



Superintendent's Office
Craig G. Broeren, Superintendent
510 Peach Street
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
715-424-6701
craig.broeren@wrps.net

August 4, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We recognize that these are trying and difficult times with many unknowns. Our planning and preparations have been conducted with the intent of bringing our kids back to their classrooms as safely as possible. While no plan is guaranteed “foolproof,” we have developed an approach which we feel will meet the needs of our students and community to the best of our ability given current circumstances, while paying significant deference to the safety of our students and staff. We understand that COVID-19 is present in our community and that like other viruses, it may spread regardless of the precautions we implement, particularly when groups of people come together. We can however, employ methods to reduce the likelihood of transmission and subsequent sickness, as well as, possibly reduce the number of people (students, staff and community members) who may be required to quarantine due to exposure or potential exposure to the virus. The more that we all do as individuals to take precautionary measures, the more likely we will be able to keep schools open for in-person programming and curb viral transmission within our community.

All of the following information is provided as a means to employ or enhance these basic expectations of people and communities to help reduce the spread and transmission of a virus such as COVID-19:

- 1) Staying Home When Sick
- 2) Use Physical Distancing
- 3) Wash/ Sanitize Hands Frequently
- 4) Avoid Touching Your Face
- 5) Use Face Coverings*

** Face coverings include masks, gaiters, bandanas, etc. Any of these, if used properly, would be acceptable. The District will provide masks for students or they can choose to use a different face covering from home. Face coverings are subject to schools' dress code requirements.*

The District's Educational Services Committee (a “committee of the whole” comprised of all 7 Board members) met on Monday, August 3, 2020 and preliminarily approved the plan outlined below to start the 2020-2021 school year. The Board of Education will “officially” approve the District's reopening plans at their regular monthly meeting scheduled for Monday, August 10, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. At this time, I do not anticipate any significant modifications to our plan. *Please note: The Board of Education acted to require face coverings for all students, staff, and visitors to school facilities (additional details are provided below); this would remain in effect for the school district even in the absence of a State-wide Order.* I will send a communication to parents and guardians on Tuesday, August 11 solidifying and validating our plans as well as communicate any changes. Additionally, **parents and guardians will receive school specific details from their child(ren)'s school(s) on Wednesday, August 12, 2020.**

Description/ Rationale

After extensive meetings with the District reopening committee, our local public health department, our medical advisors, and other school districts throughout the state and our area, the WRPS plan to reopen our schools on September 1, 2020 includes:

- ▶ 5-day per week, in-person, instruction for our elementary schools (4K-5) as well as at River Cities High School
- ▶ Implementing an A/B cohort approach at Wisconsin Rapids Area Middle School (WRAMS) and Lincoln High School (LHS)

The A/B cohort approach at WRAMS and LHS has half of the students attending on Monday and Tuesday (the A group), and the other half attending on Thursday and Friday (the B group) in person. The other 3 days that those students are not at school in-person, would include virtual education and work offsite. **Due to the first TWO weeks of school being 4-day weeks, the A group will meet Tuesday and Wednesday, and the B group will meet Thursday and Friday.** Our approach will be evaluated *at least* monthly to allow the District to make changes as proactively as possible and potentially move between the approach outlined above, as well as, 5-day per week- in-person instruction District-wide (or individual building), or completely virtual/ off-site, if local conditions warrant these changes. Decisions to change our approach will be made in conjunction with Public Health officials and local medical advisors, and will be communicated to parents and guardians as proactively as possible.

Much of the justification for this approach has to do with how Public Health is required to do "contact tracing" and the idea that we must make every attempt to keep our cohort groups as small as possible to allow for less contact among people, and provide the best opportunity for individuals to be able to employ physical distancing. At the elementary buildings, this is fairly easy with each cohort being basically a classroom with still smaller cohorts in each classroom where possible. At WRAMS and LHS it becomes more difficult since there are very high numbers of students in addition to complicated schedules and staffing involved (e.g. not all kids have the same teacher or teachers all day long, etc.). Starting normally in those buildings creates a higher probability of having to shut down the entire building due to a high number of staff potentially being told to quarantine (because of more students and more contacts) as a result of potential exposure to COVID 19. As indicated above, this is due at least in part, to the approach the Health Department uses for "contact tracing"- they ask the person who is potentially infectious who they have had prolonged contact with (i.e. closer than 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer); those people are then told to quarantine as well- quarantines will last 14 days in most cases. If we were to start just like "normal" at WRAMS and LHS, there could be a very high number of students and staff being told they have to quarantine (if there is a suspected COVID case) which may result in having to shut a building down due to an inability to staff it. The idea of having half of the students attend at any one time simply decreases the number of people in the building at any given time, and allows for greater ability for individuals to physical distance themselves.

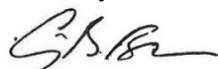
Following is relevant information for parents and students that describe our approach throughout the District. **Students and parents will receive additional school specific details from individual schools on Wednesday, August 12, 2020.**

After reviewing the reopening plan and supplementary information, parents/guardians will find a survey form at the end of this document to provide feedback on the overall plan. We appreciate any comments you are willing to provide about the District's reopening approach.

Parents who do NOT wish to have their child(ren) attend school in person in any capacity should [click here to complete this form](#). School staff will contact you to establish a plan for fully virtual or off-site instruction. This form must be completed by Friday, August 14, 2020.

I invite you to thoroughly review the information provided, and greatly appreciate your flexibility, patience, and understanding as we move through these challenging times.

Sincerely,



Craig G. Broeren
Superintendent

REQUIRED Student/ Parent Before School Protocol and Expectations

The following questions should be answered/completed EVERY day prior to sending children to school. This will NOT be recorded or turned in to the school or District; this checklist is designed to remind parents about what to look for and to help ensure that parents keep kids home if they are sick:

1) Do you and/or your child(ren) have any of these symptoms that are new or unusual for you? **YES/NO**

(If Yes, then you should contact your doctor/ your child(ren)'s doctor and stay home and self-isolate.)

Fever (100.4 or greater)
Loss of smell
Muscle aches
Fatigue

Cough
Loss of taste
Headache

Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
Sore throat
Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea

2) Have you or your child(ren) been diagnosed with COVID-19? **YES/NO**

(If Yes, you/ your child(ren) should remain home and seek guidance and advice from your medical provider and/or public health.)

3) Have you or your child(ren) been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19? **YES/NO**

(If Yes, you/ your child(ren) should remain home and seek guidance and advice from your medical provider and/or public health.)

4) Have you or your child(ren) taken medicine for a fever in the last 72 hours? **YES/NO**

(If Yes, you/ your child(ren) should remain home and seek guidance and advice from your medical provider and/or public health.)

A NOTE ON VACCINATIONS: Please be sure your children are up-to-date on vaccinations and well care. Immunizations are the best way to protect them against 16 harmful, potentially deadly diseases. Due to the pandemic, fewer families are seeking well care for their children and are falling behind on vaccinations. There is concern that outbreaks from vaccine preventable illnesses (like measles, whooping cough) could result due to low vaccination rates worldwide. Please contact your health care provider to schedule well care. Protective measures are in place at all clinics to ensure safety.

◆◆◆ GENERAL DISTRICT GUIDELINES IN EFFECT ◆◆◆

HVAC/ Air Circulation

- Modifications will be made to all school facilities that will increase the rate of outside air intake, as well as overall air flow and circulation.

Cleaning/ Disinfection

- Touch points will be cleaned/ disinfected numerous times per day.
- Restroom facilities will be cleaned/ disinfected multiple times per day.
- Classrooms and common areas will be cleaned/ disinfected as needed and at the end of each school day.
- Teachers and other staff will have access to materials to clean/ disinfect desks and touch points in their classrooms. Students may be asked to wipe/ disinfect their desk or workspace.
- Students will be provided frequent reminders regarding handwashing and/or the use of hand sanitizer. Younger students will be encouraged and reminded to use hand sanitizer more frequently as their hand washing can be less effective than older students.
- Additional hand sanitizer stations and supplies will be provided to every school.

Classroom Organization

- Every classroom will be slightly different and there will not be highly specific expectations around overall classroom set-up; however, classrooms will be organized to maximize physical distancing where possible.
- School supplies will not be shared among students. Materials that are shared within classrooms (ipads, etc.) will be cleaned/ disinfected between uses.

- Attempts will be made to significantly reduce or eliminate the travel of materials both to and from schools.
- Teachers will be encouraged to conduct classes outside as often as possible if feasible.
- Seating charts and specific seating arrangements will be implemented.

Visitors to Buildings

- Adult visitors to school buildings will be significantly reduced or eliminated when possible. ALL adult visitors to schools will be required to wear a face covering.
- Parents are expected to drop off and pick up students at locations designated by their child(ren)'s school.
- Parents will NOT be allowed inside the building when dropping students off or wait for students at the end of the day
- Parents wishing to drop items off for their child(ren) will do so at the school's office or other drop off site designated by the school. Further details will be included in the individual school plans.
- Parent meetings, IEP meetings, etc. will be handled virtually when possible. If in-person meetings are required, participants will be informed of the procedures to follow as well as how/ where to gain access to the building. Parents will be required to wear masks.

Isolation of Sick Students

- School staff members are obligated by statute to report suspected cases of COVID-19 to public health.
- Sick students will be isolated as soon as possible and parents will be contacted to pick their child up.
- In the absence of a negative COVID test, it is likely that a student showing signs of COVID will be required to remain home for 10 days after the day the symptoms began.
- "Close contacts" (closer than 6 feet for 15 minutes or longer) of individuals known to be COVID positive will be required to quarantine for 14 days.
- Students should be kept home when sick.
- Please refer to a letter from Wood County Public Health with additional details and recommendations (found at the end of this document).

Access to Water for Drinking

- Water fountain access will be limited to bottle fill ONLY. Students are encouraged to bring their own bottle for water. Disposable cups will be available for students who do not have their own water bottle.
- In schools where access to bottle fillers is limited, bottled water will be provided.

Food Service

- In general, students will eat in their school cafeteria; however, steps will be taken to use physical distancing, such as reducing the number of students in the cafeteria at any one time, changing the orientation and/or seating arrangements, increasing the number of lunch periods, etc.
- Meals will be available for pick-up for those students who are enrolled in WRPS on the days they are learning from home either because they choose to do all of their learning online or they are in an A/B cohort at the secondary building. Meals will be claimed based on a student's free, reduced, or paid meal status so families will need to continue depositing money into their student's meal account if they wish to pick up meals and the student does not qualify for free meals.
 - Meal pick-up times and locations are still being determined. It is likely that there will be an option for the secondary students on an A/B cohort schedule to take meals home with them (in lieu of pick-up) for the days they are learning from home.

Face Coverings

- Face coverings are required for all students, staff, and visitors to schools by recommendation of the Educational Services Committee on August 3, 2020 and likely future action by the full Board of Education on August 10, 2020 at their regularly scheduled monthly meeting, in addition to the Governor's executive Order which became effective August 1, 2020. Should the Governor's Order no longer be in effect, action by the Board of Education anticipated to occur on August 10th will continue the requirement for face coverings to be worn even if there is no state mandate in place.
- School staff understand the diverse needs of students we work with- as a result, accommodations will be made for students who cannot tolerate the wearing of face coverings, etc. due to a disability.

- Students are expected and will be reminded to wear masks at all times unless they are alone or when eating or drinking.
- Exemptions from the face covering requirement for medical reasons and/or special needs will be allowed. Exemptions due to medical reasons will require a doctor's note. Exemptions due to special needs can be determined in conjunction with a student's IEP case manager and/or Pupil Services staff.
- On July 30, 2020 Governor Tony Evers issued Executive Order 82, declaring a public health emergency, and corresponding Emergency Order 1, regarding face coverings in certain situations for people over the age of 5. The mask order went into effect on Saturday, August 1, 2020 and requires face coverings to be worn **whenever you are indoors or in an enclosed space, other than a private residence, and when other people are present in the same room or space.**
- Please read [Executive Order #82](#), [Emergency Order #1](#), and [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

CDC Recommendations on Face Coverings 7/17/20

- *CDC recommends that people wear cloth face coverings in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.*
- *Cloth face coverings may help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others.*
- *Cloth face coverings are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings.*
- *Cloth face coverings should NOT be worn by children under the age of 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.*

Wood County Health Department Statement to the Schools

- *Wood County Health Department, in alignment with our local medical providers, recommends the wearing of face masks when physical distancing cannot be done. We know from dozens of studies that they are indeed effective and are one of the best prevention measures we have to slow the spread of the virus. This is true when there is majority compliance in community settings, including schools and worksites.*
- *The health department strongly recommends cohorting groups of children so that they are in contact with less children and staff. These actions are necessary to keep our schools and businesses open and to assure our health systems do not become overwhelmed and children remain in school as long as possible.*

Please click [here](#) for a video on face coverings from local medical professionals.

Transportation

- Parents who can transport their child(ren) to and from school each day are encouraged to do so to reduce the number of students riding the bus.
- ALL students riding buses will have assigned seats and are expected to sit in their assigned seat every time they ride. This is to assist in contact tracing if necessary.
- Students are expected to wear face coverings while riding the bus.
- If possible, students will sit one per seat and members of the same household will sit together.
- Buses will be sanitized between routes and after routes are completed.
- Additional routes may be added if possible to decrease the number of students per bus.
- Students will only be allowed to ride on their assigned bus (no bus passes will be issued).
- Parking permit fees will be waived for LHS students- further details will be provided by LHS.

Curriculum and Instruction - Options and Enhancements

- Any student who is unable to attend in-person school for ANY reason is able to receive instruction virtually or off-site.
- There are options available to our students throughout the year and based on individual or district-wide circumstances:
 - Elementary: [Elementary Instructional Options](#)
 - Secondary: A/B Cohort Approach or Virtual/ Offsite
 - River Cities High School: 5 days per week, in-person
- Parents will have the ability to move between options; however, we are asking parents to make a **trimester long commitment** to one form of learning with changes made at the beginning of each trimester. If a change

cannot be avoided during a trimester, the parent and building principal will discuss the change and a decision will be made collaboratively.

- If a student is not able to attend school for a shorter period of time (due to illness or quarantine), the classroom teacher(s) will make arrangements to provide instruction and materials for that student during their time of absence.
- A district grade level/subject level teacher (Local Education Guide - LEG) will provide instruction, feedback and assessment for those students NOT enrolled at Central Oaks Academy or the Lincoln High School Virtual Program during a full trimester.
- Students enrolled at Central Oaks Academy or the Lincoln High School Virtual Program will follow the instructional and grading guidelines set out by those programs.
- All essential learning outcomes and curricula will be covered as fully as possible regardless of the learning option that is chosen
 - Teachers will meet students where they are at academically. Student needs will supersede traditional curriculum timelines.
 - Course flow and materials will continue with the momentum of learning that is being established in the classroom.
 - Students will complete work as assigned by the teacher.
 - Assigned work will be appropriate for structured and independent work.
 - Students will communicate with the teacher as needed for clarification of assignments or troubleshooting.
 - Traditional grading and due dates will be used throughout the school year.
 - District screenings will be implemented in reading and math to determine and meet student needs and to drive instruction both in person and off campus.

Internet Access and Availability

- Parents with internet access issues and/or availability should contact their child(ren)'s school for additional information.

Attendance

- Stay home if you are sick!
- Due to the nature of potential absences for this school year, attendance policies will be flexible with primary focus on progress through curriculum rather than daily in-person attendance.
- There will be a greater amount of structure and expectations during virtual or offsite instruction as compared to the approach from this past spring. Students are encouraged to remain engaged throughout the school year regardless of the interface used and take advantage of any and all instructional opportunities provided.
- Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child(ren)'s teachers and other school staff as frequently as necessary to ensure student participation and that student needs are being met.

Students with Disabilities or Other Special Needs

- Access to learning will be configured to meet the needs of each student as identified in the student's IEP and to adhere to parent wishes as to in-person or virtual learning.
- Staff and schedules may be redesigned and/or modified to provide access to individualized learning to meet IEP or 504 requirements.
- If parent(s) have any concerns about their child's IEP and/or special education services, they should reach out to their child's IEP case manager.

Field Trips

- In general, field trips involving large numbers of students will not occur.
- Some field trips may be possible based on the activities involved in the field trip as well as the size of the group attending.

Extra-Curricular/ Co-Curricular Activities

- Information regarding athletics and co-curricular opportunities will be provided by the specific schools offering various activities.

Social and Emotional Health

- To start the school year, all staff 4K-12 will focus on helping to reduce social and emotional anxieties students may have about school reopening and adjusting to the new approach.
- Ensuring the social, emotional, and behavioral well-being of our students will be a priority for all staff. Pupil services staff (school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists) will be available to meet with students on an individual basis to discuss any concerns or issues they may have.
- Strategies will be shared with teachers on how they can support students socially, emotionally, and behaviorally during the pandemic.
- If parent(s) have any concerns about the social, emotional, and/or behavioral well-being of their child(ren), they should reach out to the student's school counselor.

General Information for our Elementary Schools

- [General Elementary Reopening](#) Information

Please click on the link below to provide your feedback:

[SURVEY FORM TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON WRPS REOPENING PLAN](#)

Thank you!

Important COVID-19 Wood County School District Information

07/30/2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As the 2020 school year quickly approaches, we would like to reach out to the parents, guardians, and family members who have students attending a school district located in Wood County. We understand there are concerns and questions that many of you may have. All of the Wood County school districts have been working closely together to adopt safe practices, measures, and recommendations, to help keep your child(ren) safe.

Recommendations

- Please keep your child(ren) home if they are sick, even if they are experiencing mild symptoms.
- Students may be screened for symptoms prior to entering school. If your school does not screen them at school, please adhere to school policies regarding screening them at home prior to sending them to school.
- Expect your child(ren) to be sent home from school if they are sick, even if they are experiencing mild symptoms.
- Send your child(ren) to school with a face covering.
- Keep social/physical distancing of 6 feet (students and staff).

Symptoms of COVID-19 are **cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever or chills, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and/or diarrhea**. Those who test positive for COVID-19 do not always experience a fever or have chills. Students should stay home if they are experiencing **any one** of the above symptoms.

Wood County School Districts will be collaborating with the WCHD if there is a case(s) of COVID-19 in your school district. If your child(ren) are named as a “close contact,” determined by the WCHD using the WI Department of Health Services (DHS) guidelines, they will need to be sent home from school as soon as possible. They will be isolated away from others in the building until they are able to be picked up from school. If your child(ren) is named as a “close contact,” they will need to be quarantined at home, at all times, for 14 days from their last exposure to the individual who tested positive for COVID-19. They will not be able to return to school until they are cleared by their local health department. This is a requirement (not optional) that is standard across the state of WI per DHS. We highly encourage families to be open and upfront with their child(ren) about all expectations and possibilities that may occur during the current school year.

Isolation requirements for someone who tests positive for COVID-19 are different from the quarantine requirements for exposure to a positive case. Individuals who test positive are required to isolate at home for 10 days from their onset of symptoms or 10 days from the date of their test if they did not have symptoms. In addition, those positive must also be fever-free and feeling well for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

We ask families to please cooperate with the WCHD and the school. During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff at the WCHD follow guidelines and recommendations set forth by the DHS, and other expert entities who are continuously researching and gaining knowledge of the novel (new) coronavirus 2019. These guidelines and recommendations may change at any time. WCHD staff members do not make the guidelines or recommendations, but follow and enforce them at the local level, to keep our schools and community members safe.

The WCHD's mission is to maximize quality of life across the lifespan. While some individuals who have had COVID-19 have experienced mild symptoms, severe cases have occurred in Wood County and surrounding areas. In addition, because COVID-19 is a novel (new) virus, scientists and researchers are still learning of potential long-term health effects.

In addition, the WCHD asks families, students, and staff members to please be flexible regarding how school curriculum takes place. We understand these changes can be extremely difficult, and can be frustrating. Please be patient with your school district and local health departments who are working hard to ensure the health and safety of those in the community. No matter how this school year may go, we encourage families to set the tone for their child(ren). Adapting to change is never easy, but by modeling positivity, your child(ren) will benefit.

Please prepare for the potential transition to complete virtual/at-home learning if there is a significant number of COVID-19 cases in your school district. This could happen at any point in time, (determined by public health officials in collaboration with school leadership). Knowing this potential, we strongly encourage all families to have arrangements in place.

To learn more about COVID-19 and the guidelines that the WCHD must follow, please refer to these resources.

- Department of Public Instruction Guidance for Reopening Schools: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw/2019-novel-coronavirus>
- DHS COVID-19 Activity Level: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/local.htm>
- DHS COVID-19 Resources: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/resources.htm>

If you have questions or concerns or concerns, please feel free to reach out to us at 715-421-8911.

Sincerely,

Sue Kunferman, RN, MSN
Wood County Health Officer