



Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Public Schools

COVID Guidance – Safe Return to Learn Plan - 2022-2023

The Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted (HLWW) School District is committed to maintaining the health and safety of students, faculty, staff, and community members and will follow these safety protocols during the 2022-2023 school year, barring any changes in guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), and the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

As of August 22, 2022, the following protocols have been updated due to the COVID-19 case counts. These established guidelines were approved by the HLWW School Board. Should the need arise for guidelines to change, HLWW Schools will update its plan accordingly.

It is important to note that whether it is COVID-19 or any other illness that can be spread and infect others, that parents/guardians **be diligent** about monitoring their children for illness and **DO NOT send them to school if they are sick**. Working together as a team (student, parent, and school) will help make this plan the best it can be for everyone.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, **IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT** that parents have a plan, with back-ups, for arranging for their child to be picked up from school in a timely manner.

(A) **Face Coverings:**

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including but not limited to masks, shields, gloves, etc., will be provided to students or staff members who request it.
- Face coverings, in particular to the student dress code and student conduct policies, shall not depict images or wording that is considered offensive.
- School principals and staff will work with students in regards to their face covering choice and will work to create a school climate that will combat any stigma or bullying of students because of their mask choice.
- Face coverings, due to COVID-19, are not required of any student or staff members, unless they have been recently infected with COVID-19 and are following the protocols for return to school/work as outlined herein.

(B) **Physical Distancing:**

- Restrictions on spacing are not required but are highly recommended for those returning to school/work and following the protocols for a positive case. We cannot guarantee maintaining physical distancing in our district during all in-person instruction, and we ask families to be diligent in self-screening measures.

(C) **Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette:**

- The District will encourage frequent handwashing.
- We will implement measures to prevent the spread of respiratory infections from anyone in an educational setting with signs or symptoms by doing the following:
 - 1) Post signs at entrances asking students, staff, and visitors to self-screen for symptoms before entering the building.
 - 2) Ask students and staff to follow respiratory etiquette such as the following:
 - a. Cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
 - b. Wash hands or use a hand sanitizer every time there is contact with a mouth or nose.
 - 3) Provide tissues, PPE, and no-touch receptacles wherever possible.
 - 4) Provide resources for performing hand hygiene in or near waiting areas, classrooms, and other highly frequented locations.
 - 5) Offer masks to those that become symptomatic while in the building.
 - 6) Provide a place for symptomatic students in the health office while waiting for someone to pick them up.

(D) **Cleaning and Maintaining Facilities:**

- The District will continue to clean and disinfect school buildings and locations on a consistent basis as normal.
- Disinfectant spray and towels will be provided to classrooms as another disinfecting tool, when requested.
- HVAC filters will be consistently replaced to improve building ventilation, and ventilation system operations will be set to allow maximum fresh air circulation.

(E) **Isolation:** Situations that will **REQUIRE** an **isolation** of a student or staff member are as follows:

- <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/youthiso.pdf>
- five-day (5) isolation for anyone who tests positive for COVID,
- strict adherence to masking for five additional days beyond the 5-day isolation and is **REQUIRED** when returning to school/work.
- Isolation may end after five days for **anyone who tests positive** and has no symptoms (asymptomatic), **AND** if other symptoms have improved, including being fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
 - Note: **Day 0** is the day symptoms began or the day of the positive test (not necessarily when results were received) and **Day 1** is the first full day after the test. Isolation period ends after five full days.
- If an asymptomatic person develops symptoms after testing positive or exposure, the 5-day

isolation period is in effect from the date of the test or exposure.

- Upon return to school, students/staff should try to keep 6 feet of social distancing as much as possible and while doing such things as eating or drinking, return to wearing a mask as soon as possible.
- Students who were positive for COVID-19 will not be allowed to participate in activities for 5 days (as per MSHSL rule). They may return to practice **AND** participate in contests **BUT MUST WEAR A FACE COVERING**, for **Days 6-10, OR** have 2 negative antigen tests 48 hours a part.
- TEST KITS ARE AVAILABLE FROM HEALTH OFFICE STAFF. PLEASE CONTACT THEM IF YOU NEED ONE.

With the recommended isolation period, it is critical that students continue to wear well-fitted masks and take additional precautions for five days after leaving isolation.

(F) **Diagnostic and Screening Testing: IF YOU'RE SICK, STAY HOME.**

The District understands that seasonal allergies and other chronic medical conditions can mimic COVID-19 symptoms; we ask that parents and staff consider testing as a precaution, unless a note from a physician or documentation of allergies or pre-existing condition can be obtained. Test kits are available through the health office for students, staff, or parents to pick up.

We ask that parents and staff closely monitor any other members of their household, for symptoms. If others in the same household begin exhibiting symptoms, we ask that parents keep their children home, consider getting them tested.

All people entering HLWW facilities are expected to perform a self-health screening prior to entering the building (screening for elementary children should be completed by an adult).

- 1) My student or a staff member is not exhibiting any of the following symptoms associated with COVID-19:
 - a) New onset cough; OR
 - b) Fever (100.4 or higher); OR
 - c) Shortness of breath by themselves; OR
 - d) New loss of sense of smell or taste: OR
 - e) Two of the following:
 - Chills
 - muscle pain
 - sore throat
 - severe or very bad headache
 - new nasal congestion or runny nose
 - gastrointestinal symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea
 - extreme fatigue
- 2) I will notify the District Nurse or health office staff, that my child will be out of school because someone in my home has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- 3) I will immediately notify the District Nurse or Health Office Staff at my child's school, if I am

unable to self-certify for any of the above reasons for my students. I also understand that if I am notified my child is exhibiting any of the symptoms above while at school, I will immediately pick-up my student when contacted by the health office.

*** Students & staff who come to the health office, WILL BE REQUIRED to mask while in the health office if they are symptomatic.**

(G) **Homework and instructional materials:** Items will be provided for students who are absent due to isolation, similar to other student absence protocols. Students at the MS/HS should coordinate with their teacher, submission of completed work via Google Classroom, or by other means at the direction of the teacher. Paper copies of work completed may also be coordinated for pick up and drop off, at the direction of the teacher, through the school office. PLEASE ARRANGE FOR ANY ITEMS THAT NEED TO BE PICKED UP IN THE OFFICE, IN A TIMELY MANNER.

(H) **Accommodations for Children with Disabilities:** Parents or guardians of children with disabilities seeking accommodations with respect to health and safety should be in direct contact with their child's case manager. Accommodations can then be discussed at the team level.

(I) **Coordination of State and Local Health Officials:** The School District will continue to monitor federal, state, and local guidance in regards to COVID-19 protocols.

(J) **Continuity of Services:** The school district will continue to provide services to address students' academic needs and emotional, mental health, and other needs which will include student health and food services.

(K) **Visitors:** Visitors should complete a self-health screening before entering a school building. Please do not come to school if you are sick.

(L) **Notifications:** Notifications will be made each week, to the Department of Health, as to the number of positive cases in each school. Notifications will not be sent to parents (mass communication) of cases in their child's school or classroom, unless the number of cases in a particular school or room, warrant the need to make changes to the protocols for COVID-19 response, within the school or classroom.

(M) **Plan Changes:**

- 1) A review of this plan will take place on a regular basis by school administrators and health office staff. Changes to the plan will involve the feedback of the District's COVID-19 Council, made up of staff members and parents.
- 2) Any changes to the plan will be submitted for public comment.

(N) **Accommodations:** Upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, this plan can be provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent.

If you have questions about the HLWW Safe Return to Learn Plan for students, and how it applies in your child's school, please contact your child's building principal.

Updates to the HLWW COVID-19 Response Plan and Safe Return to Learning Plan were conducted and approved on the following dates:

July 30, 2020

September 8, 2020

November 25, 2020

January 9, 2021

March 12, 2021

August 9, 2021

March 14, 2022

August 22, 2022

Any updates or changes to the District's plan were reviewed by District Administration including the District Nurse and health office staff.

The plan was then reviewed by the District's COVID-19 Council, made up of staff members and parents.

The revised plan was then distributed to all staff and parents in the district, as well as posted on the District's website.

Public comment was open for all plan updates and changes following publication, through contacting the school superintendent.