



West Northfield School District 31

Handbook Addendum

*Please note information in this addendum may change without notice as guidance and information change.





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Overview

Dear District 31 Community,

District 31 is excited to welcome back our students on campus for the 2021-2022 school year. Despite the challenges the last few years have wrought, the delight at a fresh new school year never ceases to amaze me. As teachers busily prepare rooms and students and families await anxiously for class assignments, we are reminded of the excitement of new beginnings.

Part of the preparations is ensuring a safe learning environment for all students and staff. The IDPH has adopted the new guidance for schools released by the Centers for Disease Control. The District 31 administrative team is applying these guidelines when developing the re-opening plans for the 2021-2022 school year. This plan is being developed following public health guidelines to ensure the health and safety of all students and staff. Please note that this plan is a work in progress. Mitigation strategies will evolve based on health department guidance, transmission rates, school health metrics, and the availability of vaccines for all students.

We will continue to communicate with our school community as our plans evolve. We look forward to an exciting school year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Erin K. Murphy
Superintendent



Layered Mitigation Strategies

It is important to note that a majority of our students are not eligible for vaccination as school starts in the fall of 2021. Thus, it is recommended that school districts employ multiple mitigation strategies in a layered format. It is advised to allow reasonable time to determine if the change in layered mitigation strategies maintains the desired outcome and then make further adjustments as necessary.

District 31 will begin the 2021-2022 school year utilizing the following strategies:

- Universal Masking as recommended by the CDC and IDPH
- Social Distancing 3ft-6ft
- Hand Hygiene
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Building ventilation and filters
- Quarantine and travel protocols (aligned with the CCDPH/IDPH)
- Weekly testing protocols through Shield Illinois for all students (opt out permitted)

Note: The daily certification will not be required as we start the 2021-2022 school year. However, by sending your child to school you are certifying that they are in good health and you have followed CCDPH travel guidance.

Phased Approach to Mitigation

The District will continually evaluate mitigation strategies, as well as review recommendations from IDPH and the CCDPH, to determine if strategies can be eliminated or modified or need to be added. The following factors will shape recommendations, although we are not limited by only these factors:

- Vaccine accessibility and availability for student population
- Percentage of students vaccinated in a building
- Percentage of unvaccinated students participating in the voluntary testing program
- School positivity rate as reported by Shield
- Transmission rate in the community
- Covid-19 cases and transmission within buildings and classrooms
- Student attendance related to Covid-19 infections or quarantine
- Recommendations from local health department
- Continued guidance from ISBE and IDPH
- Vaccine accessibility and availability for student population
- Percentage of students vaccinated in a building
- Percentage of unvaccinated students participating in the voluntary testing program
- School positivity rate as reported by Shield
- Transmission rate in the community
- Covid-19 cases and transmission within buildings and classrooms



- Student attendance related to Covid-19 infections or quarantine
- Recommendations from local health department
- Continued guidance from ISBE and IDPH

Vaccinations

District 31 encourages families to consider vaccination opportunities for their child once they are eligible. Part of that consideration is consulting with a family doctor and following their recommendations as each child is unique. If a family would like to have a child vaccinated and needs help finding a location that will provide the appropriate vaccination, please contact the school nurse (Field - tgastelum@district31.net or Winkielman- rbaron@district31.net). District 31 will also work to provide an onsite clinic if available in order to assist families.

Please also be mindful that individuals may not be vaccinated for a variety of reasons including medical concerns, religious exemptions, etc.

As students receive their second shot of the vaccine, we ask parents to voluntarily send a picture of the front of the vaccine card to the school nurse (Field - tgastelum@district31.net or send a copy to the office. We appreciate your help in participating in this voluntary statement of status and helping us keep our records up to date so we can better ensure the health and safety of our community.

Masking

District 31 will comply with the CDC and IDPH recommendations for universal indoor mask wearing for all students, staff and visitors to District 31, regardless of vaccination status.

Masking while Outdoors - Masking is generally no longer required for students for outdoor activities.

Bus - Masking and Capacity

The CDC mandates that all individuals (passengers and drivers) wear a mask while on school buses or any other school provided transportation regardless of vaccination status. This mandate applies regardless of mask wearing practices and procedures within the building. The school will ensure that North Shore transit has extra masks in case a student forgets to bring one. Also, there are no longer capacity restrictions on buses and students may be closer than 3-feet when riding school buses or other school provided transportation. Please note, quarantine protocols will apply for any COVID cases or close contacts on the bus.



Social Distancing

District 31 is adhering to the 3-6ft social distancing guidelines.

When eating, students will utilize 6 ft social distancing.

Visitors and Guests

Visitors and guests to District 31 will follow all masking protocols.

School-Based Weekly COVID-19 Testing (Weekly Testing Program)

As we enter the 2021-2022 school year, we are excited to welcome all of our students back for in-person programming. We are committed to keeping our students and staff healthy and in school, even as we continue to face challenges related to COVID-19.

District 31 is proud to partner with SHIELD Illinois to provide weekly PCR saliva testing (not nasal or throat swab) for students and staff at Winkelman and Field school. Testing is available at each building. The testing is conducted by a third party provider. Each building will communicate the schedule once it is finalized. Testing results are available to the parent and school district in 12-24 hours, and are also sent to the IDPH.

It is recommended that all students in District 31 participate in our voluntary weekly testing program run by SHIELD. This test is administered on site at no cost to a student and family. Families who prefer for their child NOT to participate, must fill out the opt-out form and submit it to the school office. A regular testing schedule is an effective mitigation strategy.

Please read the following FAQ and consent for more information. Do not hesitate to reach out to your building administration or nurse for more information.

SHIELD Testing FAQ

What is SHIELD testing?

SHIELD is an innovative, saliva-based test created by the University of Illinois. You can read more about it at <https://www.uillinois.edu/shield>

How often will testing occur?

Our plan calls to test students in each building once every week. Building administration will send out testing schedules once the testing schedules are confirmed with our third provider “test collectors.” We will evaluate how our testing protocol is going and may determine at some point that more or less frequent testing is needed.

What is the benefit to participating in SHIELD Testing?



By participating in this testing program, District 31 will be able to monitor transmission rates in our building. In addition, students will be able to participate in the special close contact rules for schools, which reduces social distancing from 6 feet to 3 feet.

How often will testing occur?

Our plan calls to test students in each building once every week. Building administration will send out testing schedules once the testing schedules are confirmed with our third-party provider “test collectors.” We will evaluate how our testing protocol is going and may determine at some point that more or less frequent testing is needed.

Is SHIELD testing mandatory for students?

No. Testing is being provided as an additional mitigation strategy to promote the safety of our school community. Parents are able to opt their students out of testing at any time.

Where/when is the testing?

All testing will take place at Field and Winkelman schools during the school day. There will be assigned schedules and locations that are still to be determined.

Who is doing the testing?

SHIELD’s third-party partner will be sending in a trained team to conduct the testing and ensure proper steps are being followed.

Why does the testing have to happen at school? Why not at home?

Testing must take place in school due to Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) protocols and to ensure that test takers are not eating or drinking prior to testing.

Why can’t we eat or drink one hour prior to testing?

The test developers say that doing so may provide an invalid sample or inconclusive result.

How much does the test cost?

It is free for students and staff. ISBE is covering all costs so there will be no District 31 costs.

When will results be available?

Samples will be picked up by a courier and transported to a SHIELD Illinois lab. Results will generally be available the next day.

How will I get my results?



SHIELD will set up a parent portal so you can receive the results. The school district will also get the results. If the test is negative, you will not hear from the school district. If the test is positive, a school nurse or administrator will call the positive individual or their parent/guardian.

Will my child’s pediatrician get a copy of the results?

The school district will not send a copy of your child’s test results to their pediatrician. Per state protocols, IDPH automatically receives notice of a positive case.

Reminder: "No news is good news." If the test result is negative, you will NOT hear from anyone at District 31.

Consent Notice for COVID-19 Testing and Release of Records

What is this Notice?

West Northfield School District 31 (“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 time 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. West Northfield School District 31 will also receive results of your child’s test and 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 until your child has completed the prescribed quarantined period as outlined by the IDPH. 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.***



COVID-19 Testing Opt-Out

To be completed by a parent/guardian

Parent/Guardian Information	
All sections required – please print clearly	
Parent/Guardian Print Name:	
Parent/Guardian Tel./Mobile #:	
Parent/Guardian Email Address:	
Child/Student Information	
All sections required – please print clearly	
Child/Student Print Name:	
Child/Student School:	
Child/Student Grade:	

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.

ONLY ORIGINAL SIGNATURES ACCEPTED – NO COPIES OR SCANS

Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date _____



Close Contacts and Quarantining

The IDPH has put into place special close contact rules for schools K-12. With the masking policy in place, an individual will be considered a close contact when “closer than 3 feet” for a cumulative time of 15 minutes or more within a 24 hour period. instead of last year’s rule of “closer than 6 feet.”

In addition, schools participating in the IDPH School Testing Screening Program (SHIELD Illinois) may use this modified definition of close contacts for the classroom setting only.

- This rule does not apply to adults in the classroom setting.
- Both students must be correctly wearing masks.
- Fully vaccinated students and staff are not required to quarantine or test, unless symptomatic.

Quarantining

Close Contact Quarantine Rules School nurses will confirm the date of readmittance based on the chart below.	
Option 1 - 10 Days	Quarantine for 10 calendar days after the close contact’s last exposure to the COVID-19 case. Date of last exposure is considered day 0. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individual may end quarantine after day 10 if no symptoms of COVID-19 developed during daily monitoring. • SARS-CoV-2 PCR testing is recommended and may be required by the local health department. Please consult with the school nurse. • The individual can maintain physical distance and masking at all times when returning to school; for classrooms where masking is strictly adhered to, physical distance of 3 to 6 feet is acceptable for return.
Option 2 - 7 Days	Quarantine period is for seven calendar days after the last exposure if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No symptoms developed during daily monitoring AND the individual has a negative SARS-CoV-2 diagnostic test (PCR) that was collected within 48 hours of exposure day 7 (starting on day 6 or after). • The individual is responsible for obtaining a copy of the negative results for documentation purposes and submitting it to the school nurse and covering the cost of testing. • The individual can maintain physical distance and masking at all times when returning to school; for classrooms where masking is strictly adhered to, physical distance of 3 to 6 feet is acceptable for return.
Option 3 -	Close contacts can stay in school if schools test close contacts, on days one, three, five, and seven from date of exposure by a PCR or rapid antigen or molecular emergency use authorization (EUA)-approved test as long as the results are negative. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only applicable when both the COVID-19-confirmed student and close contact were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks and IDPH mask guidance is followed. • Test to Stay may be used for any indoor exposure, with the exception of



<p>Test to Stay</p> <p>Note: District 31 is in the process of establishing the protocols necessary to fulfill this option. However, it may not be fully in effect by the first day of school.</p>	<p>household exposures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students engaged in Test to Stay after an exposure may participate in extracurricular activities. Local health departments have the authority to order a classroom-only Testto-Stay protocol after assessing the risk of an individual situation. • Because students engaged in the Test-to-Stay protocol were exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19, they must wear a mask while indoors at school, regardless of the mask policy at school. • However, if the close contact is identified five days or more from the date of exposure, adjust testing accordingly, ideally on days five and seven after the last exposure. • When testing in the outlined cadence is not possible due to weekends and holidays, students should be tested at the earliest possible opportunity. • At the conclusion of the Test-to-Stay modified quarantine period, the school should notify the local health department that the student has successfully completed testing and remained negative. • Local health departments have the authority to assess high-risk exposures and order a traditional quarantine without the option for Test to Stay. • If at any time the student tests positive or becomes symptomatic, they should be immediately isolated and sent home, and the local health department notified.
<p>If a student tests positive for Covid 19, they must quarantine for ten days following CCDPH guidance. School nurses will confirm the date of readmittance.</p>	

Illness Information

The daily certification will not be required as we start the 2021-2022 school year. However, by sending your child to school you are certifying that they are in good health and you have followed CCDPH travel guidance. However, if your child has any of the COVID symptoms, or any other illness, we ask that you keep them home. If a student is vaccinated, they need to follow typical protocols and stay home until symptom free for 24 hours. If a vaccinated individual was in close contact with an individual with COVID-19 AND is showing symptoms, please get tested before returning to school.

- Unvaccinated Individuals - In order to return to school, an unvaccinated individual must provide one of the following:
 - A negative COVID test result OR
 - A doctor's note with an alternative diagnosis **No longer an option at this time**
 - Stay home for ten days.

Providing Instruction for Students Under Quarantine

The Illinois State Board of Education requires districts to provide remote instruction for students ONLY while they are are under quarantine consistent with guidance or



requirements from a local public health department of the Illinois Department of Public Health. Students who are absent for extended periods of time (ex: recovering from surgery) will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

If a student is under a quarantine order, the following instructional opportunities will be provided:

Little Wildcats & Winkelman (PK-2)	Winkelman (3-5)	Field (6-8)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applicable classwork and homework will be posted on Seesaw. ● As appropriate, lessons will be broadcast for students to view via a Google Meet. ● The teacher will work with the family to determine the best way to check in with the student (for example: Seesaw or Google Meet). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applicable classwork and homework will be posted on Google Classroom. ● As appropriate, lessons will be broadcast for students to view via a Google Meet. ● The teacher will work with the family to determine the best way to check in with the student (for example: Seesaw, email or Google Meet). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applicable classwork and homework will be posted on Google Classroom. ● As appropriate, lessons will be broadcast for students to view via a Google Meet. ● The teacher will work with the family to determine the best way to check in with the student (for example: email, phone, or Google Meet).

Broadcasting

- Broadcasting is when the audio and video of an in-person class is synchronously available for students under quarantine.
- During broadcasting, the student at home under quarantine views and listens to the instruction during class.
- At the start and close of the broadcast, the teacher would check in and check out with the student viewing from home.
- Broadcasting occurs during relevant portions of instruction, such as whole group instruction.
- The teacher would communicate with the student and family when a lesson is appropriate for broadcasting.
- Parents may expect broadcasting to begin on day 2 of quarantine.



If your child is going to be absent, you will be asked whether you will test your child for COVID in order to determine appropriate learning opportunities.

- If you answer yes, instruction will not be made available until test results are available:
 - If a student tests positive: the instruction during quarantine outlined in the chart above begins
 - If a student tests negative and is symptom-free, in-person instruction may resume
- If you answer no, the instruction during quarantine outlined in the chart above begins

Travel Guidance

District 31 continues to follow the Cook County Department of Public Health/City of Chicago [travel guidance](#). If any unvaccinated individual travels to an “orange state” on the Chicago Public Health website, that individual must quarantine for 10 days or provide a negative Covid test to return to school.

Frequently Asked Questions About IDPH and CDC Guidance

What guidance does District 31 follow to make health and safety decisions during the Covid-19 pandemic?

District 31 follows the guidelines of the Illinois Department of Public Health and our local health department, the Cook County Department of Public Health. The Illinois Department of Public Health and the State of Illinois has adopted the guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Kindergarten (K)-12 Schools issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on July 9, 2021. The State of Illinois has adopted the CDC guidance, which can be found [here](#).

What does the Illinois State Board of Education say?

All Illinois schools, both public and nonpublic, will use the CDC guidance released today to start the 2021-22 school year. You can read more in [IDPH’s press release](#).

Is District 31 required to follow this guidance?

District 31 is a public school under the auspices of ISBE and follows local health department protocols. Since the beginning of this pandemic, the District 31 Board of Education has affirmed the importance of following IDPH guidance and directed administration to make school reopening plans in accordance with guidance. This practice is also reinforced by District 31 attorneys.

What does this guidance say about mask wearing?



The IDPH has fully adopted the updated CDC guidance which recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.

Masks are generally no longer required for any individual while outside.

Masks are still MANDATED for any individual riding a school bus, no matter the vaccination status.

What does the guidance say about vaccinations?

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting vaccination can help schools safely return to in-person learning as well as extracurricular activities and sports. However, District 31 recognizes that currently two-thirds of the student population is not yet eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination and parents do not yet have the option to determine if they will vaccinate their child.

What does mitigation strategies mean?

Mitigation efforts aim to reduce the rate at which someone infected comes in contact with someone not infected, or reduce the probability of infection if there is contact. The more a person interacts with different people, and the longer and closer the interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. According to the CDC, "Evidence suggests that many K-12 schools that have strictly implemented prevention strategies have been able to safely open for in-person instruction and remain open."

What are "layered (or tiered) mitigation strategies"?

Regardless of the level of community transmission, it is critical that schools use and layer [prevention strategies](#). Five key prevention strategies are essential to safe delivery of in-person instruction and help to prevent COVID-19 transmission in schools:

1. Universal and correct use of [masks](#)
2. [Physical distancing](#)
3. [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#)
4. [Cleaning](#) and maintaining healthy facilities
5. [Contact tracing](#) in combination with isolation and quarantine

Schools providing in-person instruction should prioritize two prevention strategies:

1. Universal and correct use of masks should be required
2. Physical distancing should be maximized to the greatest extent possible.



All prevention strategies provide some level of protection, and layered strategies implemented at the same time provide the greatest level of protection. Schools should adopt prevention strategies to the largest extent practical—a layered approach is essential

Will these guidelines be in place for the entire school year?

The CDC says, “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.”

Periodically throughout the year we will evaluate whether mitigation strategies need to be strengthened and lessened. When changes are made, the district will monitor the impacts of the changes. In addition, six weeks after all students at a building site are eligible for the Covid-19 vaccination, the district will review mitigation strategies. Mitigation strategies may be adjusted by site.

The following factors will help shape recommendations, although we are not limited by only these factors:

- Vaccine accessibility and availability for student population in building (target 100% availability)
- Percentage of students vaccinated in a building (targets determined with local health department)
- [Transmission rate in the community](#) (targeting “low” transmission)
- Covid-19 cases and transmission within buildings and classrooms (determine percentage of cases were based on school spread)
- Student attendance related to Covid-19 infections or quarantine
- Recommendations from local health department
- Continued guidance from ISBE and IDPH