

MORTON DISTRICT 709

Return to School Plan - FAQ

Fall 2020

Safe Classrooms, Successful Outcomes



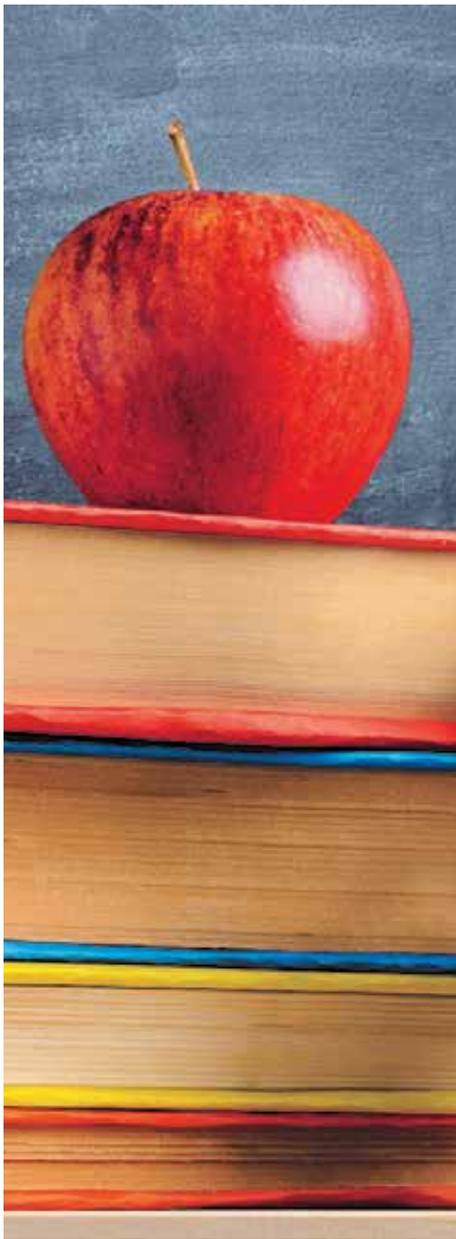
Lifelong Learning!

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following Frequently Asked Questions are to help articulate what we would expect to occur in this return to school:

Return to School



What makes District 709 confident that reopening schools full time is the right course of action?

"AAP strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school." [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

"In-person instruction is strongly encouraged in Phase 4" [ISBE/IDPH](#)

Can families choose remote instruction instead of in-person instruction?

Families can request remote instruction if the family has a medically fragile member (either the student or another family member), the student will miss school due to an illness (COVID or other) for more than 3-days, or there is a need to quarantine. Requests can be made using this [form](#).

What accommodations will be made for families?

In-person instruction is the most effective form of instruction District 709 can provide. However, for families that need to find an alternative (see question above), the district will provide a remote learning option. Depending on the duration of remote instruction needed, the remote learning option may be a 3rd party software.

Buses and Transportation

Will students be social distancing on our buses?

No. Most of our bus routes contain too many students to ensure social distancing. We will be working with families to transport their children to and from school when possible to reduce the need for our transportation. For those that are unable to provide transportation, we will work to keep our buses under the recommended capacity of 50, with physical distancing as feasible. Students will be required to wear face coverings. Buses will be sanitized after every run.

Will students have their temperature taken prior to getting on a bus?

No. Although we will be taking the temperature of students as they enter the school buildings, we are relying on parents to ensure that their students are feeling well and fever-free prior to getting on a school bus.



Classroom Environment

Will students be able to maintain physical distance in every situation?

No. The World Health Organization recommends 1-m (3-ft) and the CDC recommends 6-ft of physical distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Schools are taking measures to maximize the amount of physical distancing throughout the day. The measures include switching from collaborative table seating back to sitting in rows, removing unnecessary furniture in rooms to allow more distance between desks, alternative lunch room settings, and traffic patterns in hallways. Physical distancing will be utilized as much as feasible.

Covid Illness

If a student or employee tests positive for COVID-19, do you close the entire school, close part of the school, or keep the school open?

If a student or employee tests positive for COVID-19, District 709 will seek guidance from medical professionals to determine the best course of action based on the specific details of the incident. In general, the IDPH recommends quarantining only individuals that have had close contact with the infected person, where close contact is defined as a continuous 15-minutes within 6-feet.

When students/staff are suspected of having COVID-19, will they be required to be tested before they return to school?

No. Students/staff that are suspected of having COVID-19, or have tested positive for COVID-19 can either return on a Symptoms-Based or Test-Based criteria. For Symptom-Based, students/staff must quarantine for 10-days past the symptom onset and fever free for 72-hours. For the Test-Based criteria, students/staff must be fever free, improvements in respiratory symptoms and 2 negative tests at least 24-hrs a part.

Daily Schedule

What will the daily schedule be for each grade level?

We will follow our normal, daily schedule.

Extra Curricular Activities

Will there be changes in the offerings of activities or the manner in which they are conducted?

Maybe. Guidance from IHSA will be used to determine which activities can be offered in a safe manner.

Field Trips

Will students still get to experience field trips?

Possibly. To the extent that certain destinations are open, we will try to continue providing these opportunities that enhance the educational experience for our students. However field trips will not be taken that could greatly increase the risk of the spread of COVID-19. All trips will follow the ISBE guidelines.



Lunchtime

Will there be changes in lunch menus or food preparation?

Yes. Lunches will be more individualized at the junior high and high school cafeterias, and open salad bars and other exposed food will be eliminated. Cafeterias may use disposable plates and dinnerware and utilize pre-packaged foods as much as possible.

Will students eat in the lunchroom?

Yes. Cafeterias will have no more than 50 students at a time and as socially distanced as possible. Students may eat in other locations in the building as well. Tables will be disinfected between each lunch period.

Masks and Face-Coverings

Will all students and staff be wearing a mask or face-covering?

No. The CDC recognizes there are individuals that have a medical contraindication (requires a doctor note) to the wearing of a mask. Additionally, outdoor activities where physical distancing is practiced, lunch/snack times, instruction/communication that requires facial visualization, and band have been identified as exceptions to the wearing of a mask.

Will students get breaks from wearing their mask?

Students will get breaks from wearing a mask all day when they have snack breaks, outdoor activities and lunch. The district is sensitive to the challenges that come with wearing a mask all day.

What will the consequences be if a student refuses to wear a face covering?

Students who do not have a medical waiver to opt out of wearing a face covering, and do not fall into one of the other identified exceptions will be disciplined according to the handbook and appropriate to their age/ cognitive ability.

Is there a particular type of face-covering that must be worn?

No. Students and staff may bring their own face coverings and are responsible for caring for them and cleaning them. Face coverings must cover both the nose and the mouth. Masks will be provided to those who request them.

Restrooms and Locker Rooms

Will there be changes in the restrooms and locker rooms?

Yes and No. At the elementary school level, scheduled restroom breaks and taking turns will help ensure social distancing. Teachers will also ensure that hand sanitation takes place afterwards. However, junior high and high school restrooms will operate as normal with the students being responsible for distancing and handwashing.

References

- ▶ [Updated Summer School and Other Allowable Activities](#)
- ▶ [ISBE Summer School Key Elements](#)
- ▶ [Legitimate Safety Precautions for Students/Staff](#)
- ▶ [Community Mitigation Strategies - CDC](#)

