

RSD #140 - Fall Reopening Plan 2021

Executive Summary and Guiding Principles

Since March 2020, the Rockton School District has focused on the following three priorities in this evolving pandemic:

- Priority one: The safety, well-being and care of our families and staff
- Priority two: To provide accurate and clear information
- Priority three: To provide connection and engagement in learning

The district has prepared educational plans and operational protocols, based on guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Department of Health (IDPH) and the state's five-phase reopening plan, Restore Illinois.

This guide outlines the educational plans and protocols in place for the entire school year. It is important to note that no one will be penalized for missing school and we encourage those who are not feeling well to stay home.

The district's commitment to providing a first class education to our students remains the same. The district will only offer in-person instruction during the 2021-2022 school year, and the school year is set to resume on August 18th for grades PK-8.

Note: Protocols outlined in this guide are subject to change as guidelines evolve and, unless noted in these plans, general operations and services should be assumed to function at pre-pandemic levels.

On July 9, 2021 the CDC and IDPH provided updated guidance for COVID-19 prevention in K-12 Schools. This guidance was then updated on July 27th.

The major elements of the updated guidance from CDC and IDPH that affect the Rockton School District include:

- ~~Originally the CDC recommended that masks should be worn indoors by all individuals who are not fully vaccinated.~~ **This was updated to include all individuals regardless of vaccination status.**
- ~~Masks are required on busses regardless of vaccination status.~~
- CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, ~~combined with indoor mask wearing by all staff, students, and visitors,~~ to reduce transmission risk. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully reopen while maintaining these distances, it is especially important to layer multiple other prevention strategies, ~~such as indoor masking.~~

- 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.**
- Screening testing, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick and getting tested, contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation, and cleaning and disinfection are also important layers of prevention to keep schools safe.
- This guidance is subject to change pursuant to changing public health conditions and updates from CDC.

Mitigations within the Rockton School District

- Masking is highly recommended for students regardless of vaccine status
- ~~Universal masking, Vaccination or Screening testing is required for employees and visitors of the Rockton School District.~~
- ~~Bus Masking Required~~
- Hand Sanitizing Stations throughout the Building
- Hand Sanitizer Stations in each classroom
- Hand Washing Hygiene Posters throughout building
- Students and staff will wash or sanitize hands:
 - Upon arrival to and departure from school
 - Upon entering the classroom and hourly as possible
 - Before eating and after eating
 - Before/after routine care for another person, such as a child
 - After being in contact with someone who may have been sick
 - After touching frequently touched surfaces (railings, doorknobs, counters, equipment, etc).
 - After using the restroom
 - After coughing, sneezing or blowing the nose
 - Before and after changing locations on site
 - After using any common items, such as SmartBoards or keyboards.
- Classroom Desks and Tables Sanitized daily
- Clorox 360 Machines for deep cleaning
- 3 ft separation in Classrooms
- Limited small group work
- Limited group work
- ~~6 ft separation in Cafeteria / Auxiliary Cafeteria~~
- Classroom Seating Charts maintained for Contact Tracing
- Doors and Handles Sanitized daily
- Bathrooms Sanitized daily
- Locker Rooms Closed for Physical Education
- ~~PE classes taught outside (weather permitting)~~
- Encourage opening windows when possible
- Marked hallways for directional traffic flow

- Only visitors essential to the educational process allowed during school hours
- Staggered bus loading and unloading
- Staggered hallway passing, mealtime, bathroom breaks
- Limited locker use at SMMS
- Limited number of students in a restroom at a time
- Limit physical contact, i.e. high fives, hugs ,handshakes, etc.
- ~~No facility use by outside organizations~~
- Contact Tracing
- Quarantine Protocols
- Binax testing for symptomatic staff/students
- One-to-one Chromebooks
- Staff Trained on Mitigation Strategies
- Students provided instruction on mitigation protocols

As a reminder, protocols outlined in this guide are subject to change as guidelines evolve. The district has prepared educational plans and operational protocols, based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Department of Health (IDPH), and Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD). While school will look different, the district's commitment to providing a safe and inspiring education to our students remains the same.

The health and well-being of our students and staff is a top priority. For this reason, there will be strict protocols in place when students and staff are on campus.

The Rockton School District has divided these protocols into four categories:

- Health & Wellness
- Instruction
- Operations
- Transportation

Health and Wellness

Physical Distancing

The Rockton School District has developed procedures to maintain three to six feet of physical distance from other persons as much as possible. This expectation pertains to students and staff members in all areas and settings to the greatest extent possible.

- Staff and students should abstain from physical contact, including, but not limited to, handshakes, high fives, hugs, etc.
- Staff break areas will be arranged to facilitate social distancing.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Face Coverings

The Rockton School District understands physical distancing will not be possible for all circumstances.

- Masks are highly recommended for all students.
- Parents are responsible for making sure their child is following the family's masking choice.
- Masks are highly recommended for all staff and visitors entering a school building.
- Masks are highly recommended for all indoor extracurriculars and sports.
- Masks are highly recommended for all students using bus transportation.
- ~~Masks are not required for activities outdoors.~~

The Rockton School District will maintain a supply of disposable face coverings in the event that a staff member, student, or visitor does not have one for use. After use, the front of the face covering is considered contaminated and should not be touched during removal or replacement. Hand hygiene should be performed immediately after removing and after replacing the face covering. Gloves or other PPE must be used as needed when the assistance of students requires close contact. Face coverings do not need to be worn outside.

- Personal care aides working with medically fragile students will wear PPE (e.g., face shields, face masks, and gloves).
- Gloves or other PPE will be used as needed when assisting students requires close contact.
- Employees and students may use their own face covering.
- ~~Face masks may be removed for eating or drinking.~~
- ~~When face coverings are required at all times within the school building during the school day, there may be times when a teacher uses a face shield for instructional purposes, to better communicate with the students. In the event that this is the preferred practice, teachers will maintain a minimum of 6 feet social distance and will return to mask coverings when instruction is complete.~~
- Face shields will be provided to students who the Winnebago County Health Department or an educational team based on a doctor's recommendation supported by an IEP, 504 or Individual Health Plan have determined that a face shield is warranted.

Hand Hygiene

Frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing are key to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The Rockton School District will encourage and schedule frequent and proper handwashing. The Rockton School District will ensure availability of supplies such as soap and paper towels, and hand sanitizer for all classrooms, office and common areas.

- Hands should be washed as often as possible with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used.
- Staff and students must avoid touching their mouth, eyes, or nose as much as possible.

- Schools will post handwashing posters in the bathrooms, hallways, all common areas.

Students and staff will wash or sanitize hands:

- Upon arrival to and departure from school
- Upon entering the classroom and hourly as possible
- Before eating and after eating
- Before/after routine care for another person, such as a child
- After being in contact with someone who may have been sick
- After touching frequently touched surfaces (railings, doorknobs, counters, equipment, etc).
- After using the restroom
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing the nose
- Before and after changing locations on site
- After using any common items, such as SmartBoards or keyboards.
- Before food preparation, and
- Following PPE and glove removal.

Training

Staff and students will be required to participate in safety training related to physical distancing, face covering, and hand hygiene procedures.

- Hand hygiene and physical distancing will be included in the curriculum to help educate students on the importance of proper hand hygiene and personal safety.
- Each building will provide training to staff and students that is specific to their unique circumstances.
- Employees will complete safety training prior to the return of students related to physical distancing, PPE, hand hygiene and proper disinfectant measures and expectations.
- Certified staff will provide instruction to students on kindness and respect of individual choices.

Symptomatic Students/Staff

Staff and students will **not** have to complete the daily self-certification. Only students and staff who are healthy should report for in-person learning. It is important to note, students will not be penalized for missing school and are encouraged to stay home when not feeling well. **Regardless of vaccination status, the school's best defense against COVID-19 is cooperation and commitment from our families and staff to remain home if any of the following symptoms are present: temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, cough, fatigue, fever or chills, headache, known close contact with a person who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, nausea or vomiting, new loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, diarrhea, muscle or body aches, or sore throat.**

When a Student or Staff Becomes Sick at Home

Students and staff with any of the symptoms of COVID-19 referenced in CDC guidelines, regardless of vaccination status, must remain home until tested: Families and staff should report possible cases to the school where the individual attends school or works, to initiate contact tracing.

- The Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD) will determine who needs to be quarantined and/or isolated.
- Close contacts include:
 - Household contacts including siblings in other grades and/or schools.
 - Anyone who is within 3 feet of the case for a cumulative of 15 minutes or more in a 24 hour period, unless vaccinated.
 - A contact of a close contact does not require quarantine, or an individual who is fully vaccinated.
 - The infectious period begins 2 days before the onset of symptoms or 2 days before the positive sample was obtained.
- **Students, staff and family members who are identified as close contacts are quarantined for a period of 7–14 calendar days (The new CDC guidelines approved for school use on 1/11/22 will be used for quarantine length and definition of close contacts <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/covid19.aspx>) to monitor symptoms, per the WCHD. Fully vaccinated and asymptomatic persons are not required to quarantine if named a close contact to a known case of COVID-19, which is consistent with the Centers for Disease Control.**

Quarantine and Isolation

	Vaccinated/Immune (positive case within 90 days)	Unvaccinated wearing mask	Unvaccinated NOT wearing mask
Showing Symptoms	Isolate	Isolate	Isolate
Close Contact (3-6 feet) No symptoms	No Quarantine	No Quarantine	Quarantine
Close Contact Less than 3 feet No symptoms	No Quarantine	Quarantine	Quarantine
Close Contact Less than 3 feet Symptoms	Quarantine	Quarantine	Quarantine
Rapid Testing Positive	No testing required unless symptomatic	Testing required unless opt out	Testing required unless opt out

(when available)			
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When a Student or Staff Becomes Ill at School

Any student or staff member who exhibits a high fever or symptoms of COVID-19 or is associated with COVID-19 like symptoms must follow the building procedure.

- Any individual who shows symptoms and their close contacts within the school environment will be immediately isolated from the rest of the school population and parents/guardians contacted.
- Rapid testing will be available in the schools. (See below.)
- Students will not be allowed to utilize the school bus for the return home.
- Individuals will never be left alone and will be supervised while maintaining necessary precautions. If emergency assistance is needed, 911 will be called.
- Individuals who have had close contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19 must follow the IDPH guidelines for self-monitoring and self-quarantine.
- Close contact means the individual was within three feet of the individual with symptoms for more than 15 minutes total over a 24 hour period or less than 15 minutes without proper mask wearing.

How will the school respond when a staff or student is removed for possible COVID-19?

- Students or staff will be moved to a quarantine area.
- Open windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Contact tracing will begin immediately and the WCHD will be notified.
- Clean and disinfecting of all areas, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment, etc., used by the person who is sick.
- Ensure cleaning products are stored and used a safe distance away from children and staff.
- Individuals who did not have close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.
- Students within 3 to 6 feet of the infected student are not treated as close contacts as long as students had well fitting masks and following other mitigation procedures.
- Authorized school personnel and WCHD officials will notify parents/guardians and staff of affected students and staff maintaining student and staff confidentiality.
- Continue routine cleaning and disinfection.
- Attendance personnel and WCHD officials will maintain communication with the individuals.

Rapid COVID-19 Testing (When Available)

The Rockton School District will be administering rapid testing for students/staff who are close contacts in the school setting. Students/staff who are showing symptoms of COVID-19 must have a negative PCR test result to return to school (per WCHD). Updated 9/27, 10/13. If a student

shows symptoms, they will be directed to the nurse's office where the trained nurse will administer the test. Parents will be contacted for approval before tests are administered. After the test is given, the student or staff member will have to wait for the results. If the student/staff member is positive, they will be sent home. If a student/staff member is negative, they will be able to return to class. However, if the student or staff member is too sick to return to class, they will be sent home with the request of a negative PCR before returning to school. When a student/staff is symptomatic, the district will provide a rapid test with guardian/staff consent.

Positive test= isolation

Negative test=counsel for further medical care depending on symptoms.

If a close contact is determined through contact tracing an unvaccinated student or staff without symptoms, the district will provide a rapid test with guardian/staff consent. A determined close contact will have the option to be tested twice, once during days 1-4 and once on days 5-7 or choose to quarantine for an amount of days determined by WCHD.

Positive test at any point = isolation

Negative test = continue testing protocol.

If parents refuse consent for rapid testing quarantine will be determined by the WCHD.

School Closure Plan (guidance from CDC)

An Adaptive Pause is a strategy that allows for movement into any level of remote learning to prevent disease transmission during a pandemic. An Adaptive Pause may result in delayed reopening at the start of a specific school term or a pivot to remote learning once the school year is underway for school officials to have time to plan for next steps with parents, teachers and staff. An Adaptive Pause may also include a pivot to remote learning for a classroom, a grade level, a wing, a building or school- or district-wide remote learning.

At all levels of community transmission, school officials may need an Adaptive Pause to consult with the Winnebago Health Department to understand community transmission metrics and to plan for how to respond to a given scenario. Adaptive Pauses may be for a set period of time or indefinite, depending on the specific metrics related to transmission and infection rates within a county or school district/area and its student population. The school officials will make the determination on how long an Adaptive Pause will last (days, weeks, months, rest of school year) in order to respond effectively.

Instruction

The Rockton School District has developed an instructional plan to allow for a return to in person learning for students, while holding paramount the health and safety of our students and staff.

Students will not be grouped in classrooms based on whether or not they chose to wear a mask.

Addressing Our Learner's Academic Needs

Students may enter the upcoming school year with varied academic knowledge more than in previous school years.

- Additional teaching staff have been hired to lower class size to better allow teachers to address lost learning.
- Benchmark diagnostics will be given, at the beginning of the school year and throughout in order to assess student strengths and deficits.
- Teachers will use targeted interventions and differentiated instruction to help individual students reach their learning goals.
- Grading, promotion and assessment policies will be followed.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Second Step, a SEL curricula, and supplementary services will be provided for students and staff. Teachers will implement the SEL curriculum with an intentional focus on student's emotional health who may have been or continue to be impacted by COVID-19. Students will also have continued support by administrators, social workers, psychologists, at school. Surveys will continue to be conducted for students in grades PK-8 quarterly and problem solving teams will continue to identify students who may need additional support or interventions. Students with IEPs for SEL will continue to receive services based on their identified IEP minutes.

Music-Related Courses

Music related education will follow the most current IDPH/ISBE guidelines for student and staff safety measures.

In addition

- Additional safety measures will be taken for disinfecting instruments after each use.
- Students will be socially distanced to the greatest extent possible during singing and playing of instruments.

Physical Education, Gymnasiums, and Locker Rooms

Physical activity can support students' overall health and help reduce stress and anxiety.

- Whenever feasible and weather permitting, schools will select outdoor PE non-contact activities that allow physical distancing.
- Handshaking, high fives, or other physical contact is prohibited.
- It is recommended that PE teachers use a megaphone or microphone to maximize physical distancing.
- Any shared equipment must be cleaned daily.
- Students and staff must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at the start and end of each class period or when hands are visibly dirty.
- Schools will eliminate the need for use of locker rooms and allow students to participate in activities without changing clothing.

Large Group Events/Gatherings

Open House will be conducted virtually. Other events will be determined as the year progresses to ensure we can conduct events safely.

Athletics/Extracurriculars

Extracurricular activities must follow the IDPH requirements set forth for the school setting.

- Athletics will follow the guidelines provided by the IESA.
- Masks are highly recommended for all fans for indoor extracurriculars and sports.

Students Who are Medically Fragile or at Higher Risk

The administration will work closely with school nurses and parents, as well as the student's medical provider, to determine if homebound instruction is appropriate.

Special Needs

The Rockton School District understands the impact COVID-19 has had on our most vulnerable student population. As a result, the Student Services Department is developing plans and procedures to address the various unique challenges of our students.

The Rockton School District must adhere to timelines for annual IEP meetings and required evaluations. There continues to be limited flexibility from complying with federal and state laws.

- All individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 timelines remain in effect. IEP teams should meet to determine whether any amendments to students' IEPs are necessary to address students' current levels of performance.
- IEP teams will update remote learning plans as needed for students based on the learning experiences during the 2020-2021 school year.

Operations

Facilities

Strategies to:

- reduce unnecessary visits from students, staff, and visitors;
- reduce office and health office congestion;
- reduce exposure to infection.

Sanitation, hygiene, and PPE supplies will be ordered for employee access. All custodial/maintenance staff will be trained on the return to school guidelines. These procedures

will include extra sanitation efforts using certified EPA products in both low/high contact areas including:

- Countertops
- Desktops
- Door handles
- Bottle fillers
- Handrails
- Light switches
- Restroom fixtures

Building custodians and cleaning personnel will conduct daily cleaning and disinfection. An EPA approved cleaner will be used for disinfection along with our standard cleaning protocols. All frequently touched surfaces (e.g., door handles/knobs, desktops/tabletops, countertops, light switches, pencil sharpeners, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, phones, toys, cubbies/coat and backpack areas, sinks and faucets) will be cleaned on a daily basis. Cleaning schedules will be created and implemented for all facilities and equipment. Custodial schedules may be adjusted to meet reopening school needs.

Visitors

Higher discretion will be given while inviting visitors to schools. Visitors will not have access to the building in general to maintain physical distancing.

- Visitors will follow district guidelines for PPE
- ~~Visitors during school hours must disclose their vaccination card or a negative COVID lab result taken within 48 hours before the visit.~~
- Visitors will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer throughout their time in the building
- Visitors will not shake hands with, touch or hug individuals during their visit
- Students or staff will be asked to meet the visitor to conduct business as needed.

Facility Use

- No outside groups can use facilities for the first quarter. This policy will be reevaluated as the year progresses.

Classroom Guidance

Pre-Kindergarten (PK) Classroom Guidance

- Clearly mark common areas and tables to show where to sit, stand or line-up for three to six feet spacing, if possible.
- Students will remain with the same classroom group throughout the day, services will take place in the classroom when feasible.
- Keep windows open as much as possible.

- Schedule/coordinate restroom and hand washing breaks throughout the day.
- Schedule/coordinate recess by classroom to minimize student mixing.
- Sanitize hands whenever anyone enters the classroom.
- Clean classrooms after each use or at least daily.
- Building staff must review student pick up and drop off procedures.

Kindergarten-Grade 5 Classroom Guidance

- Clearly mark common areas and tables to show where to sit, stand or line-up for three to six feet spacing, if possible.
- Schedule/coordinate restroom and handwashing breaks throughout the day.
- Sanitize hands whenever anyone enters the classroom.
- Clean classrooms daily.

Grades 6-8 Classroom Guidance

- Arrange seating three to six feet apart, if possible, and face the same direction as feasible.
- It is recommended teachers provide assigned seating for students and require students to remain in these seats to the greatest extent possible.
- Clearly mark common areas and tables to show where to sit, stand or line-up for six feet spacing, if possible.
- Stagger transition times and review schedules.
- Encourage hand washing throughout the day.
- Schedule/coordinate activities by grade level and cohorts to minimize student mixing.
- Sanitize hands whenever anyone enters the classroom.
- Clean classrooms daily.

Hallways, Main Office, and Common Areas

- Maintain three to six feet physical distancing when possible.
- Clearly mark areas to indicate safe distancing for students.
- Clearly mark hallways to indicate flow of traffic for students and staff.
- Display visible signage reminding everyone of physical distancing and face covering usage at entryways, hallways, classrooms, and common areas.
- Restrict students to specific areas as identified by the building principal.

Cafeteria

- Maintain three feet physical distancing when possible.
- Clean cafeteria in between uses.
- Clearly mark areas to indicate safe distancing for students.
- Require staff and student face coverings (if not eating).

Restrooms

- Maintain three to six feet physical distancing when possible.
- Require face coverings for staff and students.
- Clearly mark areas to indicate safe distancing for students.
- Display clearly visible signage reminding everyone of physical distancing and face coverings.
- Schedule/coordinate restroom and handwashing breaks when possible.

- Assign restrooms to student groups when possible.

Recommendations for Families

- Please make sure all emergency contact information is up to date and kept current.
- All students should stay home if they are sick, with any illness symptoms.
- The CDC recommends everyone 6 months of age and older get vaccinated every flu season with rare exceptions. Flu symptoms overlap with coronavirus symptoms.
- The CDC recommends everyone 5 years of age and older get vaccinated for COVID.
- For students with asthma, no nebulizer treatments will be given at school during the pandemic. Asthma action plans should reflect the use of asthma inhalers and spacers.

Transportation

Arrival/Beginning of the day

- There will not be early morning access to playgrounds.
- Schools will assign supervision to support physical distancing.
- Schools will designate student entry points.
- ~~Face masks will be required prior to entering the building.~~
- Students will report directly to the classroom.
- Students will use hand sanitizing stations upon entry of classrooms.

Bus Transportation

- ~~A school bus is considered public transportation; therefore, mask wearing is mandatory.~~
- Assigned seating charts for all routes will be established on the busses.
- It will be the expectation of the student that they will sit in their assigned seat for the duration of the bus ride.
- As with the typical rules during a normal school year, if a student does not follow the expectations of riding the bus they may be reprimanded or unable to ride the bus for a specific duration of time.
- Busses will be cleaned and disinfected daily.

Additional Resources

[Center for Disease Control \(CDC\): Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[Illinois Department of Public Health \(IDPH\)](#)

[Winnebago County Health Department](#)

[Illinois State Board of Education: CORONAVIRUS \(COVID-19\) RESOURCES](#)

[Illinois Elementary Sports Association \(IESA\)](#)