



# Oak Park and River Forest High School - District 200 2021-2022 Reopening Plan

*Approved by the Board of Education on June 10, 2021*

We are pleased to announce that Oak Park and River Forest High School will return to fully in-person learning for the 2021-2022 school year.

This decision aligns with a May 19, 2021, [resolution from the Illinois State Board of Education](#) (ISBE). The unanimously passed resolution supports a planned declaration by Illinois State Superintendent of Education Carmen Ayala that all Illinois schools will return to fully in-person learning for all student attendance days in the 2021-2022 school year. The resolution provides one exception: Schools must provide remote learning only for students who are not eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine **and** also are under a quarantine order by the local or state health department. Students must meet both criteria to qualify for remote learning.

Districts have been told to expect that State Supt. Ayala will issue this declaration following the end of the current school year. Districts also are awaiting specific guidance from ISBE regarding safety requirements such as social distancing. Superintendents have been told that this information will be forthcoming after Gov. Pritzker announces that the state has entered Phase 5 of the [Restore Illinois](#) plan, which is expected to happen in June.

Please keep in mind that because definitive information from the state is still pending, the information that follows is subject to change. Barring any sharp reversal in rates of COVID-19 transmission, however, we are optimistic that the plans will remain mostly as detailed below.

## **Daily schedule**

Our annual Huskie Kickoff Day for freshmen will take place on Friday, Aug. 13. The first semester of the [2021-2022 school year](#) begins on Monday, Aug. 16, 2021. We will return to our normal, daily [eight-period bell schedule](#). We also will resume regularly scheduled late-arrival Wednesdays, when faculty participate in teacher-collaboration teams and professional development prior to first period. The dates of late-arrival Wednesdays will be forthcoming.

## **Learning loss**

The global pandemic forced schools to provide instruction in a variety of ways. At least a third of our student body has been learning entirely remotely since March 2020. As we resume fully in-person teaching and learning, identifying and addressing learning gaps from 2021-2022 is a priority. To remedy these gaps, the district will:

- Waive 2021 Summer School fees for all students.
- Identify learning gaps through academic testing early in the school year.
- Support students with specific in-school reading interventions.
- Support students with specific in-school math interventions.
- Identify a permanent substitute teacher to provide remote learning for those who qualify as well as tutoring to remedy learning loss.
- Implement after-school academic support programs.
- Specifically address the needs of children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth.

## **Social-emotional support**

Living through a global pandemic has taken an emotional toll on our students. Helping students process their lived experiences and deal with the trauma the pandemic has caused is an essential part of transitioning back to fully in-person learning. As a result, we will:

- Implement research-based social-emotional learning programs.
- Deploy the trauma informed school interventionist to train faculty and staff to recognize trauma and provide support to students.
- Provide social worker support to students who experienced significant challenges.
- Use the Care Coordinator and Community Outreach Coordinator to support students and their families.

## **Health and safety procedures**

### *Masking and social distancing*

Per a [May 17 announcement from the governor](#), masks still will be required in schools next year, so all students, employees, and visitors must continue to abide by [Board Policy 4:182 - Face Coverings](#). The state has not yet issued guidance to schools on whether social distancing will be required. A distancing requirement would have an effect on where lunch can be served, so we are considering various options for that possibility. We will share further information when it becomes available.

### *Water bottles in classrooms*

Proper hydration is important for physical health and brain function. Given that we will be back to a normal, full-day schedule, students may lift their masks briefly to take sips of water in classrooms and hallways. Please note that ONLY water will be permitted. Consuming food or other beverages will NOT be allowed in classrooms or hallways.

### *Daily symptom screening and weekly saliva screening*

These practices will be discontinued for 2021-2022. They were an important part of our mitigation strategy when COVID-19 rates were high and vaccination was extremely limited; students who failed a screening were still able to participate in their classes remotely. Now that vaccination is widely available, community transmission rates are low, and remote learning is eliminated, we want to avoid any barriers to school attendance.

### *On-site testing for symptomatic individuals*

The state has provided schools with BinaxNOW, a rapid-results diagnostic test that's effective at identifying COVID-19 in symptomatic individuals. Our Health Services office has an ample supply of BinaxNOW and will test students or staff members who begin displaying COVID symptoms at school. (Anyone with symptoms prior to entering the building should NOT come to school.) We will still have an isolation room for any student who tests positive to wait for their parent or guardian to pick them up.

### *Quarantine for close contacts*

Those who are fully vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone testing positive for COVID-19 do not have to quarantine, as long as they remain asymptomatic. In alignment with the guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and the Illinois Department of Public Health, the district will work with the Oak Park Department of Public Health in an effort to shorten the length of time the department currently requires for close contacts of positive cases.

*Enhanced cleaning schedule*

Our Buildings & Grounds staff will continue to follow enhanced procedures for daily cleaning and sanitizing classrooms and public areas, as well as sanitizing high-touch surfaces multiple times a day.

## **Appendix: 2021-2022 ESSER Safe Schooling Plan**

The American Rescue Plan Act, passed on March 11, 2021, provided \$122.7 billion in supplemental funding for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund, known as ESSER III. States receive these dollars based on the same proportion of funding that each state receives under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title-IA. States must distribute at least 90% of funds to local education agencies based on their proportional share of ESEA Title I-A funds. The local education agencies--in this case, District 200--must reserve at least 20% of the funding they receive to address learning loss.

District 200 anticipates receiving \$1.4 million in ESSER III funds over three years, of which at least \$280,000 must be spent on learning loss. As required by law, we are providing the following information to outline how ESSER III funds will be used by the district, focusing on four primary areas to ensure the safety of our students and staff and to remedy learning loss that may have occurred during the COVID-19 global pandemic.

### **Academic Supports**

Research is clear that there is no substitute for a high-quality, in-person teaching experience to ensure student academic success. The global pandemic interrupted our instructional model and forced schools to provide instruction in a variety of ways. As we return to full-time in-person instruction we will:

- Use academic testing to identify learning gaps.
- Use in-school reading interventions.
- Use in-school math interventions.
- Use research-based curricular programs.
- Purchase educational technology.
- Implement activities and services related to summer learning.
- Implement after-school academic support programs.
- Address the needs of children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth.
- Provide intensive tier 3 interventions for academic and social-emotional needs.
- Provide on-site evening learning lab for diverse learners.
- Provide an option for transition-plus services for diverse learners ages 18-22.

For more detailed information, [click here](#).

### **Social/Emotional Supports**

Living through a global pandemic has taken an emotional toll on our students. Helping students process their lived experiences and deal with the trauma the pandemic has caused is an essential part of transitioning back to fully in-person learning. As a result, we will:

- Implement research-based social-emotional learning programs.
- Deploy the trauma informed school interventionist to train faculty and staff to recognize trauma and provide support to students.
- Provide social worker support to students who experienced significant challenges.
- Use the Care Coordinator and our Community Outreach Coordinator to support students and their families.

For more detailed information, [click here](#).

## Health and Safety Resources

The health and safety of our students and staff is always our top priority. The COVID-19 global pandemic has taught us important lessons on how to ensure the safety of our students and staff safety. These include, but are not limited to, cleaning protocols, hand sanitizing, physical distancing, and virus suppression. While the vaccine provides some sense of protection, we will continue to require additional safety measures for the 2021-2022 school year. As we return to full-time in-person instruction we will:

- Requiring mask wearing and/or social distancing when required or necessary.
- Implement on-site diagnostic testing.
- Plan for long-term closures, including providing meals to eligible students/families.
- Provide training and professional development on sanitizing and virus transmission.
- Purchase supplies to clean and sanitize facilities.
- Use EPA-/OSHA-approved cleaners for frequently touched surfaces.

For more detailed information, [click here](#).

## Capital Improvements

The ESSER III funds provide districts with the opportunity to address structural issues that may need to be addressed within their schools. These capital improvements may help bridge the digital divide, improve the learning environment or make schools safer for students and staff. As we return to full-time in-person instruction we will:

- Improve air quality where needed.
- Make any needed repairs or improvements to facilities to reduce risk of virus transmission.
- Purchase in-class technology to enhance instruction.
- Install network-security monitoring devices to increase cybersecurity, for students as well as for devices used in classroom instruction.
- Enhance streaming equipment in the auditorium, including audio-visual integrated into the existing system.

For more detailed information, [click here](#).