have met the criteria to return.

Midwest Central will use a symptom checklist for families and staff to determine if they are well enough to attend that day. CDC and IDPH guidelines for students who were suspected of having COVID-19, whether they were tested or not, state that 24 hours must elapse from the resolution of fever without fever reducing medication and 10 days must pass after symptoms first appeared. It is recommended that medically fragile and immunocompromised students consult their medical provider prior to attending school. Students or staff returning from illness related to COVID-19 should call to check in with the District office following quarantine. Any individual within the school environment who shows symptoms will be immediately separated from the rest of the school population. Individuals who are sick will be sent home. If emergency services are necessary, we will call 911.

When interacting with students or staff who may be sick, school nurses and personnel should follow CDC guidance on standard and transmission based precautions. Students should never be left alone and must always be supervised while maintaining necessary precautions.

Areas of the school used by a sick person will be closed off and not used until after proper cleaning and disinfection procedures have been completed. Windows will be opened to increase air circulation in the area. It is advised by the CDC to wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting; if 24 hours are not possible, we will wait as long as possible. All areas, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment, etc., used by the person who is sick will be cleaned and disinfected. We will ensure cleaning products are stored and used a safe distance away from children and staff.

Individuals who did not have close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection. Those who had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or is suspected of having a COVID-19 infection should isolate at home and monitor symptoms for 14 days. Close contact means the individual was within six feet of the individual with symptoms for more than 15 minutes. Additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary if more than seven days have elapsed since the person who is sick visited or used the school. Routine cleaning and disinfection will continue. This includes every day practices that schools normally use to maintain a healthy environment.

CDC guidance - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html>

CDC Cleaning Link - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>

Instruction

Midwest Central has developed an instructional plan to allow for a return to in-person learning for students, while holding paramount the health and safety of our students and community. The regular school day will be one hour shorter than normal until further notice. Dismissing one hour early will allow all students to meet the mandated 5 hour instructional day. This extra hour will allow the district teachers to contact students who have been absent, work with students that have chosen remote learning, or tutor students that have returned to school from an extended absence. It will also be used for extra cleaning and planning that are required to keep everyone safe. Students may enter the upcoming school year with academic knowledge that varies more greatly among students than in previous school years. Teachers will use targeted interventions and differentiated instruction to help individual students reach their learning goals.

Safety Education for Students

Students will be receiving grade level appropriate education and guidance for proper physical distancing, proper use of PPE, and proper hand hygiene during the first week of school. Each school should develop a plan for providing students with building specific safety measures to follow with an explanation as to why these measures are important. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

Student Who are Medically Fragile or at Higher Risk

The administration will work closely with the school nurse and parents, as well as the student's medical provider, to determine safe alternatives to in-person instruction. Midwest Central will consider Remote Learning for medically fragile students, students at a higher risk of severe illness, and students who live with individuals at higher risk of severe illness for the duration of Phase 4.

Appropriate consents must be obtained for communication with outside providers. IEPs, 504 Plans, asthma action plans, and Individualized Health Plans will be reviewed to determine if these plans will need to be amended or modified.

Teams should consider the following:

- Whether the student's medical condition is conducive to in-person attendance or if needs would best be met remotely.
- The student's behavior and capacities, including ability to control secretions, cover mouth/nose when sneezing and coughing, ability to maintain distance from other classmates, ability to tolerate wearing a face covering (may consider the option of face shield instead), ability to wash hands with/without assistance, and ability/safety of use of hand sanitizer.
- The number of students per classroom and ability to social distance as much as possible.
- Consult with individual student health care providers, if applicable, and IEP teams to determine the best modality to meet the student's needs on an individualized basis.

For staff working with students who are present for in person learning, Midwest Central will provide appropriate PPE for continuous wear and during procedures such as feeding (e.g., gowns, gloves, and face shields). Maintaining strict social distancing will not likely be feasible due to the personal nature of common care and services, including feeding, toileting, suctioning, position changes, diaper changing, hand-over-hand assistance, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. Appropriate PPE should be used in conjunction with appropriate hand hygiene.

Social and Emotional Care

Students will also have continued support from the social workers and counselor at school. Problem solving teams will continue to identify students who may need additional support or interventions. Students with IEPs for SEL will continue to receive services based on their identified IEP minutes.

Music-Related Courses

Music related education will follow the most current IDPH/ISBE guidelines for student and staff safety measures. During phase 4, this will include utilizing outdoor spaces when possible. Instrumental music teachers will work with students in smaller sectional groups. Students will need to wear face coverings if singing indoors. It is permissible for band members to remove their mask during the time they are playing, but only if necessary. (Percussionists, for example, can play in masks.)

Driver's Education Behind-the-Wheel

In order to provide behind-the-wheel training to students in driver's education in compliance with all Secretary of State and IDPH safety requirements, the following procedures must be followed:

- Require only two students and one instructor per vehicle
- Require face coverings
- Prohibit eating and drinking in the vehicle
- Do not make any unnecessary stops during the training
- Complete hand hygiene with soap and water or hand sanitizer, before and after driving
- Clean and disinfect steering wheel, door handles, seat belt fastener, controls/dials, keys, etc. in between each behind-the-wheel session
- Conduct regular routine cleaning and disinfecting of seats

Physical Education, Gymnasiums, Playgrounds, and Locker Rooms

Physical activity can support students' overall health and help reduce stress and anxiety. Whenever feasible and weather permitting, schools should select outdoor PE activities that allow physical distancing. If physical education must be taught inside, utilize markings on the gymnasium floor/wall/field to maintain distance between participants. Handshaking, high fives, or other physical contact is prohibited. The use of shared equipment is not recommended. Any shared equipment must be cleaned between each use and disinfected at the end of each class. Fitness centers with equipment such as treadmills, elliptical, stationary bicycles, weights, etc., must be cleaned and sanitized before and after each class.

Frequently touched surfaces such as keypads, hand weights, handles, etc will be focused on for cleaning. Students and staff must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at the start and end of each class period or when hands are visibly dirty. Students must perform hand hygiene after the use of each piece of equipment. Schools will consider limiting the use of locker rooms, as well as allowing students to participate in activities without changing clothing when possible.

Extra-Curricular

Extracurricular activities must follow the IDPH requirements set forth for the school setting, which include social distancing, appropriate use of PPE, limiting the number of individuals in one space to 10 individuals during Phase 3 and to 50 or fewer in Phase 4, and cleaning and disinfecting to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Many extra-curricular activities will be minimized or eliminated this year. Athletics will follow the guidelines provided by the IHSA and the IESA.

Special Needs

Midwest Central understands the impact COVID-19 has had on our most vulnerable student population. As a result, the Student Services Department is developing plans and procedures to address the various unique challenges the blended model creates. The Student Services team will remain in contact with special needs families throughout the summer and will be ready for the 2020-21 school year.

Midwest Central must adhere to timelines for annual IEP meeting and required evaluations. There continues to be limited flexibility from complying with federal and state laws. All Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 timelines remain in effect. IEP teams should meet to determine whether any amendments to students' IEPs are necessary to address students' current levels of performance. IEP teams should update remote learning plans as needed for students based on the learning experiences during the 2019-2020 school year.

Remote Learning Option Grades K-5

Parents who are not comfortable sending their students to school due to a COVID-19 concern will be allowed to choose remote learning for their student. Parents who choose this option must keep their students in remote learning, and they will not be able to switch their learning option on a day to day, week to week, etc. basis. Students may only switch into or out of online learning at the semester break.

Students who attend school via remote learning will earn letter grades or meet grade level standards, and they will be assessed in the same manner as students who come to school for face to face instruction. **Parents cannot choose remote learning simply because their student does not want to attend school.**

Remote learning will be done through live online lessons as well as video recordings of actual Midwest Central teachers. Parents will opt-in for remote learning during the registration process.

Midwest Central students that opt for online or remote learning will not be permitted to participate in or attend extra-curricular events or other school functions for safety reasons.

Online Learning Option Grades 6-12

Parents who are not comfortable sending their students to school due to a COVID-19 concern will be allowed to choose online learning for their student in 6-12th grades. Parents who choose this option must keep their students in online learning, and they will not be able to switch their learning option on a day to day, week to week, etc. basis. Students may only switch into or out of online learning at the semester break.

Students in grades 6-12 will have the option of completing fully online coursework in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The coursework will be taught by Illinois certified teachers using Illinois learning standards. Courses will not be taught by Midwest Central teachers. Coursework, grades, and progress will be monitored by Midwest Central staff, and students will receive a grade for each class they take. Midwest Central has been using this method of learning with great success for several years with students who were unable to attend school for medical reasons. Coursework is rigorous and students must be motivated to complete their work. Caregiver support for this option is extremely important.

Parents will opt-in for online learning during the registration process.

Midwest Central students that opt for online or remote learning will not be permitted to participate in or attend extra-curricular events or other school functions for safety reasons

Transportation

Midwest Central is working to ensure all procedures are in compliance with all applicable expectations under state and federal guidelines. All individuals on a bus must wear a face covering, no more than 50 individuals will be on a bus at one time, and social distancing will be maintained to the greatest extent possible. **Parents will have to self-certify that their children are symptom and temperature free daily prior to boarding the bus. Parents will be provided a symptom checklist to use for this process.** When a parent sends a student to a bus stop they are certifying that their child is symptom and fever free. Drivers and monitors will wear approved and appropriate PPE and perform regular hand hygiene. Before the start of each workday, drivers and monitors will undergo symptom and temperature checks to verify that they are free of symptoms. Drivers and monitors who have a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius or symptoms of COVID-19 will not work. Drivers and monitors who become ill during their route will contact their supervisor immediately.

The CDC recommends that entities should “create distance between children on school buses ...when possible. No more than 50 individuals may be on a vehicle at any one time during Phase 4. Midwest Central will provide visual guides to ensure that students comply with expectations. All students will have assigned seating. Family members must be seated together and all riders will be distanced as much as possible. Buses will unload at the schools one at a time and buses will be loaded in groups less than 50 at a time. IEP or 504 teams will meet to determine individual transportation needs for students who require special accommodations.

All IDOT inspections will occur as required. In addition, student transportation vehicles will be sanitized each day. Seats and high touch areas will also be sanitized between routes. Sanitizing products will meet the EPA criteria and be used according to manufacturers’ guidelines.

Operations

Food Services

Masks must be worn by students until they are seated and ready to begin eating. The masks must be put back on once they have finished eating. At the primary and middle school breakfast and/or lunches may be served in classrooms to limit student exposure to other students. At the high school procedures will be in place to distance the students as much as possible. Students will have the opportunity to eat in alternate locations to minimize contact with other students.

All food will be served by Arbor employees; there will be no self-serving of any food items. Meals will be individually plated or packaged as grab and go items. Non-disposable food service items will be handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher. Areas where students consume meals will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Food service personnel will use appropriate PPE, including gloves and face coverings, while preparing and distributing food.

Meals can be delivered to families that are participating in Remote Learning. Those who would like meals need to inform the office staff in their child's building. They will coordinate with transportation and the cafeteria to coordinate delivery. Meals are available to all students at no cost.

Hand hygiene will be required prior to and after eating a meal or consuming any food items, and hand sanitizer will be available at food service locations. Mealtime expectations will be shared with students and staff.

Faculty and Staff should avoid eating in large numbers in workrooms, unless social distancing can be accomplished.

Facilities

Sanitation, hygiene, and PPE supplies will be ordered and stockpiled for employee access. All custodial/maintenance staff will be trained on the return to school guidelines, where applicable. These procedures will include extra sanitation efforts using certified EPA products in both low/high contact areas including:

- Countertops
- Desktops
- Door handles
- Bottle fillers
- Handrails
- Light switches
- Restroom fixtures

Building custodians and cleaning personnel will conduct daily cleaning and disinfection. An EPA approved cleaner will be used for disinfection along with our standard cleaning protocols. All frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles/knobs, desktops/tabletops, countertops, light switches, pencil sharpeners, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, phones, toys, cubbies/coat and backpack areas, sinks and faucets) will be cleaned on a regular basis. Restrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and high touch common areas will be cleaned throughout the day. Soft surfaces such as carpets and rugs will be cleaned daily. Items such as cloth toys or other cloth material items that cannot be disinfected must not be used.

Classroom Teachers will have a cleaning protocol for their rooms/toys/calculators, etc.

Building and Grounds may adjust personnel schedules to meet reopening school needs. Cleaning schedules will be created and implemented for all facilities and equipment. Extra sanitation efforts will occur during in-class learning which will address high traffic/common areas.

High Traffic Areas:

- Entryways
- Foyers
- Hallways
- Main offices
- Restrooms
- Stairwells

Limit Outside Access to Our Facilities

Visitors and the use of school facilities by external parties will be discouraged as much as possible. Outside organizations that may have rented school facilities in the past should not expect to use the facilities again until circumstances change.

Designated Areas for Students with Health Issues

All designated areas will:

- Limit the number of individuals allowed in at one time.
- Provide a supervised quarantine space for students/staff who are experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms and may be awaiting evaluation and/or pickup.
- Students must never be left alone and must be supervised at all times while maintaining necessary precautions within the quarantine space.
- Disinfect a space after it is occupied by a student and deep clean daily.
- Require students exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms wear a face covering unless medically contraindicated.
- Per CDC guidance, close off areas used by a sick person; these areas will not be used until after cleaning and disinfecting. There is a waiting period of at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If 24 hours is not feasible, we will wait as long as possible.
- The school nurse and/or the administrator/designee working with individuals with illness symptoms will be provided with appropriate PPE. School nurse should use PPE, including gloves and face coverings, when interacting with students and staff. Appropriate PPE should be used in conjunction with appropriate hand hygiene and standard precautions.
- Require personal care aides working with medically fragile students wear PPE (e.g., face shields, face masks, and gloves).
- Implement strategies to reduce unnecessary visits from students, staff, and visitors; reduce health office congestion; reduce exposure to infection, and allow for separation. Designate one room for the nurse to see symptomatic people (separate from the usual nurse's office).
- Treat healthy students reporting to the health office for medical management, such as medications, tube feeding, assessment of injury, or first aid, in a separate clean designated area inside or outside the health office to prevent contact with potentially ill children.
- Perform daily cleaning of high-touch surfaces in the health office with a disinfectant labeled to kill the coronavirus.

*Persons with common health conditions or those who need basic first aid should not report to the health office but may be managed in the classroom/alternate setting as much as possible.

*Parents, guardians, or other authorized individuals should pick up ill students within a reasonable amount of time; ill students will not be allowed to ride the school bus home.

*In the absence of a nurse, each school district's administrators must determine who will be responsible for meeting the health-related needs of students and staff.

Recommendations for Families

- State of Illinois mandated health examination and vaccine requirements will be due by October 15th.
- Please make sure all emergency contact information is up to date.
- All students should stay home if they are sick with any illness symptoms.
- The CDC recommends everyone 6 months of age and older get vaccinated every flu season with rare exceptions. Flu symptoms overlap with coronavirus symptoms. Please vaccinate your children for influenza this fall.
- When reporting illness absences, be sure to report if your child has:
 1. Been in close contact of someone with a positive COVID 19 test
 2. Has signs of coronavirus
 3. Has been diagnosed with coronavirus
 4. Has been diagnosed with influenza (respiratory flu)
- For students with asthma, no nebulizer treatments will be given at school during the pandemic. Asthma action plans should reflect the use of asthma inhalers and spacers.
- When necessary, please send your child with extra clothing in case a change is necessary as there will be no clothing stored in the nurse's office.

What to Expect if There is a Confirmed Case in School

- The Mason or Tazewell Co. Health Depts. will notify school officials. They will help administrators determine a course of action for the school.
- Persons identified as being in close contact (within 6 ft. for 15 min.) with the individual will be on quarantine for 14 days, isolated from other family members as much as possible.
- What to do if you are sick: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Returning to School After Having Had Coronavirus:

- Please call the school office prior to returning to school.
- Students will stay home for at least 10 days and must be fever free for 72 hours after symptoms have resolved OR have two negative Covid-19 tests in a row, with testing done at least 24 hours apart.
- As new guidance emerges, guidelines may change.

Human Resources

The contents of this document are subject to change when formal guidance or mandates are issued by the proper authorities (ISBE, IDPH, IHSA, etc.). All employees will need to be flexible and agile during this pandemic which will require cooperative, collaborative, flexible, and creative problem solving. Midwest Central will generate guidelines and protocols which will be required for all employees. Midwest Central will continue to monitor recommendations from the PRESS Policy Organization, as well as from professional organizations such as IASA, IASB, IPA, and others about educational expectations for student learning.

Staff Return Plan

All return to work expectations will be dictated by executive and legislative guidance from the state and federal government. An employee's request for a special accommodation should be provided to the building principal for consideration.

Absences that are related to COVID-19 concerns must be accompanied by a physician's note or official notice from a health agency containing relevant information/direction regarding the claimed condition.

Eligible employees would be entitled to any COVID-19 related federal, state, and locally mandated leaves or accommodations. Otherwise, employees would be expected to use their traditionally available days for their absences from work (sick time, vacation time, personal, etc.). Each case will be evaluated individually based upon the facts surrounding the circumstance.

If the District determines that it is both necessary and appropriate, the employee will be informed about the accommodation(s) verbally and in writing. The District will make every effort to follow all CDC, IDPH, and CDPH guidelines regarding district employees.

Staffing Level

The district will monitor staffing levels within each building to ensure optimal operations for teaching and learning. In the event that staffing levels drop below the ability for the building to maintain optimal operations, the district will consider all options to support student learning.

Every effort shall be made to ensure substitute teachers are available in all employee categories to fill vacancies and/or absences that could be a result of the COVID-19 health precautions. In the event of any unforeseen circumstances, the district will comply with Federal, State, IDPH, ISBE and CDC guidelines.

Illness and Diagnoses Monitoring

A tracking process will be instituted to maintain ongoing monitoring of individuals excluded from school because they have COVID-19-like symptoms, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 and are in quarantine.

Tracking ensures CDC and local health authority criteria for discontinuing home isolation or quarantine are met before a student or staff member returns to school. Tracking methods include checking in with the principal/nurse upon return to school to verify resolution of symptoms and that any other criteria for discontinuation of quarantine have been met. Tracking will take place prior to a return to the classroom.

Continual communicable disease diagnosis monitoring and the monitoring of student and staff absenteeism should occur through collaboration of those taking absence reports. Employees and families must be encouraged to report specific symptoms, COVID-19 diagnoses, and COVID-19 exposures when reporting absences.

The district will share community testing sites with staff, families, and students. Confirmed cases of COVID-19 should be reported to the local health department by the school nurse or designee as required by the Illinois Infectious Disease Reporting requirements issued by IDPH.

Districts should inform the school community of outbreaks per local and state health department guidelines while maintaining student and staff confidentiality rights. Please refer to the linked documents for:

- Frequently asked questions - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Cleaning-and-Disinfection>
- CDC corona website - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- IDPH corona website - <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19>

Mental Health

Considerations will be given to the impact that COVID-19 has on the mental health of faculty, staff, students, and their families. The mental and emotional well-being of students and staff members will be closely monitored. Training will be provided to staff to increase awareness of the impact of COVID-19. Access to school counselors and supports are readily available as possible and communicated to students. Employees in need of assistance should contact their administration for help as needed.

Communications

Communication Methods

Throughout the 2020-21 school year, Midwest Central will utilize the following communication methods to keep stakeholders up to date on changes regarding all protocols:

- Midwest Central social media (Facebook, Twitter)
- Phone messaging system, texts, and emails

All parents/guardians who wish to receive communication should make sure email addresses and phone numbers are up-to-date in TeacherEase.

QUICK CONTACTS:

Who do I contact if...

- I have questions/concerns about Remote Learning for my primary school student: First point of contact is the teacher and the second point of contact is the building principal
- I have questions/concerns about online coursework for my MS or HS student: Natalie Putney
- My student tests positive for COVID-19: school nurse or building principal
- I am a staff member who tests positive for COVID-19: building principal
- I have questions/concerns about transportation: transportation director

Midwest Central Primary School
Principal – Ms. Sally Timm / timmm@midwestcentral.org
309.968.6464

Midwest Central Middle School
Principal – Ms. Kyra Fancher / fancher@midwestcentral.org
309.352.2300

Midwest Central High School
Principal – Mr. Jay Blair / blair@midwestcentral.org
309.968.6766

Midwest Central High School
School Counselor – Natalie Putney / putney@midwestcentral.org
309.968.6766

Midwest Central Transportation Department
Director of Transportation – Val VanEtten / vanetten@midwestcentral.org
309.968.3020