

# Macomb CUSD #185

## Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

July 26, 2021

### **Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in major upheaval to all aspects of life, including unprecedented school closures in the spring and fall of 2020. The re-opening of schools for in-person instruction last spring required strict health and safety protocols which created barriers and limitations to teaching and learning. Recognizing that students across remote and in-person settings faced significant academic, social, emotional, and mental health challenges because of the interrupted education and the trauma caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Congress made emergency funds available to local school districts to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. Most recently, funds available through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act require that school districts develop a *Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services*. As such, this plan has been developed in accordance with the ARP Act and the Illinois State Superintendent of Education declaration of July 9, 2021; is aligned with guidance provided by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and addresses adjustments needed in response to evolving COVID-19 pandemic circumstances. Taking the public's input into account, The Center for Disease Control school guidance, Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Department of Public Health and McDonough County Health Department, this plan has been developed. Upon request, this plan will be provided in an alternative format accessible to parents who are individuals with a disability as defined by the ADA. This plan will also be made publicly available on the district's website. School strategies in this plan may be removed based upon local conditions, levels of community transmission (i.e., low, moderate, substantial, or high), local vaccine coverage, use of screening testing to detect cases in K-12 schools, and consultation with local public health officials to determine the prevention strategies needed. School officials will communicate any changes in plans to staff members, students, and parents through the district's regular communication platforms.

### **Maintaining the Health and Safety of Students, Educators, and Other Staff**

In accordance with the Illinois State Superintendent of Schools' July 9, 2021 declaration, all Macomb CUSD #185 schools will be open fully for in-person learning for all full day student attendance days for the 2021-22 school year. Remote instruction will only be made available for non-vaccinated or vaccine ineligible students who are under quarantine as directed by the local health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health. Absent an order from the Illinois State Board of Education and/or the Illinois Governor's Office, Macomb CUSD #185 schools will be in operation in accordance with the CDC's updated (July 9, 2021) *Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Kindergarten (K)-12 Schools*, also adopted by the IDPH on July 9, 2021.

The CDC continues to recommend masking and physical distancing as key prevention strategies. However, if school administrators decide to remove any of the prevention strategies for their school based on local conditions, they should remove them one at a time and monitor closely (with adequate testing through the school and/or community) for any increases in COVID-19 cases.

In a PowerPoint received today (July 26, 2021), the CDC state, “Universal masking policies can help avert the need for shutdowns – especially if combined with other non-pharmaceutical interventions such as social distancing, hand hygiene, and adequate ventilation.” Onsite and consistent Covid-19 testing has been added as well. The following outlines the Macomb CUSD #185 fully open in-person learning plan.

### **1. Mask Use**

- Mask use is required indoors for students, staff, and visitors regardless of vaccination status. Mask use is required outdoors during activities (e.g., participating in outdoor play, recess, physical education, sports, extra curriculums) that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated, particularly in areas of substantial to high transmission.
- School staff are to model for and encourage students to always adhere to these guidelines.
- Unless exempt by CDC Order, all passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses.

### **2. Physical Distancing**

- To the extent possible within school and classroom structures so that it does not exclude students from full day in-person learning, school staff are to help students commit to physical distancing as much as possible by:
  - arranging furniture, controlling movement, play spaces and naptime materials to model and reinforce physical distancing of at least 3 feet;
  - providing assigned seating for students and requiring students to remain in these seats to the greatest extent possible; and
  - developing marked paths of travel in classrooms and corridors.
- School staff will maximize physical distance as much as possible when moving through food service lines and while eating indoors. Aside from the cafeteria, additional spaces for mealtime seating may be utilized when available and feasible (e.g., weather permitting). Students and staff who are fully vaccinated do not need to distance while eating.
- Physical distancing measures are to be done in an equitable manner that does not perpetuate academic, racial, or other tracking (e.g., separating people into fully vaccinated and non-fully vaccinated cohorts). Lunch may be the exception to this rule, as it is difficult to maintain the distances necessary while eating. We are still working on these details in each building.

### **3. Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette**

- School staff will monitor and reinforce frequent handwashing and respiratory etiquette by
  - continuing to teach handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
  - assisting young children with handwashing;
  - reminding everyone in the facility to wash hands frequently;
  - using hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol (for teachers, staff, and older students who can safely use hand sanitizer) when handwashing is not possible;
  - continuing to teach respiratory etiquette (e.g., covering coughs and sneezes).

### **4. Facility and Transportation Cleaning, Disinfection and Ventilation**

- School custodial staff and transportation staff will continue to clean surfaces daily. To further reduce the risk of spreading infection, these staff will also use disinfectants on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency COVID-19 “List N” to disinfect spaces occupied by someone who tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 24 hours.

- Maintenance staff will continue to regularly replace school ventilation system filters. Although regular tests indicate a high quality of indoor air in our schools, aged ventilation systems are being replaced by new systems to improve the control and reliability of air circulation and filtration.
- When it does not pose a safety risk, transportation staff will keep vehicle windows open at least a few inches to improve air circulation. Mask must be worn on all buses.

## **5. Contact Tracing in Combination with Testing, Isolation and Quarantine**

- Students and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, should stay home and contact their healthcare provider for testing and care.
- To ensure continuity of services, Macomb School District has partnered with the University of Illinois to implement a weekly testing program at school using the Shield Illinois Testing Program. This initiative will help us ensure there are no outbreaks by testing all non-vaccinated staff and students on a weekly basis as well as all symptomatic vaccinated students and staff. (This process could evolve as we monitor local and regional statistics).
- Individuals in our school environments who show symptoms of COVID-19 are to immediately report to or be escorted to the school's health care professional's office to be either sent home or be quarantined in the school's supervised safe area while awaiting pickup/evaluation. Parents should ensure that ill students are picked up from school within 30 minutes of being notified. Ill students will not be allowed to utilize the school bus to return home. To facilitate COVID-19 diagnosis and inform the need for quarantine of close contacts and isolation, a rapid COVID-19 test can be administered on site unless parental consent is withheld.
- Students and staff who are not fully vaccinated should quarantine after a recent exposure to someone with COVID-19, unless the student has maintained the 3 feet distancing, masked, and participated in the school-based testing program. When all three of these mitigation measures are in place no quarantine due to the school setting is required at this time.
- Fully vaccinated people who were in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 but do NOT have COVID-19 symptoms do not need to quarantine or be tested.
- Student absences related to a COVID-19 isolation or quarantine will be recorded as excused. To ensure continuity of services, schoolwork missed during such an absence can be requested and made up in a remote setting in accordance with the school's or teacher's policy; social, emotional, mental health, or other needed supports will be provided in accordance with a student's IEP (Individualized Education Program) or 504 Plan. Parents of students who have social, emotional, mental health, or other needs outside of an IEP or 504 Plan should contact their child's principal to discuss those needs. Remote instruction will be made available only to students who are under quarantine as directed by the local health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health.
- Staff absences related to a COVID-19 isolation or quarantine will be recorded in accordance with the district's sick leave policy and related professional negotiations agreements. To ensure continuity of services, staff members should contact their principals to discuss support for social, emotional, mental health, or other needs.
- To the extent allowable by privacy laws and other applicable laws, school health care professionals will continue to collaborate with McDonough County Health Department officials to confidentially provide information about people diagnosed with or exposed to

COVID-19, including making notifications to staff and parents as soon as possible regarding those who were in close contact of someone in the school who tested positive for COVID-19.

- The school's health care professional will inform the school community of outbreaks while maintaining student and staff confidentiality rights.
- Students and staff suspected of having COVID-19, whether they were tested or not, are to follow the McDonough County Health Department guidelines to determine when they can return to school.
- Following quarantine, students and staff returning from illness related to COVID-19 are to call to check in with the school's health care professional.

## **6. Screening Testing**

- Macomb School District has partnered with the University of Illinois to implement a weekly testing program at school using the Shield Illinois Testing Program. This initiative will help us ensure there are no outbreaks by testing all non-vaccinated staff and students on a weekly basis as well as all symptomatic vaccinated students and staff. (This process could evolve as we monitor local and regional statistics). As required by Illinois State Law, there is an "Opt Out of Testing Form" attached to the end of this plan. If you approve of testing as a mitigation strategy to prevent your child from having to quarantine NO ACTION is required.

## **7. Vaccination Clinics**

- Respectful of peoples' varying levels of vaccine confidence, those who want to get vaccinated against COVID-19 can visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find out where they can get vaccinated in our community.

## **8. Disabilities or Other Health Care Needs**

- Parents of students who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, or weakened immune systems should contact their student's case manager to discuss those need(s).
- Staff members who need accommodations, modifications, or assistance related to COVID-19 safety protocols, disabilities, underlying medical conditions, weakened immune systems, or a sincerely held religious belief or practice (covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) should contact their school's principal to discuss the need(s). Staff members with weakened immune systems are advised to contact their healthcare professional about the need for continued personal protective measures after vaccination.

## **9. Collaboration with Public Health Officials**

- District officials will continue to collaborate and consult with the Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois State Board of education and McDonough County Health Department officials throughout the pandemic on various planning and decision-making including, but not limited to, school health and safety protocols, screening testing, contact tracing, vaccine clinics, and emergency school closings.

## **10. Plan Review**

- Through May 30, 2022, this plan will be reviewed no less frequently than every month and revised as appropriate. Revisions will address the most recently updated safety recommendations by the Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois State Board of Education and McDonough County Health Department. They will be provided in an alternative format accessible to parents who are individuals with a disability as defined by the ADA and made publicly available on the district's website.

*Approved and adopted by the Board of Education - Macomb C.U.S.D. #185, at its August 16, 2021 regular meeting.*

## CONSENT NOTICE FOR COVID-19 TESTING & RELEASE OF RECORDS

The Macomb CUSD #185 (“School District”) has partnered with the University of Illinois (“Testing Partner”) to test School District students, teachers, and staff members for COVID-19 infection. This notice provides information about the program to allow an informed consent for your child to participate in the testing program. By not opting-out of the testing program as described below, consent for your child to be tested for COVID-19 infection is presumed.

### **How often will your child be tested?**

We are arranging for our Testing Partner to test the students at least [1] times per [Week].

### **What is the test?**

Your child will receive a free diagnostic test for the COVID-19 virus conducted by collecting saliva (spit).

### **How will I know if my child tests positive?**

You will receive access to your child’s test results via an online platform which we will separately send you information about in future correspondence. [School District will also receive results of your child’s test and may/will notify you separately of any positive result.]

### **What should I do when I receive my child’s test results?**

If your child’s test results are positive, please contact your child’s doctor immediately to review the test results and discuss next steps. You may not send your child back to school without a note from your child’s doctor that indicates your child is no longer positive for the COVID-19 virus.

If your child’s test results are negative, this means that the COVID-19 virus was not detected in your child’s saliva (spit).

Tests sometimes produce incorrect negative results called “false negatives” in people who have COVID-19. If your child tests negative but has symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have concerns about your child’s exposure to COVID-19, you should call your child’s doctor.

### **Who will receive my child’s test results?**

In addition to you receiving your child’s test results, the School District and the Illinois Department of Public Health (“IDPH”) will also receive your child’s test results, consistent with IDPH guidance and the Illinois Control of Communicable Disease Code.

### **Do I need to take any other action?**

NO OTHER ACTION IS REQUIRED if you consent for your child to be tested for COVID-19 infection pursuant to the above terms. If you do NOT consent for your child to be tested for COVID-19 infection, complete, sign, and return the OPT-OUT form below.

**OPT-OUT**

**TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN**

<b><u>Parent/Guardian Information</u></b>	
All sections required – please print clearly	
Parent/Guardian Print Name:	
Parent/Guardian Home Address:	
Parent/Guardian Tel./Mobile #:	
Parent/Guardian Email Address:	
Best way to contact you:	
<b><u>Child/Student Information</u></b>	
All sections required – please print clearly	
Child/Student Print Name:	
Child/Student Date of Birth:	
Child/Student School:	
Child/Student Home Address:	

By signing below, I attest that:

- I have signed this form freely and voluntarily, and I am legally authorized to make decisions for the child named above.
- I DO NOT consent for my child to be tested for COVID-19 infection.
- I understand that if I revoke my consent, my child will be required to continue quarantine rules as established by the Illinois Department of Public Health.
- I understand that if I am a student age 18 or older or may otherwise legally consent to my own health care, references to “my child” refer to me and I may sign this form on my own behalf.

**ONLY ORIGINAL SIGNATURES ACCEPTED – NO COPIES OR SCANS**

Signature of Parent/Guardian (if child is under age 18):		Date:
Signature of Student (if age 18 or over)		Date: