

Kirby School District 140 2021-22 Reopening Plan



Updated October 15, 2021

Overview

The Kirby School District 140 Reopening Plan was designed to safely resume full in-person learning for all students during the 2021-22 school year. The following document was developed in accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Mitigations below are listed in order of priority and effectiveness for providing students and staff with a safe and consistent on-site educational setting throughout the school year.

- **Vaccination**

The CDC is very clear that the safest way to reopen our schools is high levels of vaccination for those in our schools and surrounding communities. We will continue to support ongoing community vaccination efforts while respecting the rights of individuals and families for both privacy and personal choice. Please visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) if you wish to find a vaccine location near you.

- **Masking**

On August 4, 2021, Illinois Governor JB Pritzker issued an order requiring indoor masking for all students, staff, and visitors to PreK-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Masks must be worn at all times while inside District 140 buildings and while riding D140 buses. Masks are not required outdoors.

- **Social Distancing**

CDC guidelines have determined that ideal distancing is 3 feet or greater. Additionally, proximity and time of contact should be considered in hallways, common areas, and stairwells.

- **Testing, Quarantine, & Contact Tracing**

Since the beginning of the pandemic, testing is becoming more accessible and results are immediately available. Testing is an important way to determine additional precautions, including initiating contact tracing for unvaccinated individuals and quarantining COVID positive, probable, or close contact individuals, are necessary. Quarantining individuals from the general public creates a safer learning environment for all.

- **Cleaning and Ventilation Protocols**

Regular and comprehensive cleaning protocols are essential. Additionally, improved ventilation, airflow, and access to outdoor spaces for exercising, learning, and eating decrease the risk of the spread of COVID-19.

Primary Goal

The most significant goal for the upcoming school year is to safely remain fully open without interruption to teaching and learning while supporting a community of students, staff, parents, and community partners after 18 months of tremendous challenges and incredible stress.

Objectives:

- 100% fully onsite teaching and learning for the entire school year
- Little or no interruptions to learning due to illness or quarantine

Key Elements

Some key elements of our safety mitigation strategy for the 2021-22 school year include:

- A return to an in-person, standard school day.
- A return to full in-person, regularly scheduled extracurricular programs, such as clubs, sports, and activities.
- We will continue to share community efforts for vaccinations for eligible students, staff, and community members to be vaccinated against COVID-19.
- All students, staff, and visitors will be required to wear masks while inside all District 140 buildings and while riding D140 buses, regardless of vaccination status. Masks are not required outdoors.
- We will adhere to a minimum of 3-foot social distancing as much as possible throughout the day, including in classrooms and common areas.
- We will adhere to a minimum of 6-foot social distancing at lunch and while eating, when possible.
- Students and staff should self-monitor any symptoms for signs of illness each day. Anyone who is not feeling well should stay home.
- Students and staff will be expected to adhere to handwashing and appropriate social distancing. We will continue to adhere to CDC mitigation guidelines for ventilation in our buildings.
- COVID-19 testing is readily available throughout the community, including from doctors, pharmacies, and the Cook County Health Department. We will continue to share resources with the community to be sure individuals who need or want testing are aware of resources.
- We will follow local health department guidelines and enforce quarantine requirements to prevent the spread of the virus among students and staff. (Fully vaccinated individuals are generally exempt from quarantine in most cases.)
- If a student is quarantined, their teacher will provide them with lessons and instructional materials via Seesaw or Google Classroom and increased academic support will be available.

Start of the School Year

- August 11: Elementary classroom assignments and middle school student schedules released via Infinite Campus
- August 11: Board of Education Committee Meeting to discuss three Fernway construction options - 7 pm at Prairie View Middle School
- August 16: Bus Route Information released via Infinite Campus
- August 16: Step Up Day for incoming sixth graders
- August 18: Middle School Walkthrough for Parents/Students
- August 20: Kindergarten Round-Up
- August 23: Institute Day for all staff
- August 23: Elementary Open House
- August 24: First Day of School for Students
- August 24: Middle School Open House

Communication

Communication between the District, families, and staff is vital. District 140 will continue to provide updates and important communications by phone, text, email, and/or the D140 website.

Please log in to your [Infinite Campus Parent Portal](#) and review your phone, email, and text messaging contact information. If you need assistance with this process or have any questions regarding the information provided in this communication, please contact your school office.

- Bannes: 708-532-6466
- Fernway: 708-349-3810
- Keller: 708-532-2144
- McAuliffe: 708-429-4565
- Millennium: 708-532-3150
- Grissom: 708-429-3030
- Prairie View: 708-532-8540

Social and Emotional Supports

D140 realizes that the Social-Emotional Support structure of our district has always been strong. The following areas are available and/or enhanced to help prepare our students and staff for a successful return.

- All District 140 schools are staffed with a social worker and counselor.
- Administer DESSA Screener twice throughout the 2021-22 school year - fall and winter. Analyze data to determine needs.

- PBIS initiatives in elementary and middle school inclusive of restorative practices and trauma-informed practices.
- Explore the utilization of the digital Second Step Curriculum.
- Elementary classrooms will have morning meetings to create a sense of community and belonging. This helps establish routine into the student day, provide a positive experience first thing in the morning, and build empathy and school culture.
- Provide an advisory period at a given time each day for middle school classrooms to give students a structured routine from which they can receive resources and support specifically geared toward social/emotional learning.

COVID-19 Symptoms/Positive

- IDPH has existing protocols for COVID-19 positive/probable cases in their Exclusionary Guidelines. These guidelines were updated on July 27, 2021, and include:
 - All vaccinated individuals are exempt from quarantine, unless symptomatic.
 - If unvaccinated and unmasked an individual must quarantine if a close contact within 6-feet.
 - If unvaccinated and masked an individual does not need to quarantine if a close contact is between 3-6 feet.
 - No quarantine is required for outdoor close contact.
- For the foreseeable future, we strongly encourage families to exercise caution about sending students with COVID-like symptoms to school. Based on the age of individuals and the density of our population, we are requesting families not send their students onsite if symptomatic whether vaccinated or unvaccinated.
- In the spring of 2021, vaccines have been approved for use with individuals as young as 12 years old. The decision to become vaccinated is a personal decision and one in which the district respects. Please know the following factors should be considered from an educational perspective regarding vaccinations for students:
 - Students who are vaccinated will be exempted from close contact tracing and quarantine. This includes within the school building and when participating in athletics or activities.
 - IDPH guidelines may differentiate between vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals when it comes to masking, special event participation, or athletics. D140 will be obligated to follow those guidelines.

Nurse's Office

- Each school has a Registered School Nurse on staff who will follow IDPH guidelines including an isolation area for anyone who shows COVID-19 symptoms.

Health Certification

- While in Phase 5, students and staff will NOT be required to fill out self-certification forms prior to entering the building. Additionally, athletes and students at school for after-school activities will not be responsible for self-certification.
- In the case of a return to mitigations according to IDPH/ISBE, if there is a requirement to screen for symptoms, we will be obligated to do so.
- Guests to D140 buildings, parents included, may be asked to complete a brief symptom checklist if they are entering the building to meet with staff or attend school activities. Visitors during the school day will be required to wear a mask.
- Students and staff should self-monitor for signs of illness each day. Anyone who is not feeling well should stay home.
- As of July 2021, IDPH/CDC guidance regarding symptoms are: Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and/or diarrhea.

Testing Protocol

- The goal of testing in D140 is to reduce the loss of instructional time and ensure equal access to testing. The testing program can accelerate student and staff return to the classroom based on results.
- D140 will offer testing through LTE Preventative Health Systems. (10/15/2021)
- This program is optional. Staff and families will be offered an opportunity to opt-out of testing.
- Testing will be focused on unvaccinated students and staff who are identified as close contact to a positive or probable case and for unvaccinated or vaccinated individuals who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms.

Arrival & Dismissal

- The District will follow IDPH guidelines regarding the transportation of students to and from school. Currently, this includes allowing full capacity on buses.
- CDC requires that masks be worn by all individuals while on the bus.
- D140 schools will communicate individual entry and dismissal plans for students.
- Students in the building after school must be there for a school-related reason. These reasons include, but are not limited to, athletics/activities, academic support, or meeting with a staff member.

Cleaning Protocols

- It should be noted that the CDC has provided substantially revised guidance related to COVID-19 specific to surface transfer. The guidance points to exposure to COVID-19 based on surface contact is not a cause of spread. However, D140 believes these protocols are worth continued implementation due to the impact we have on controlling the spread of other bacteria and viruses non-related to COVID-19 and we have the equipment and means to do so.
- Enhanced cleaning protocols will continue including the use of hospital-grade, EPA registered disinfectants for all high touch areas in school, classroom, and on buses.
- Use of electrostatic disinfectant sprayers.
- An increased number of hand sanitizer stations will be available.

Activities and Events

- Activities, events, and athletics will follow guidance from IDPH, ISBE, and SWIC.
- Clubs and activities, specifically meetings and competitions, will continue onsite but will follow guidance from IDPH, ISBE, SWIC, and/or the specific organizations facilitating the activity.
- In many cases, clubs and activities have found, on a limited basis, virtual meetings and activities lead to increased participation. D140 will encourage onsite activities as we know socialization and face-to-face collaboration are vitally important to our student's development. However, we will support virtual meetings in cases it may be appropriate. D140 schools will follow SWIC and/or IDPH guidelines for screening and attendance for fans and spectators once/if that guidance is provided.

Field Trips

- D140 will return to normal approval of field trips for the 2021-22 school year.
- We anticipate many of our field trip destinations will remain closed, limited, or have specific protocols. Those protocols will be communicated in advance to families and all protocols must be followed by participating students and staff.
- Over the past year, D140 students and staff have had some success in certain areas with virtual field trips. We anticipate that virtual field trips due to availability, reduced cost, and an increase in potential experiences will continue to some extent.

Lunches

- The schools will follow IDPH guidelines regarding capacity, face masks, and social distancing for lunch spaces.
- School-specific details regarding PTO hot lunch programs will be communicated by building principals at the start of the 2021-22 school year.

Hallways & Classrooms

- The schools will follow IDPH guidelines for classrooms and hallways. Buildings are designing individualized plans regarding hallway and stairwell traffic flow. This is building-specific based on the size of the hallway/stairwell, typical traffic patterns, and supervision.
- Middle school students will be issued lockers. Schools may encourage limited use of lockers to avoid congestion in the hallways.
- Increased supervision in hallways to deter congregating.
- To aid in contact tracing protocols, teachers will maintain a seating chart for students in case of the need to contract trace. As a reminder, students who have completed vaccinations will be exempt from quarantine.
- Signage will be posted throughout the buildings regarding hand washing, physical distancing, and facemasks.

Physical Education

- The schools will follow IDPH guidelines regarding physical education classes and programming.
- During the first semester, and possibly the entire year, we will be optimizing outside physical education classes to maximize student time unmasked and follow the science regarding limited exposure to COVID or other airborne transmissions.
- We have high confidence that students will be participating in a regular physical education program. This may include the need to wear school PE uniforms and locker room usage.

Physical Spaces

- Air purifiers and increased ventilation in accordance with guidelines in all classrooms and buildings.
- School water fountains will remain off. Students and staff members are encouraged to bring their own water bottles for the day. Water refill stations will be open.

- The district continues to promote proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette. Hand sanitation stations will still be available throughout D140 buildings.

Spectator Limitations/Virtual Parent Meetings

- Given IDPH guidelines at the time, schools will make determinations about live, virtual, or hybrid meetings with large groups of parents (ie, Open House nights, athletic parent meetings, Town Halls, etc)
- Spectator / Audience limitations will adhere to the IDPH Guidelines. For student performances and athletic events, we will always allow as many spectators as determined by the guidelines.

Technology

- All students are issued an iPad to support their learning.
- Video conferencing may be used for parent and student virtual meetings.
- Streaming options may be available for various school activities.
- Online forms will be used to submit digital documents for parents/students, when possible.
- eLearning Days may be used for weather and other extended outages based on the D140 approved state plan.

References and Resources

- CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>
- Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) - <https://www.idph.illinois.gov>
- Illinois State Board of Education - <https://www.isbe.net>
- Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH)
<https://cookcountypublichealth.org>
- If you wish to find a COVID-19 vaccine location near you, visit <https://www.vaccines.gov>