



SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND

Educating Today's Students for Tomorrow's Challenges

STOH'S SCHOOL RE-OPENING PLAN

Based on the
STOH Re-Opening
Framework

Fall 2020

Revised 9/4/2020

NOTE: The information in this document may need to be revised and updated on an on-going basis.

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Overview

For the first time in 102 years, schools across the nation closed their doors in response to a worldwide pandemic.

School is a vital part of our community's well-being. Over the last several months, STOH has been researching how to best open our schools in a safe manner that is responsive to the needs of our students, parents and staff. We have been working in partnership with the [Lake County Health Department](#) and NWI superintendents, taking our lead from the medical experts. No plan will meet the needs of everyone. Our goal, throughout re-opening planning, was to make the best decisions possible with the information provided to us. In addition, we attempted to create a plan that would meet the needs of our families and staff. This plan adds more detail to the district's [School Re-opening Framework](#) and includes:

- ◆ Modes of instruction
- ◆ School Schedules and Calendars
- ◆ Student and Staff Health
- ◆ Daily School Operations
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Facilities
- ◆ Mental Health
- ◆ Technology

We believe this plan provides an educational path for all students. Students who are ready to return to a more traditional model of education will have an opportunity to do so. Students who feel more comfortable at-home will have the opportunity to continue their education in a remote model. Some students may need to transition between the two models based on quarantine requirements from the local health department.

Since we are still learning about COVID-19 and the fact that the pandemic is still active, *the information in this document may need to be revised and updated on an on-going basis.* As with any uncertain situation, communication will be important. We will do our best to keep you informed of any pertinent situations as it relates to re-entry and/or the pandemic's impact on the STOH.

The return to on-site instruction will involve new health and safety protocols. Adapting safety procedures to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 will be new to all of us, but remember that all risk cannot be eliminated. We appreciate your patience, feedback and support as we look to maneuver through this unprecedented situation.

STOH Re-opening Plan

The STOH Re-opening Plan allows students the ability to take advantage of two instructional models: on-site (at school) or on-line (at home).

On-site (at school) Model

The on-site model will consist of students attending school in their respective school buildings. Mitigation strategies will be implemented at varying degrees based on the level of COVID-19 activity within our community. At this time, the Lake County Health Department has stated all persons that cannot social distance should wear a face mask in public and the Governor has issued a face mask mandate for those 8 years and older. However, all students will have to wear masks at all times, unless socially distanced.

On-line (at home) Model

On-line instruction for our at-home students will be delivered by a STOH teacher via Google Classroom or another on-line platform utilizing school issued iPads.

During the registration process (week of Sept. 7) families will select the model (on-site or on-line) for each of their students. (Families may choose different options for each of their children.) The selected model will be in effect through the first semester of school. Opportunities for changing models will occur only after the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th 9-week grading periods. Exceptions must go through the building principal.



Elementary On-line Expectations:

- A minimum of one activity, assignment, or check-in per subject for on-line learners equaling the subjects taught during the in-person school day.
- All lessons will be available asynchronously, meaning students will not be required to log in at a specific time in order to complete assignments.
- Teachers will respond to on-line questions from students and parents within a 24-hour business day window.

- Each day's on-line work needs to be completed and turned in by the start of the next day at 9 a.m. Extensions can be made if there are unanswered student or parent questions pertinent to assignment completion.
- On-line and in-person instruction will be paced the same.
- Teacher expectations will be the same for both on-line and in-person work.
- If a student is falling behind, teachers will reach out as soon as possible to the student and parents.

If you choose Plan B, on-line instruction, for your child, they become part of a classroom just like their Plan A, traditional classroom, peers. They will have a teacher and a space saved within that classroom should you decide to move to Plan A.

Breakfast served daily at 7:30 a.m.

We will be going out for recess.

We will be changing classes for specials.

Masks will be worn in gym class when socially distancing is not possible (using outdoors as much as possible).

Student dismissal and arrival procedures will be specific to each school and will be communicated to parents by each individual school.

Dependent Care

Students kindergarten through sixth grade are eligible to enroll in the Dependent Care Program. The program is housed at all four elementary schools during the school year, with Johnston housing both before and after school and Southridge, Warren and Merkley housing after school only. This is dependent upon what home school your child attends. (Dependent Care's office has moved from Johnston to Southridge.)

The program is available for elementary students from 6:45 – 7:45 a.m. at Johnston only and from 2:45 – 6:00 p.m. at the child's home school on days school is in session.

The daily schedule including start and end times may be evaluated each nine weeks based upon the level of the pandemic.

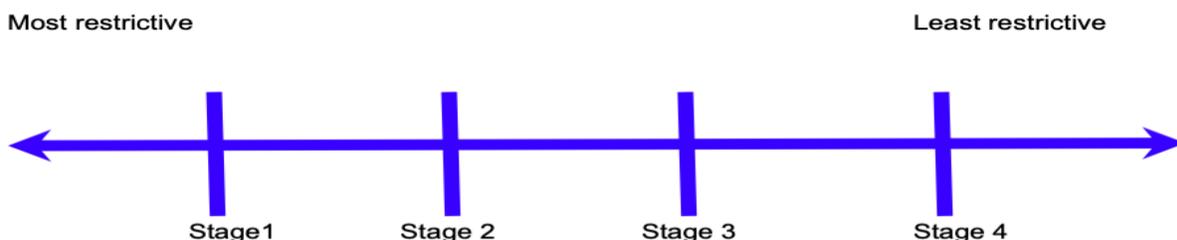
STOH Secondary Schools Reopening Plan

Due to the vastly different needs and schedules of the secondary schools, and the recent trends in COVID-19 activity in the area, STOH has developed a slightly modified model for opening Highland High School and Highland Middle School to better address student and staff safety and to better accommodate all learners.

To this point, a flipped classroom model of delivering educational experiences will be deployed in stages 1 and 2. A flipped classroom is defined as a pedagogical approach where the instruction is delivered outside of the classroom allowing the classroom time to focus on questions, assignments, labs, and tests. This will also provide the opportunity for differentiation of instruction to address the needs of individual students. Providing the instruction to the student before they enter the classroom allows the students to move at their own pace and simultaneously provides the opportunity for the teacher to address questions, reteach, and further promote learning individually or in smaller groups. A true flipped classroom is not just “watching a video and learning on their own”, instead it is a vehicle in which students have the information presented to them by their teacher and then can ask clarifying questions when they are attending during the school day. STOH has been training and working with faculty and staff on this methodology over the past few years and continues to do so.

Within Stage 3, we plan to deploy a modified flipped classroom where the students will be in the room together and monitor the teacher’s lesson (either live or by video) with the teacher in the classroom. At the conclusion of the day’s lesson, the teacher will be able to answer questions, provide feedback, and re-teach as necessary to those in the classroom and to those online at their designated times. This is to provide equitable instruction for online and in-person students.

We have developed a four stage model to utilize as we reopen our buildings and begin our instruction. All stages are outlined and described below.



Stages are defined as follows:

Stage 1 - COVID-19 is active in STOH schools - Several known cases of students/staff with COVID-19 and LCHD recommends some form of closure.

Stage 2 - COVID-19 activity is at an increased level within the STOH community. The level of cases in the community and area are increasing or are stable but at a concerning level.

Stage 3 - COVID-19 activity is low or absent within STOH. The amount of cases is minimal **and** is subsiding.

Stage 4 - COVID-19 is absent from STOH and status of the pandemic is greatly diminished.

Educational descriptors at each stage for students, staff and parents:

Stage 1 - Most restrictive - Red All students are on-line, off campus learning using flipped classrooms. Deployed when dictated by STOH, County, or State officials.

Stage 2 - Yellow (A) On-line learning delivered to students either at home or at school, depending on student/parent choice.

A student who attends in-person will report to **one homeroom classroom and maintain attendance there for the entire day.** Classes will be flipped and teachers will be accessible on-line. When allowable, Google meets may be instituted so that further instruction can be had when students experience difficulty on a subject. Email and possibly interschool phone calls using classroom phones will be the other vehicles for communication between teacher and in-school student at this stage. Classroom teachers will be expected to supervise and reasonably assist students in their homeroom as they navigate through on-line assignments.

In-person students may have access to experiential learning opportunities based on the courses they are enrolled in but within smaller groups (based on room size) and within a controlled and clean setting. Instructors in these classes will

be taking extra precaution in setting class size to best suit the safety requirements necessary as well as maintaining the integrity of the activity. While class size may vary for each experiential activity based on the course, the times in which the experiences will be offered will extend throughout the day as is possible. Such courses would include, but not be limited to: Art, Music, P.E., PLTW, and Science. Experiences will vary and be scheduled with students and other faculty in advance so that students, families, and teachers can plan appropriately (HS only).

There will be no passing periods, but students and staff will be practicing appropriate health and safety protocols (masks, social-distancing when possible, good hygiene practices). Teachers and students will be with the same group all day. Breaks and lunch will be provided at appropriate times. Schools will also be operating at a different and shortened schedule (see times below) to implement reduced exposure times for all.

At home, on-line students will have the same flipped classroom instruction, assignments, and expectations just without the experiential opportunities, and they will also have the same access to Google meets and other such correspondence with teachers (except the ability to call classroom phones, that is not available) and their classes.

Stage 3 - Yellow (B)

Students attending in-school will now transition to a more traditional school day by changing classes and following a normal daily schedule, have normal start and end times, with appropriate health and safety protocols in place (masks, social-distancing when possible, good hygiene practices).

Students who opt to remain as on-line students will continue to follow classes through Google classroom and other similar

venues through lessons that are flipped and made available by teachers each day.

Stage 4 - Green

All attend school and follow their normal schedule. STO and community will remain vigilant for a resurgence of cases and follow appropriate health and safety protocols.

Operational times:

Highland High School will be instituting a Block 8 schedule for the 2020-2021 school year. Students will attend certain classes on certain days. Throughout all the stages of our high school planned schedule we will alternate days for instruction. One day will be ODD class periods, and the next will be EVEN class periods to extend throughout the school year. Students will be responsible for that day’s assignments and not beholden to all 7 enrolled classes on any one day. This allows a greater amount of class time, minimizing start/stop times and transitions, and maintains the workload for students in an acceptable range. Doors will open at 7:00 am and breakfast will be available for purchase every day in Stages 2, 3, and 4.

High School Stage 1:

Everyday

ODD Days	EVEN Days
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****All instruction is online in the flipped classroom format with no onsite time available****

High School Stage 2:

(note: time changes for Stage 2)

Monday-Tuesday-Thursday-Friday

ODD Days		EVEN Days	
Homeroom	7:20* - 1:50*	Homeroom	7:20* - 1:50*
Lunch	TBD by Homeroom	Lunch	TBD by Homeroom

(note: time changes for Stage 2 - Wednesday)

Wednesday

ODD Days - Wednesday		EVEN Days - Wednesday	
Homeroom	7:20* - 2:25*	Homeroom	7:20* - 2:25*
Lunch	TBD by Homeroom	Lunch	TBD by Homeroom

High School Stages 3 and 4 (Stage 4 no online option):

Monday-Tuesday-Thursday-Friday

ODD Days		EVEN Days	
Period 1	7:45 - 9:20	Period 2	7:45 - 9:20
passing	9:20 - 9:26	passing	9:20 - 9:26
Period 3	9:26 - 11:01	Advisory	9:26 - 11:01
passing	11:01 - 11:07	passing	11:01 - 11:07
Period 5 A	11:37 - 1:13	Period 4 A	11:37 - 1:13
Period 5 B	11:07 - 11:37 & 12:07 - 1:13	Period 4 B	11:07 - 11:37 & 12:07 - 1:13
Period 5 C	11:07 - 12:13 & 12:43 - 1:13	Period 4 C	11:07 - 12:13 & 12:43 - 1:13
Period 5 D	11:07 - 12:43	Period 4 D	11:07 - 12:43
passing	1:13 - 1:19	passing	1:13 - 1:19
Period 7	1:19 - 2:54	Period 6	1:19 - 2:54

Wednesday

ODD Days - Wednesday		EVEN Days - Wednesday	
Period 1	7:45 - 9:12	Period 2	7:45 - 9:12
passing	9:12 - 9:18	passing	9:12 - 9:18
Period 3	9:18 - 10:45	Advisory	9:18 - 10:45
passing	10:45 - 10:51	passing	10:45 - 10:51
Period 5 A	11:21 - 12:51	Period 4 A	11:21 - 12:51
Period 5 B	10:51 - 11:21 & 11:51 - 12:51	Period 4 B	10:51 - 11:21 & 11:51 - 12:51
Period 5 C	10:51 - 11:51 & 12:21 - 12:51	Period 4 C	10:51 - 11:51 & 12:21 - 12:51
Period 5 D	10:51 - 12:21	Period 4 D	10:51 - 12:21
passing	12:51 - 12:57	passing	12:51 - 12:57
Period 7	12:57 - 2:25	Period 6	12:57 - 2:25

Highland High School Updated Re-Entry Plan

September 7, 2020

HHS is planning to return to offer in-person instruction at Stage 3, with students changing classes and following their normal Block 8 Schedule, with recommended health and safety precautions in place.

The Stage 3 Experience WILL BE DIFFERENT than Stage 1

As we progress towards the ultimate goal of Stage 4 (no virtual, all in person, similar to what is referred to as 'normal'), we will be modifying the school experience to best mimic this goal and provide the greatest educational experience possible. The school will be operating within two worlds simultaneously (virtual and real life) and this will add an additional dimension for teachers to perform within. Attention will therefore be divided between the in-person and virtual student which will greatly change the on-line experience from what has been completed in Stage 1.

The expectation of on-line student participation at designated times throughout the day, each day, will be the greatest notable change for those electing to remain virtual students. This mandatory on-line student participation will vary, based on course need and structure (academic, performance or skills based).

Daily schedule, including start and end times, will be evaluated over the course of time and may be adjusted, if needed.

On-line Guidelines for Highland High School:

- On-line Students will be responsible for completing similar activities, assignments, assessments, and check-ins as in-school students to measure content understanding and mastery.
- Assignments must be completed and submitted to the instructor in the time provided.
- Lessons and activities will be delivered in multiple ways during the school day. Students are expected to be engaged online with school activities at the appropriate times during our regular school hours.
- Emails and queries submitted after 3 pm may not be responded to until the next instructional day but typically within 24 hours.
- Parents, students, and teachers shall communicate with one another if a problem arises or if work is not being completed.

Specific information for Stage 3 In-Person Students

- **Start times: (Traditional)**
 - Doors will open at 7:00 AM
 - Classes will start at 7:45 AM
- **Dismissal Times: (Traditional)**
 - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday - 2:54
 - Wednesday - 2:25
- **Breakfast will be served daily beginning at 7:00 AM**

In-Person Guidelines for Highland High School:

- Students will be required to wear masks at all times, except at teacher discretion and while eating.
- Students will be expected to follow social distancing guidelines as directed.
- Students will be allowed routine hand washing opportunities and have access to hand sanitizer throughout the building.
- Keeping things clean is everyone's responsibility, students and staff will have access to cleaning supplies to wipe down common touchpoints, desktops, and educational tools.
- Upon entering the building, students will report to breakfast or other designated areas where appropriate health and safety measures will be practiced until reporting to class. If students go to the cafeteria, they must make a purchase, there are no extra seats for guests in the cafeteria.
- Students will not be issued lockers unless requested.
- Students will be allowed to carry a reasonably sized backpack containing only the items needed for classroom use.
- Students will be allowed to bring water in a closable container. There are water filling stations throughout the building that will be accessible. Water will also be available for purchase at mealtimes.
- Assigned seating **WILL** be instituted in all classrooms **AND** in the cafeteria at lunchtime.
- Students will be limited to the area that they will be assigned to during the lunch periods. The commons area and courtyard will be closed during lunch periods.
- The commons area will be closed, no benches will be available to loiter at between classes, during the lunch periods and before/after school. Students will be expected and encouraged to travel directly from place to place without gathering in common areas.

Highland High School Expectations In All Stages

- Highland High School will be instituting an on-line Google Form attendance policy in Stages 1 and 2. **Stage 3** will have **ONLY** on-line students complete an attendance form as in-person attendance will be recorded by instructors in each class period.
- Each day the on-line student will need to access, complete, and submit their attendance form after 6 am and before 10 am to add a level of accountability and participation with classroom activity in a timely manner.

- Parents are still required to call their student off of school (922-5610) whether they are an on-line or in-person student if they are ill or will not be participating in school that day (doctor’s visits, etc.).
- After 10 am, we will begin the process of reaching out to families about their missing student.



Highland Middle School Updated Re-entry Plan

Highland Middle School In-Person Expectations (For Plan A)

The following guidelines pertain to students choosing Plan A (in school instruction). **We will be returning in Stage 3**, with students changing classes and following their normal schedules, with recommended health and safety procedures in place.

The daily schedule including start and end times will be evaluated over the course of time and may be adjusted if needed.

Specific Information for Stage 3 In Person Students

- Start times: (Traditional)
 - Doors open at 8:00 AM
 - Class starts at 8:27 AM
- Dismissal Times: (Traditional)
 - 3:18 PM M, T, Th, F
 - 3:05 PM W (early release)
- Breakfast served daily at 8:00 AM

In-Person Guidelines for Highland Middle School:

- Students will be required to wear masks at all times, except at teacher discretion and while eating.
- Students will be expected to follow social distancing guidelines as directed.
- Students will be allowed routine hand washing opportunities and have access to hand sanitizer throughout the building.
- Keeping things clean is everyone’s duty, students and staff will have access to cleaning supplies to wipe down common touchpoints, desktops, and educational tools.
- Students will enter through Door L, MS main entrance, (except 6th grade car riders at Door H).
- Students will report to breakfast or other designated areas where appropriate health and safety measures will be practiced until reporting to class. If students are going to the cafeteria for breakfast, they must be making a purchase.

- Students will not be issued lockers.
- Students will be allowed to carry a reasonably sized backpack containing only the items needed for classroom use.
- Students will be allowed to bring water in a closable container. There are water filling stations in the middle school. Water will also be available for purchase at lunch.
- 2 lunchrooms will be utilized to ensure distancing and minimize contacts.
- Students will have assigned seats at lunch and eat with members of their academic team.
- Schedules will be adjusted as allowable to aid in more even student distribution.
- There will be altered passing periods to aid in distancing.

Highland Middle School Expectations for On-line Learning (Plan B)

As we progress towards the ultimate goal of Stage 4 (no virtual, all in person, similar to what is referred to as 'normal'), we will be modifying the school experience to best mimic this goal and provide the greatest educational experience possible. The school will be operating within two worlds simultaneously (virtual and real life) and this will add an additional dimension for teachers to perform within. Attention will therefore be divided between the in-person and virtual students which will change the on-line experience from what has been completed in Stage 1.

The expectations of on-line student participation at designated times throughout the day, each day, will be the greatest notable change for those electing to remain virtual students. This at times mandatory on-line student participation will vary, based on course need and structure (academic, performance, or skills based).

- Students will be responsible for completing the same activities, assignments, assessments, and check-ins as in school students. They must be completed daily and submitted at the assigned time.
- Lessons and activities will be delivered in multiple ways during the school day. Students are expected to be engaged in school activities at the appropriate times during our regular school hours.
- Emails and queries submitted after 3 pm may not be responded to until the next instructional day but typically within 24 hours.
- Online and in person instruction will be paced the same
- Teacher expectations will be the same for both online and in person work.
- **Online students who are unable to do daily work because of illness or other reasons need to be called off and reported absent by parents otherwise daily work completion will be expected. Parents can call off by calling the school office at 922-5620. They will then be marked as absent.**
- If a student is falling behind, parents and/or the student are expected to reach out as soon as possible to speak with the teacher or the office to schedule a parent conference via the school counselors at 922-5620.

- If you choose the online option (Plan B) for your child, they will still have a normal schedule in place and have places in each of their classes. This will be the schedule they resume should they return to school.

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### **School Calendar**

The STO is planning on following the previously approved 2020-21 District Calendar. If the pandemic requires a change to the calendar, all families will be notified via phone and e-mail messaging. In addition, an updated calendar will be posted on the district website

# Health Protocols

## COVID-19 Testing Locations

The State [COVID-19 testing websites](#) has a list of over 200 testing facilities throughout the State of Indiana, their location, and hours of operation. At the publication of this document, the closest Lake County testing location listed is:

**Physicians Urgent Care**  
10343 Indianapolis Blvd  
Highland, IN 46322

## Exclusionary Symptoms (Students and Staff)

It is essential for the STOH stakeholders to work together to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19 in our school environment and in the community while still providing educational opportunities for our students. State law gives the STOH the authority to exclude students who have a contagious disease such as COVID-19 or are liable to transmit it after exposure (IC 20-34-3-9). In addition, the local health department has the authority to exclude students from school and may order students and others to isolate or quarantine (IC 16-41-9-1.6).

If a student or staff member has COVID-19 or is quarantined because of COVID-19 related symptoms, any other STOH student(s) or staff member(s) within the household should follow the directions of the Lake County Health Department and/or the Indiana State Health Department. Even without symptoms, if a student or employee has recently traveled from somewhere considered to be a “hot spot” by the CDC, the health department may require self-isolation.

## Symptoms Impacting Consideration for Exclusion from School

Students and employees should be aware of the following [COVID-19-related symptoms](#):

- A fever of 100.4° F or greater
- Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain/aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell

Students and employees should be excluded from school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 based on [CDC Guidance](#) that is not otherwise explained (for example, a student who has a COVID-19 related symptom, but is diagnosed with another ailment by a physician that does not warrant exclusion from school).

## Return to School After Exclusion (State Guidelines)

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC and/or are released by a healthcare provider (medical documentation required). Currently those guidelines are:

- **Untested Persons** who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 but experience symptoms may return if the following three conditions are ALL met:
  - At least 10 calendar days have passed since your symptoms first appeared; **and**
  - Other symptoms have improved (for example, your cough or shortness of breath have improved); **and**
  - You have not had a fever for at least 72 hours. (That is three full days of no fever without the use of fever reducing medications.)
- **Tested Positive - Symptomatic Persons** who experienced symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 may return to school if the following conditions are met:
  - The individual no longer has a fever (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers for 72 hours); and other symptoms have improved (for example, your cough or shortness of breath have improved); **and**
  - **At least 10 calendar days** have passed since symptoms first appeared; **or**
  - The individual has received a negative test and has received a written note from a healthcare provider releasing the person back to school.
- **Tested Positive - Asymptomatic Persons** who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID-19 may return when they have gone 10 calendar days without symptoms and have been released by a healthcare provider. Students may also return if they are approved to do so in writing by the student's healthcare provider.

## Self-Screening and Observational Screening

According to the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), screening all students and staff for coronavirus symptoms at school every day is not realistic. As a result, All STOH families are strongly encouraged to self-screen before coming to school each day. Students and employees exhibiting [symptoms of Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) without being otherwise explained, are prohibited from coming to school, and if they do come to school, will be sent home immediately. In addition, all staff members are strongly encouraged to report students and staff members to a school nurse for symptom analysis if symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) are evident. Keeping a sick student at home will be critical. Please note that all attendance incentives for the 2020-2021 school year have been suspended.

## How to Self-Screen

Prior to coming to school each day, students and staff should assess themselves (with parental/guardian assistance if applicable) for any of the following signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19:

- Feeling feverish or temperature greater than 100o F
- New chills or repeated shaking with chills
- Unexplained new or worsening cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Unexplained fatigue
- Unexplained muscle aches
- Unexplained headache
- Unexplained sore throat
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell

## Next Steps

All students and staff members who answered “yes” to any of the above symptoms and suspect that the symptoms are related to COVID-19, should not come to school. When reporting a student absence, please report all symptoms to school officials. Staff members should follow the normal procedures for calling off. In addition, all staff members must contact their supervisor to discuss their symptoms and the reason for the absence. Each department and school will communicate the specific procedures to all staff.

If any of the above symptoms develop after the school day starts, students should report to the school nurse. Staff members should notify their supervisor, return to their residence and contact their medical provider.

Students and staff members who experience symptoms should follow the **Return to School after Exclusion** procedures listed on page 11.

## Temperature Checks

Based on recommendations by local and state health departments, temperature checks when entering the building will not be an active component of the STOH screening process. Health departments believe the risk outweighs the benefits since students would have to congregate in line at unsafe distances from one another. In addition, fevers are not always present in COVID-19 cases.

## Confirmed Case of Covid-19 (Student or Employee)

All positive cases of COVID-19 will be reported to the Lake County Health Department (LCHD) and the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) for reporting purposes, school closure guidance and potential contact tracing efforts:

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the STOH will work in conjunction with the Lake County Health Department (LCHD) and the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) to make a determination if changing stages is needed. Some of the factors that will be considered are likelihood of exposure to students and staff in the building and the number of cases in the community. When positive cases are reported, the LCHD will conduct contact tracing measures that may warrant self-quarantine and exclusions from school for some students and/or staff.

Due to federal privacy measures, it is important to note that the name(s) of any student or staff who test positive will not be identified in communications to the STOH community. School closures may range in length depending on the circumstances.

The STOH will track attendance trends daily to determine any patterns of absence due to illness throughout the corporation. In addition, Indiana law requires schools to track and monitor attendance to assist in the determination of a viral outbreak within our schools (512 IAC 1-2-2). Schools shall report to the local health department and the IDOE when the percentage of student absences from a school is equal to or greater than the threshold rate of twenty percent (20%) of the enrolled student population.

## **Medical Inquiries**

Federal law typically limits the type of medical inquiries that can be made; but, given the nature of the pandemic, more leeway has been given to districts/schools in this circumstance to make additional medical inquiries of staff and students than would otherwise be allowed.

- If a parent reports that a student is ill, STOH staff members will ask the parent whether the student is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19.
- If an employee calls in sick or appears ill, the STOH will inquire as to whether the employee is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.
- If a person is obviously ill, the STOH will make additional inquiries and will exclude the person from school property.

## **Nurse Office Areas - COVID-19 Symptomatic**

Each STOH school will designate a room or space separate from the nurse's clinic where students or employees who are feeling ill (with COVID-19 related symptoms) are evaluated or are waiting to be picked-up. All waiting staff and students should wear a cloth face covering. Only essential staff assigned to the room may enter. A record will be kept of all persons who entered the room and the room will be disinfected several times throughout the day. Strict social distancing is required, and staff must wear appropriate PPE. If parents are requested to pick-up their student, they should notify the school main office when they are in the parking lot. Students who are ill will be walked out of the building to their parents. If students drive to school, the nurse will speak with the parents to determine if the student can safely drive home. Those students will be walked to the exit and allowed to drive home with parent permission.

## Nurse Office Areas - Non-COVID-19 Related

Students who do not display symptoms of COVID-19 can be seen and treated in the regular nurse's clinic. These would include students who are injured during the school day or students with special health care needs such as those with chronic health conditions, those requiring medical treatments and those with individual health plans.

## Preventative Measures

### Face Coverings

The ISDH and LCHD believe face coverings should be required when social distancing cannot be maintained. According to these professionals, wearing face coverings will be key to keeping schools safe, along with implementing social distancing protocols. COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Face covering usage can reduce this form of transmission.

Students and families who opt to take part in the in-person (at-school) model will be required to wear a face covering. In addition, face coverings will be required to be worn at all times while traveling on STOH buses and at all STOH bus stops.

**Face Shields** – If a teacher cannot wear a face mask for medical reasons, the teacher may use a face shield. Also, face shields may be needed in situations where it is important for students to see how a teacher pronounces words (e.g., hearing difficulties, English Learners, foreign language, etc.). Students who have conditions that impact their ability to wear a face covering may be approved to wear face shields.

Although families may supply their own face coverings, the STOH will have a supply of face coverings for all students and staff members. Cloth face coverings should be laundered each day. Ideally, students and staff should have access to at least two clean face coverings per day.

#### Key points on face coverings:

- Follow CDC guidance for mask usage and IDOE Face Covering Guidance.
- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth while wearing face coverings to prevent potential contamination.
- Wash your hands thoroughly before putting on a face covering.
- Remove the face covering carefully and wash your hands thoroughly after removing.
- Wash the face covering each day.

- Wearing cloth face coverings does not replace the need to continue frequent handwashing, avoiding touching the face, and practicing social distancing, which are our best tools to help prevent the spread of illness.
- Face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.
- Reminder - Face coverings do not provide adequate protection for others if an individual has symptoms compatible with COVID-19. Students and staff who are ill should stay home.

## Covering Distribution and Training

Each school will develop a plan for initial cloth face covering distribution (for those opting for the on-site model and who will not be able to supply their own face covering).

Training materials and instructions on how to wear a face covering will be shared with all STOH students. Until then, we encourage families to view CDC guidance for mask usage and IDOE Face Covering Guidance for familiarity on how to properly wear face coverings.

## Face Covering Modifications or Exemptions

Some students and staff may have conditions that impact their ability to wear a face covering. Staff or students who have a condition and seek modifications or exemption to the face covering requirements must make a request to the school administration for the exemption or modification. The STOH will initiate a certification process of any underlying condition or disability as well as an interactive dialogue, IEP meeting, or Section 504 meeting (for students) to respond to requests and to ensure the safety of the school environment.

## Social Distancing

The STOH will make attempts to socially distance students when possible. However, it is important to note that maintaining six feet of social distancing will be a challenge during the in-person model. Students will be required to wear face coverings when social distancing cannot be maintained. Examples would include classrooms, buses, passing periods, cafeteria (when not eating), reading groups and/or where social distancing is not possible. In an effort to promote social distancing within the classroom setting, teachers should utilize technology to compliment instruction (reducing the need to pass out/collect papers, borrow pencils, etc.).

## Sanitation Stations

Sanitation stations will be available in all STOH schools utilizing hand sanitizer (foam and/or gel with at least 60% alcohol content). These stations will be located throughout school buildings including the following locations: General Classroom Hallways, Cafeteria, Restroom Areas, Media Centers, Inside Entrances, Office Areas, Gymnasiums, Locker Rooms, etc.

## Hygiene

The STOHS will use signs throughout the buildings to remind students and staff about the importance of good hygiene habits and other preventative measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Hand washing and avoiding touching the face, eyes, nose, or mouth are important steps a person can take to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others. If soap and water are not readily available, students and staff should use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Reinforcing healthy habits regarding handwashing is expected.

Key times to practice handwashing include:

- Start of the school day
- Before eating
- After using the restroom
- After blowing nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using shared equipment



## Attendance

### Student Attendance

STOHS personnel will request specific symptom information when absences are reported along with COVID-19 diagnoses and/or potential COVID-19 exposure. Information obtained will be shared with the nursing staff.

An STOHS student absent from school due to COVID-19 related symptoms will be recorded as a medical absence. If a student is not ill but circumstances require the student to quarantine, the student's attendance will be recorded as a medical absence. If the student is able to participate in remote learning while quarantining, no absence will be recorded for that day.

As a reminder, any student who is at home due to any COVID-19 issue is strongly encouraged to transition to the on-line model for the duration of their stay at home. This will allow the student to remain current with his/her schoolwork.

### Tardies

At the beginning of the school day, schools may alter the tardy consequences if extenuating circumstances occur such as staggered times for entry. Because students will not be able to congregate during passing periods, tardy policies between class periods will continue as normal.

### Perfect Attendance Incentives

The STOHS will strongly encourage all symptomatic students and staff to stay home to prevent the spread of illness. In addition, the school system will send students home from

school who are not feeling well on a much more frequent basis during the school year. As a result, all perfect attendance programs will be suspended for the 2020-2021 school year. The STOJ believes these programs may encourage students to attend school when they don't feel well. In the midst of a pandemic, it would be irresponsible to continue with these programs/incentives.

## **STOH Staff Attendance**

Employees who experience the onset of any COVID-19 symptoms at work should immediately be sent home and remain there until contacted by a supervisor or a member of the STOJ Human Resources Department. Employees who have had a known exposure to someone testing positive for COVID-19 should alert their supervisor and follow the directions of the health department.

# **Daily School Operations**

## **Arrival/Dismissal**

All STOJ schools will make every attempt to minimize crowding at drop-off and pick-up times. We ask all stakeholders to cooperate with school personnel and follow each building's prescribed plan. We anticipate the number of students who utilize bus service this year will decrease. As a result, parents should expect longer wait times. Staggered arrival and dismissal times may be utilized at various buildings to assist with the arrival/dismissal process.

The traditional practice of entering each school building for a student remains the same. Parents should notify the main office via telephone or email if a student requires early release or has a change to their normal mode of transportation for the day. We ask all parents to remain in their vehicles.

At the elementary schools, doors open at 7:55 a.m. The late bell rings and school starts at 8:10 a.m. Elementary schools dismiss at 2:40 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. They dismiss at 1:55 p.m. on Wednesday (early release for teacher professional development).

Building principals will provide directions on the drop-off and pick-up lines and the rules prior to the start of the school year. Buildings may utilize signage and other visual cues to direct traffic flow and encourage social distancing for students and staff.

## **Visitors**

Based on recommendations from numerous agencies, STOJ will restrict nonessential visitors at all instructional levels. The STOJ encourages all essential business that typically requires a visit to the school be conducted via telephone or a virtual meeting option. The STOJ believes restricting visitors to buildings will allow us a greater opportunity to keep students and staff safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Visitors who are deemed essential must wear face coverings while in a STOJ building. The School Board passed a policy in July that requires anyone entering an STOJ facility must wear a face covering.

## Special Education Case Conferences and 504 Committee Meetings

Case Conference Committee (CCC) and Section 504 Committee meetings are deemed essential and may require a parent/guardian to meet with the team on an as-needed basis. The STOHS recommends that all CCC and 504 meetings be conducted via telephone or a virtual meeting option when possible.

## Parent Conferences

Unless otherwise dictated by the building principal, all parent conferences shall be conducted via telephone or a virtual meeting.

## Field Trips

Although field trips provide memorable and educational experiences for students, the STOHS believes effective social distancing in an uncontrolled environment becomes difficult. As a result, all field trips will be postponed or cancelled until further notice.

## Recess

The STOHS believes recess is an important part of the school day for our elementary students. However, the safety and security of our students and staff must take precedent during a pandemic. Under guidance from the IDOE and CDC, outdoor recess will be staggered and will comply with social distancing requirements. If students cannot social distance during recess, they will wear masks. Equipment will be cleaned on a more frequent basis.

## Locker Usage

Due to the proximity of lockers to one another, social distancing practices become difficult to implement/enforce. As a result, locker usage will be discouraged.

## Room Configurations/Set-up

Classrooms should be arranged to maximize student desk space (increase capacity while maintaining social distancing). Non-essential (non-curricular) items should be removed to aid in cleaning efforts.

Desks should be arranged in configurations that decrease face to face interaction (reducing transmission opportunities). Assigned seating will be mandatory in all STOHS classrooms this school year. Assigned seating will assist the LCHD in potential contact tracing situations if a student is diagnosed with COVID-19. STOHS schools will:

- Encourage educational activities that keep students seated in the classroom
- Limit activities that combine classes or grade levels
- Limit, when possible, student transitions from room to room
- Limit sharing of high touch materials (art supplies, equipment, etc.)
- Avoid sharing of electronic devices
- Increase opportunities for student hygiene activities
- Encourage the use of outdoor spaces for instruction
- Encourage the use of larger classroom spaces (gym, cafeteria, etc.)
- Schedule restroom breaks, when possible, to avoid overcrowding

## Hallways/Passing Periods/Transition Periods

Since social distancing will be difficult to adhere to during transitional periods of a school day, face covering usage will be required. Visual cues for expected traffic flow may be used by STOH schools. In addition, operational procedures at each school will be analyzed with the intent to reduce student transitions (if possible). If transitions can't be reduced or eliminated, schools may look to stagger transition times to aid in social distancing efforts. Congregating in hallways between classes will not be allowed at any school.

Schools may opt to alter their usual schedule and allow students to remain in the room while teachers change classes. This may be particularly true for specials courses at the elementary schools.

## Safety Drills

Even during a pandemic, it is still important and required by law to prepare and drill for potential emergencies.

Schools should exercise caution with any drill that involves dividing grade levels or hallways. Having a subset of students and staff ignoring an alarm for a drill may cause confusion in the event of an actual alarm.

### Fire Drills

- Schools will “slow down” their drills. This may include sounding the alarm for all occupants to be familiar with the sound, silencing, and then beginning a slow and orderly evacuation. This will help occupants know what the fire alarm sounds like, practice their evacuation, and maintain social distancing.
  - Building and school safety leaders will assess traffic flow and other problems.
  - Drills should be clearly announced so students and staff are aware of the drill.
  - When feasible, one-way hallways will be designated for evacuation to lessen the instances of “crossing paths.”
  - Rally points may need to be reconsidered to accommodate social distancing.

### Tornado Drills

- Drills will be announced, and students will move to their shelter location one classroom at a time, or slowly in waves. Building leaders and teachers should emphasize social distancing while ensuring occupants are able to locate their shelter in the event of severe weather or a tornado.
  - Drills should be clearly announced so students and staff are aware of the drill.
  - When feasible, one-way hallways will be designated for evacuation to lessen the instances of “crossing paths.”

### Lockdown Drills

- If the lockdown location is impractical for a drill due to social distancing requirements, teachers and staff should emphasize where students should go in the event of a lockdown.

### Bus Evacuation Drills

- Students will be required to use face coverings for all bus evacuation drills.

## **Student Supplies**

Parents should make every effort to reduce the amount of materials, supplies, and personal belongings going to and from school each day.

Staff should be cognizant of this requirement and limit required school supplies to only essential items. Supply lists will be shared by each specific school/teacher. (The lists are available on the website.)

In addition, STOH staff members should make a concerted effort to reduce student exposure to high-touch, shared resources at school (art supplies, books, electronic devices, etc.). Supplies utilized by students which are owned by STOH should be cleaned/sanitized on a regular basis.

Ipads should be taken home each day and sanitized. Please refer to the Cleaning and Sanitization Procedures from Apple on page 24.

## **Media Center/Library**

Due to the close proximity students typically have in a traditional media center environment, some operational changes will need to take place for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. In all schools, the number of students allowed in the library at any given time will be limited. Each individual school will develop a plan for media center usage.

## **Water Fountain Usage**

Since water fountains are considered “high-touch” areas, fountains will be shut down while the pandemic is active. Students are encouraged to bring their own water/bottle.

## **Restrooms**

Regulating social distancing in restrooms is difficult due to the obvious privacy nature of these areas. As a result, facial coverings are required in all STOH restrooms. In addition to the face covering requirement, the following actions may also take place:

- If teachers take classes to the restroom, a practice of social distancing and limited students in the restroom at any given time should be practiced
- Educate students on handwashing and face covering usage in the restroom area
- Designate restrooms usage (by classroom)

## **Staff Meetings**

Whole staff, grade level, departmental and/or PLC meetings are an important part of the workday for instructional staff members. When meetings are held, staff members should meet in spaces that are large enough to accommodate social distancing. If a space is not available to successfully socially distance staff members, a virtual format should be utilized.

## **Student Nutrition (Breakfast and Lunch)**

Student usage of the cafeteria will be one of the most challenging events during the school year. Due to the size of each school’s cafeteria and the number of students enrolled, it will

be difficult to maintain social distancing with normal lunch procedure. In addition, students will not be able to wear face coverings while they eat. As a result, schools will employ various practices to facilitate the operations of the cafeteria area. Face coverings will be required in the cafeteria and other designated eating areas until the student is seated.

Throughout the school year, some of the strategies that may be utilized include:

- Grab and go meals - eliminates self-serve food items and utilizes disposable utensils
- Assigned seating
- Visual cues placed throughout the cafeteria to control movement
- Prohibit food sharing
- Sanitation station availability in all cafeterias
- PPE provided for all food service staff
- Dining in classrooms or specified areas in the building such as the gymnasium, fieldhouse, large rooms, and outdoor areas for lunch (to aid in social distancing measures)

## Transportation

For many of our STOH students, the school bus is a student's first contact with the school in the morning and the last point of contact in the afternoon. Thus, STOH understands the importance of establishing protocols regarding student transportation to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and protect both students and staff. *If possible, we encourage parents to use their own transportation to drop-off and pick-up their students from school.* However, if that is not possible, students riding the bus will be required to follow strict protocols.

During the registration process, parents will be asked to choose the mode of transportation their student will be using this school year (walk, car ride, or ride the bus). (Students may only ride a bus if they are in a bus area. Students in a walk area may not ride the bus.) After the registration process, changes may be made by notifying Transportation via telephone at 219-924-4730 or via email at [nschless@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:nschless@highland.k12.in.us). We ask parents to give as much notice as possible to accommodate requests in a timely fashion.

## Social Distancing

Transportation will attempt to socially distance students when possible. However, it is important to note the recommended six feet of social distancing will be difficult depending on the number of students who ride a bus. Therefore, students will be required to wear face coverings while riding the bus and while embarking and disembarking the bus. Bus windows may be lowered when weather permits to increase air circulation throughout the bus. Siblings and members of the same household will be required to sit with each other in the same seat. Students will be required to maintain social distancing and to wear face coverings while at the bus stop. Parent supervision at the bus stop is encouraged.

Per Indiana's [In-Class Re-entry Plan](#), students will be assigned to a specific seat on the bus.

In addition, students will not be permitted to eat on the bus unless medically necessary. Students may not pass personal items between one another on the bus.

Failure to comply with COVID-19 preventative requirements may result in the loss of school bus privileges for a student.

## **Bus Cleaning and Sanitization**

Buses will be thoroughly sanitized three times a day using a CDC approved agent. If a STOH vehicle transports a passenger or has a driver who tests positive for COVID-19 or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19, the transportation department will remove the bus/vehicle from service for deep cleaning and disinfecting.

## **Facilities**

All STOH facilities will have significant changes to the way buildings are cleaned/sanitized. Cleaning supplies with the capability to kill COVID-19 have been purchased and will be utilized in all buildings and STOH buses.

### **Cleaning and Sanitization**

All buildings will be receiving a “deep clean” prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year. We are asking all non-essential items to be removed from classrooms and other areas occupied by students to aid in cleaning and sanitization efforts. In addition, students should only bring essential items to school each day. Nightly disinfecting of all high-touch surfaces in rooms will take place. High-touch areas include but are not limited to:

Doorknobs  
Light switches  
Media center furniture  
Locker rooms  
Restroom Sinks  
Desks  
Weight room equipment  
Toilets  
Pencil sharpeners  
Phones

In addition to nightly cleaning of our facilities, COVID-19 will require STOH staff to conduct more frequent cleanings throughout the school day. This process will include the following:

- Ongoing cleaning of high-touch surfaces throughout the day and in between student activities (recess, lunch, passing periods, etc.)
- Cleaning shared objects between uses. Including:
  - Gym Equipment
  - Classroom Materials

- Related Arts Materials (Art, Band, Orchestra, etc.)
- Games
- Copy Machines
- Cupboard, Drawer and Filing Cabinet Handles
- Refrigerator and Freezer Door Handles
- Desks, Tables and Chairs

Certain materials that become problematic to keep clean may be temporarily taken out of use.

## **Cleaning after COVID-19 Exposure**

Emergency cleaning will occur in situations where a known infection is connected to a STOH facility. Depending on the size or complexity of the area requiring emergency cleaning, outside vendors may be hired to assist. If an emergency cleaning need occurs, all or part of the applicable STOH facility will be vacated. If a school needs to be evacuated and closed, the length-of-closure will be communicated to all appropriate stakeholders.

## **Signage**

The STOH will post signage throughout the district. Signage could include:

- Hallway Directional Paths
- COVID-19 Symptoms/Self-Screening
- Handwashing Practices
- Stop the Spread and Proper Hygiene Practices
- Proper Face Covering Usage

## **Ventilation**

The STOH will ensure ventilation systems operate properly. In all classrooms with unit vents, the HVAC system replaces the air with outside air 8 times an hour. Air filters will be replaced more frequently.

# MENTAL HEALTH

STOH understands the importance of mental health and the role that it plays in the lives of our students, faculty, staff, and families. We are supporting the mental health of stakeholders during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing resources, services and professional development opportunities.

All STOH schools are staffed with at least one licensed school counselor. If a student needs any social or emotional assistance, they should reach out to their counselor.

## Tips to Support Coping and Resilience

- Encourage employees and students to take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories about COVID-19, including social media if they are feeling overwhelmed or distressed.
- Promote health and wellness habits of employees and students such as eating healthy, exercising, getting plenty of sleep, and setting time aside to unwind.
- Encourage employees and students to talk with people they trust about their concerns and how they are feeling.
- All stakeholders should be educated on the signs and symptoms of anxiety and depression.

## Resources for Families and Students

[Indiana School Mental Health Initiative: Resources for Supporting Mental Health Stress Management Tips for Students](#)

## STOH Guidance Counselor Information

Kelly Gossman, Guidance Coordinator, District [kgossman@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:kgossman@highland.k12.in.us)

Anne Lemon, HHS [alemon@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:alemon@highland.k12.in.us)

Amy Vezmar, HHS [avezmar@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:avezmar@highland.k12.in.us)

Rose Vis, HHS/HMS [rvis@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:rvis@highland.k12.in.us)

Denise Mavity, HMS [dmavity@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:dmavity@highland.k12.in.us)

Rachel Jennings, Johnston Elementary [rjennings@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:rjennings@highland.k12.in.us)

Kristine Pilewski, Warren Elementary [kpilewsk@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:kpilewsk@highland.k12.in.us)

Deanna Shapiro, Southridge Elementary [dshapiro@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:dshapiro@highland.k12.in.us)

Kristin Verhoeve, Merkley Elementary [kverhoev@highland.k12.in.us](mailto:kverhoev@highland.k12.in.us)

# TECHNOLOGY

On-site students will receive their iPads the first day of school. Building principals will create and communicate the pick-up schedule for their on-line students.

## **How to clean your iPad / Mac products**

Apple products are made with a variety of materials, and each material might have specific cleaning requirements. Here are some tips that apply to all products:

- Use only a soft, lint-free cloth. Avoid abrasive cloths, towels, paper towels, or similar items.
- Avoid excessive wiping, which might cause damage.
- Unplug all external power sources, devices, and cables.
- Keep liquids away from the product, unless otherwise noted for specific products.
- Don't get moisture into any openings.
- Don't use aerosol sprays, bleaches, or abrasives.
- Don't spray cleaners directly onto the item.

# RESOURCES

[Face Covering Guidance for Families](#)

[Screening Chart for Parents](#)

[Screening Decision Tree ISDH](#)

[When a Student, Faculty or Staff Member Can Return to School](#)