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Return to School Plan Fall 2020

Beecher City #20 has been working on planning for the start of the 2020-21 school year. The following is very important information concerning the opening of the school year. Please understand that this situation is changing daily and we do expect additional information to be released by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Illinois Department of Health (IDPH). It is important to note that these requirements are subject to change pursuant to updated public health guidance and changing public health conditions.

During Phase 4, ISBE and IDPH guidelines will:

- **Require** use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings;
- **Prohibit** more than 50 individuals from gathering in one space;
- **Require** social distancing be observed, as much as possible;
- **Require** that schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require that individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings; and
- **Require** an increase in school wide cleaning and disinfection.

*All public and nonpublic schools in Illinois serving prekindergarten through 12th grade students **must** follow these guidelines.

Schedule:

Beecher City Unit #20 plans to return to in-person instruction five days a week and will dismiss one hour early at 2:00 PM each day. Unit #20 schools will be providing in-person face-to-face instruction as well as remote learning to students (if needed) beginning August 17.

Learning Options:

Beecher City is offering your student(s) two (2) learning options for the 2020-21 school year:

- Option 1: Choose to have your student(s) attend school and follow the ISBE requirements.
- Option 2: Choose to have your student(s) participate in remote learning.

Remote Learning

Remote instruction will be provided to students through different formats that could include teleconference, Google Classroom, pre-recorded video, traditional paper learning activities, or other means developed throughout the year. The type of instruction delivered to remote learners will vary by teacher, age level, and content area. Remote learners may be required to pick up or drop off learning materials at pre-arranged times through the year. Teachers will be available to students who are remote learning from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM through email or school telephone each school day. Daily engagement is a requirement for remote learners and remote work will

be graded. It highly recommended that the student logs into google classroom during the time the class is in session.

A student who wishes to switch to in person learning can do so whenever for the first time. The second time a student must complete a full quarter before changing.

If a student would like to purchase a Breakfast/Lunch the student/parent must call the school before 9:00 AM. The student/parent must come to the school and pick up the food/drink.

Student Attendance

Daily attendance and engagement of students should be expected whether students are participating in classes in-person or remotely.

Districts, schools, and teachers should make daily contact with all students and families, especially those who are not in attendance or not engaging in classes, whether in-person or remotely.

Instructional Best Practices for Maintaining Social Distancing

Consider moving class activities outdoors if weather and safety considerations permit.

Teachers should implement strategies to model and reinforce social and physical distancing and movement. Suggestions include:

- Use carpet squares, mats, trays, or other visuals for spacing.
- Model social distancing when interacting with children, families, and staff.
- Create and develop a scripted story/role play around social distancing, as well as handwashing, proper etiquette for sneezes, coughs, etc.
- Give frequent verbal reminders to children.
- Hang pictures within the school building to give constant reminders.
- Send home a tip sheet to parents and caregivers so they can also learn about social distancing.
- Offer more opportunities for individual play and solo activities, such as fine motor activities (e.g., drawing, coloring, cutting, puzzles, and other manipulatives).
- Plan activities that do not require close physical contact between multiple children. Keep groups separate for special activities, such as art, music, and exercising.
- Stagger indoor and outdoor play and adjust schedules to reduce the number of children in the same area. Teach, model, and reinforce healthy hygiene habits and social skills. Suggestions include:
 - Explain to students why it's not healthy to share drinks or food.
 - Practice frequent hand hygiene by teaching a child-friendly song or counting to 20.
 - Teach students to use tissue to wipe their nose and to cough inside their elbow.
 - Model and practice hand hygiene before and after eating, coughing, sneezing, playing outside, and using the restroom.

Create a classroom environment that promotes positive teacher and student relationships that support student social-emotional well-being and self-esteem. Suggestions include:

- Promote empathy through conversations about other people's feelings and perspectives. Talk about responsibilities.
- Build a coping toolbox that includes body- and mind-calming strategies.
- Read children's books to help support the children when they may be feeling anxious or sad.

Special Education Considerations

Districts remain responsible for ensuring that special education students receive a free appropriate public education. They are required to address the individual needs of students eligible for special education services.

Blended Remote Learning Plans must address the unique needs of students eligible for special education services.

Conversations at the district level should include the type of training that should be provided to the classroom teacher and, when applicable, the paraprofessional; the planning time that should

be provided; and collaboration for Blended Remote Learning Days.

It is important to utilize paraprofessionals in the general education classroom during the transition from remote learning.

Districts must adhere to timelines for annual IEP meetings and required evaluations. There continues to be limited flexibility from complying with federal and state laws. All Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 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 must make individualized determinations regarding placement and where special education students receive services.

Students must receive education in their least restrictive environment, according to federal and state laws. Staff, therapists, and paraprofessionals may be able to work in person with students if appropriate safety measures are in place.

Additional guidance may be provided on transition and special education services.

Grading

The district will return to traditional grading.

Technology

The District will be 1:1 in August grades 2-12. We still have some Chromebooks on back order. Additional supports including, but not limited to flash drives, Verizon hotspots, and internet access in the parking lots at each school building.

Health and Safety Protocols IDPH Guidance

Preparing for When a Student or Staff Member Becomes Sick

The District will work directly with the Effingham, Fayette, and Shelby County Health Department in the case of a positive COVID-19 case within the school. Individuals who exhibit symptoms will be quarantined in a designated safe area while they wait for pickup.

Students/employees who test positive for Covid-19 will follow local health department directives for quarantining before returning to school. Students/employees who have had close contact with someone who tested positive for Covid-19 should isolate at home and monitor for symptoms for 14 days. Close contact is defined as being within 6ft of an infected person for 15 or more consecutive minutes. The district will work with the Effingham, Fayette, and Shelby County Health Department to perform contact tracing. School closure in an outbreak situation will be based on the directives/recommendations of ISBE, IDPH, and the local Effingham, Fayette, and Shelby County Health Department.

Hand Hygiene

Districts should encourage frequent and proper handwashing.

Ensure availability of supplies, such as soap and paper towels, hand sanitizer, tissues, etc., for all grade levels and in all common areas of the building. Cloth towels should not be used.

Handwashing with soap and water is always the first recommended line of defense, but where this is not feasible or readily accessible, the use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol may be used.

Hands should be washed often with soap and water for 20 seconds. 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. Districts should determine any "hot spots" where germ transmission may easily occur and ensure hand sanitation/handwashing supplies are readily available.

Additionally, districts should adhere to recommendations for safe hand sanitizer use, including:

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers should be used under adult supervision with proper child safety

precautions and stored out of reach of young children to reduce unintended, adverse consequences. It will be necessary to ensure that students do not ingest hand sanitizer or use it to injure another person.

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers must be properly stored – which includes away from high temperatures or flames – in accordance with National Fire Protection Agency recommendations.
- Hand sanitizers are not effective when hands are visibly dirty.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers do not remove allergenic proteins from the hands.
- Staff preparing food in the cafeteria/kitchen should ALWAYS wash their hands with soap and water.

The IDPH Food Service Sanitation Code does not allow persons who work in school cafeteria programs to use hand sanitizers as a substitute for handwashing.

Educate staff and students on healthy hygiene and handwashing to prevent the spread of infection.

Face Coverings

All individuals in school buildings, including all public and nonpublic schools that serve students in prekindergarten through grade 12, **must wear face coverings at all times** unless they are younger than 2 years of age; have 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.

A physician's note will be required for students and staff who are not able to wear a face covering due to trouble breathing. Proper accommodations will be made within the guidelines of the Part 3 IDPH/ISBE document. Face shields will be required for those who are not required to wear a mask (with doctor note).

Teachers may use face shields in lieu of masks. Face shields may be useful in situations where it is important for students to see how a teacher pronounces words (e.g., English Learners, early childhood, foreign language, etc.).

There is significant evidence that face coverings provide protection and decrease the spread of COVID-19.

Ensure that the face covering fully covers the mouth and nose, and that the covering fits snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps.

Social Distancing

Districts should develop procedures to ensure 6-foot physical distance from other persons **as much as possible**.

The expectation pertains to students and staff members in all areas and settings **to the greatest extent possible**.

Districts may wish to post visual reminders throughout school buildings and lay down tape or other indicators of safe distances in areas where students congregate or line up (e.g., arrival and departure, lunchroom lines, hallways, recess lines, libraries, cafeterias).

Symptom Screenings

Schools and districts **must** conduct temperature and symptom screenings or require self-certification and verification for **all** staff, students, and visitors entering school buildings.

Individuals who have a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius or currently known symptoms of COVID-19, such as 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, may not enter buildings.

Individuals who exhibit symptoms will be quarantined in a designated safe area while they wait for pickup.

School wide Cleaning and Disinfection to Prevent the Spread of Infection

The District will clean 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, buses/vans) on a daily basis. The District has purchased additional cleaning supplies and equipment, including electrostatic handheld sprayers to allow for effective/efficient disinfecting on a daily basis. Cloth toys or other cloth material items that cannot be disinfected should not be used.

Infection Control Procedures for Specific Areas

Classrooms

It is recommended that teachers provide assigned seating for students and require students to remain in these seats **to the greatest extent possible**.

Teachers may also develop a marked path of travel inside the classroom to maintain social distancing from the entry point of the classroom to the student's assigned seat.

If possible, rearrange desks so that there is a 6-foot distance in all directions between the desks and face desks in the same direction.

Open windows, if possible, for increased ventilation.

Only allow supervisors and staff who are required for instruction to be in the classrooms.

Build in time for hand hygiene and/or schedule hand hygiene breaks, including before/after eating snacks/meals and upon exiting and returning to the classroom.

Ensure adequate hygiene supplies, including tissues, hand sanitizer, extra face coverings, handwashing supplies if sinks are present, soap, paper towels, and gloves for staff, are present in the classroom.

Consider assigning classroom computers to minimize disease transmission. Computer keyboards and/or touchscreens can be difficult to clean, so consider utilizing keyboard covers to facilitate cleaning. Shared computers should have signs posted instructing proper hand hygiene before and after computer use, with handwashing facilities or hand sanitizers readily accessible.

Communicate with parents of younger students to discourage their children from bringing any toys from home to school.

Consider labeling students' personal items and keeping them in a separate bag to ensure they remain separate from the belongings of other students.

Shared Objects

Restrict or discourage the 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, tablets, touchscreens, keyboards, remote controls, lunchroom keypads, door entry systems, etc., should be cleaned before and after use. Consider using a wipeable cover on electronics and clean per the manufacturer's instructions or use wipes or sprays of at least 70% alcohol and dry completely.

It is recommended that items that must be shared or communally used be cleaned after each use - - at a minimum -- and that the individuals perform hand hygiene between use. Additional safety measures could be taken, such as gloves for art, library or other settings where supplies, books or items may be shared. Keyboard covers could also be used on shared keyboards.

Driver's Education Behind-the-Wheel Instruction

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:

- Allow only two students and one instructor per vehicle.
- Face coverings must be worn, unless medically contraindicated.
- Prohibit eating and drinking in the vehicle.
- Open the windows whenever possible.

- Do not make any stops during the training that are not applicable to driver's education to reduce the amount of time in the vehicle.
- Complete hand hygiene with soap and water or hand sanitizer, as appropriate, before and after driving and, at the minimum, upon completion. Hand sanitizer should be placed in each vehicle.
- Clean and disinfect the steering wheel, door handles, seatbelt fastener, controls/dials that the driver would come in contact with, keys, etc. in between each behind-the-wheel session.
- Conduct regular routine cleaning and disinfecting of the seats.

Music-Related Courses

Students should wear face coverings while singing and avoid touching, choreography, and singing/playing in circles.

Students should sanitize hands prior to handling instruments. Instruments should not be shared at any time. Sanitize hands after using instruments.

It is permissible for band members to **remove their masks** during the time they are playing, but only if necessary.

Students should provide their own equipment for class; sharing of equipment between students should be prohibited.

Traffic Flow, Hallways, and Lockers

Face coverings **must** be worn at all times.

Consider the following hallway procedures to adhere to social distancing requirements and IDPH limitations on gathering sizes, when possible:

- Limit number of persons within hallways at any given time to the **greatest extent possible**.
- Limit required movement of students between classes. Consider having staff rotate through classes rather than requiring movement/mixing of student groups.
- Provide hallway supervision using hall and bathroom monitors to ensure a limited number of persons enter bathrooms at one time.
- Hallways could have marked one-way paths and certain staircases could be designated one-way only, as possible.
- Place floor markings to delineate 6-foot distance between students in locations where they line up.
- Remove furniture or other items that may encourage congregating in certain areas.
- Sharing lockers should be prohibited. If lockers must be used, consider staggering locker assignments and create schedules to stagger locker access to allow for 6-foot distancing between students. For example, students could be assigned to every other or every third locker depending on their width.

Restrooms

Districts should consider means to maintain social distancing in restroom areas.

Schools may wish to consider scheduling restroom breaks and escorting individual classrooms to the restroom area to monitor social distancing, as appropriate.

Drinking Fountains

The district purchased water cooler bottle fillers for both buildings. Students will be allowed to bring a clear, sealable bottle to fill at the school. Regular water fountains will be shut off.

- Personal water bottles should be taken home and cleaned daily.
- Clean your hands before and afterward with an alcohol-based rub or wash them with soap and water.

Cafeterias/Food Service

The District will utilize alternative seating for dining, including the stage, gymnasium, classrooms and other areas as deemed appropriate and safe.

Stagger the release of classrooms to the cafeteria to help ensure social distancing while students wait in line.

Additionally, the room should be disinfected after eating prior to resuming classroom activities. Hand hygiene must be performed prior to and after eating a meal or consuming any food items. Face coverings must be removed during eating, so it is important to ensure 6-foot distance between individuals **as much as possible**.

Administrative Offices and Staff Workspaces/Lounges

Limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations, as possible.

Restrict any visitors to the main office area, when possible.

Hand hygiene facilities or hand sanitizer should be readily available for visitors to use upon entry.

Student Transportation

All individuals on a bus **must** wear a face covering, no more than 50 individuals should be on a bus at one time, and social distancing must be maintained **to the greatest extent possible**.

Students **must** undergo symptom and temperature checks, which may include self-certification, **before boarding a bus**.

Drivers and monitors **must** wear approved and appropriate PPE and perform regular hand hygiene.

Physical Education, Gymnasiums, Pools, and Locker Rooms

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.

Activities must allow for 6-foot distance between students **as much as possible**.

Games and sport activities that require close guarding and any potential physical contact with another player must be avoided in order to comply with IDPH requirements.

Whenever feasible and weather permitting, educators should select **outdoor** physical education activities that allow natural social distancing.

Playgrounds

Playground equipment that is to be used should be monitored, and the number of students using each piece of equipment should be limited.

Consider staggering playground times to allow one class in a playground space at one time rather than multiple classes playing together.

Maintain appropriate cleaning of playground equipment. Any equipment/items that cannot be cleaned should not be utilized.

Discourage the sharing of toys.

High-touch surfaces made of plastic/metal, such as swings/slides, railings, and other play structures, should be cleaned routinely and disinfected as per the most recent CDC guidance.

Students should perform hand hygiene prior to touching playground equipment and upon return from the playground.

Field Trips

Field trips are discouraged until state and local health officials have determined that it is safe to resume them.

The CDC recommends pursuing virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips.

Athletics and Extracurricular

The district will follow IHSA/IESA guidelines. Students in remote learning will be eligible to participate as a member of any extra-curricular or co-curricular activity.