

# SAFE START PLAN 2.0

## Wyoming Public Schools

2021-2022



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Our Scholars. Our Purpose.  
Our Commitment. Our Family.

# OUR PLANNING PROCESS

## Our Planning Team

Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, Principals, Teachers, Support Staff, and Board Members collaborated around these focus areas:

- Wyoming Public School's Mission and Identity
- Academic Excellence
- Operational Vitality
- Social and Emotional Needs

# OUR PRIMARY GOAL

## Opening schools for all students

Our focus remains on continuing to bring our entire learning community together in Wyoming Public Schools. We will adjust our systems and structures to meet individual needs of students and staff to the greatest extent possible while maintaining the vision, mission, values and integrity of our learning community.

# OUR SHARED VALUES

**Character:** We believe actions express priorities.

**Continuous Improvement:** We believe success is linked to high expectations.

**Collaboration:** We are better together.

**Diversity:** We are strengthened by our diversity.

# Message from Superintendent Hoekstra



I am pleased to share that we are ready to begin our 2021-2022 school year! After thoughtful preparation focused on the health, safety, and well-being of our students, staff, and families, we are opening our buildings for in person instruction on August 24, 2021. Thank you for your patience and support as we navigate the challenges created by this new Delta variant of COVID-19. We all share a common goal of having our kids attend school safely while learning and growing together!



We have prepared a comprehensive plan to best serve our students through this next year. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause unfortunate disruptions to our goal of returning to “normal” as a school and community. The Kent County Health Department has now issued their strongest warning about the increased cases of COVID-19 and the urgent need for more people to become vaccinated and wear masks.

Based on this latest guidance by the KCHD, as well as the recent CDC announcement placing Kent County in the “high risk” category, Wyoming Public Schools is now requiring masks to be worn by all PK-12 students and staff indoors in all district buildings, regardless of age or vaccination status, beginning Monday, August 23. As we continue to track data and consult with the KCHD, we will re-evaluate this requirement by September 30. Our intent is to keep our child(ren) attending school safely every day and to reduce the risk of COVID transmission among children and in our community.

We are #BetterTogetherWPS, and embracing our unity as a district and family is more important than ever. We will move forward together, and I am so proud of our staff, students, families, and community who live out our mission. I know that we are all tired of this pandemic and it is frustrating that it is impacting another school year. Thank you for partnering with us and trusting us with your child(ren) as we embark on our continued journey.

## OUR GOALS

- ✔ Serve, support, and protect our students, staff, and community.
- ✔ Empower students to discover and achieve their potential.
- ✔ Cultivate strong relationships and a sense of belonging.
- ✔ Assume positive intentions and seek to understand other views.
- ✔ Model flexibility, empathy, grace, patience, and courage.
- ✔ Ensure all students have equitable access to learning.

# SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

WPS staff are committed to supporting the social and emotional needs of every student. No matter the challenges we face, we will continue to empower all students to discover and achieve their potential in an inclusive, inspiring, and innovative culture of learning, regardless of their learning environment.

## WELL-BEING OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

We recognize that our students, staff, and families have experienced significant and ongoing stress, grief, and uncertainty. Each student is affected differently by the COVID-19 pandemic, economic and employment crises, and displays of racism and injustice. We believe that our highest priority must always be the safety, mental health, and emotional well-being of our students, and we must work harder than ever to provide effective social-emotional supports. We will continue to provide a comprehensive system of emotional and behavioral supports to our students by prioritizing relationships with students, engaging families, promoting anti-racist action, responding to trauma, applying evidence-based practices, meeting requirements from federal, state, and local health officials, and following social-emotional health recommendations from the MI Department of Education, Kent ISD, and national mental health agencies.

As a district, our work will continue to be guided by four core values:

**Character:** We will continue to treat each student in our community with kindness, compassion, grace, trust, integrity, respect, and acceptance.

**Continuous Improvement:** We will continue to empower our staff to meet the unique challenges we face today.

**Collaboration:** We will continue to work in partnership with families, teachers, administrators, support staff, and community agencies.

**Diversity:** We will continue to celebrate our diversity as a strength, be leaders in social justice and anti-racist action, and stand in solidarity with our Black community members.

If you would like to know more about how WPS is promoting social and emotional well-being in our school community, please visit our [website](#) or contact any of the mental health clinicians in our district.

## OUR COMMITMENTS

- 1 Adapting to **unique challenges**
- 2 Addressing **social and emotional needs**
- 3 Responding to **trauma**
- 4 Creating **safe and inclusive environments**
- 5 Promoting **antiracist action**
- 6 Engaging **families**

# HEALTH AND SAFETY OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

When developing the WPS Safe Start Reentry Plan, the health and safety of our students and staff has remained a priority. Below you will find the District's steps to adhering to the health and safety guidelines and recommendations outlined in the Center for Disease Control and the [Kent County Health Department](#) to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

## STUDENT HEALTH

Parents will be asked to screen their child(ren) for symptoms of coronavirus or other contagious disease(s) before coming to school. As the start of the school year approaches, additional information, resources and expectations for screenings will be shared.

If your child(ren) exhibits any of the symptoms below, **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD(REN) TO SCHOOL** and contact the building's office and your physician or Kent County Health Department for additional guidance.

- Fever (greater than 100.4) or chills
- Cough that cannot be attributed to another health condition
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Increased fatigue that cannot be attributed to another health condition
- Muscle or body aches that cannot be attributed to another health condition or physical exercise
- Severe headache
- Recent loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat that cannot be attributed to another health condition
- Congestion or runny nose that cannot be attributed to another health condition
- Nausea or vomiting that cannot be attributed to another health condition

In addition, keep your child(ren) at home and contact your building's office and their physician or Kent County Health Department for additional guidance if any of the following scenarios apply to your child(ren).

- An immediate member in your household has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 or demonstrated any symptoms.
- Your child(ren) has had any close contact with a person that has a suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 or demonstrated any of the symptoms.
- Your child(ren) has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Your child(ren) is awaiting test results for COVID-19.

In addition, if your child(ren) are medically unable to wear a mask, we will be asking parents/guardians to contact our Student Services Office at 616-530-7525 and obtain documentation from a physician.

## STAFF HEALTH

Before reporting to work, all staff (including guest teachers) will monitor for various symptoms related to coronavirus or other contagious illnesses. If a staff member is exhibiting any symptoms, they will be required to stay at home and contact their supervisor immediately, and follow up with their physician or the Kent County Health Department.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing protocols for all building spaces have been identified.

- Spacing in classrooms and hallways will be maximized to the greatest extent possible.
- Entrances and exits will be limited at each building. Students and staff shall use limited entrances and exits during the school day.
- Visitors will only be allowed in emergency situations.

## FACE COVERINGS

- Face masks must always be worn on the bus, in hallways and common areas, and in classrooms, by all students grades preK-12.
- Face masks may be reusable cloth masks or disposable surgical masks. The District will provide disposable masks for all students and staff in the event they do not bring their own.
- Any student or staff member who cannot medically tolerate a face mask will be excused from wearing one with proper documentation. Any student or staff member that is incapacitated or unable to remove the facial covering without assistance, will also be excused from wearing one. If a student or staff does not wear a face mask, a face shield will be provided.
- Facial masks must be worn by staff except for meals.
- PreK-4 and special education teachers should consider wearing clear masks.
- Homemade facial coverings must be washed daily.
- Disposable facial coverings must be disposed of at the end of each day.





## HAND-WASHING & HYGIENE

- WPS will educate all staff, students and families on the importance of hygiene.
- Buildings will follow schedules that provide students and staff increased access to hand-washing/sanitizing stations throughout the day.
- Teachers will provide age-appropriate lessons to teach hand-washing best practices, and age-appropriate posters with the CDC guidelines will be placed around the school buildings.
- Students and staff will wash/sanitize hands upon entering their classroom and before and after meals.
- Hand-sanitizing stations will be dispersed throughout K-12 schools to help reduce the congestion around the restrooms and allow opportunities for students to sanitize their hands more frequently.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be placed at entrances and other key locations throughout the building/district.

## WATER FOUNTAINS AND RESTROOMS

- Touchless bottle filling water fountains will remain available for use but with increased cleaning and disinfecting measures.
- The District will make use of signage to promote appropriate distancing and additional monitoring of restroom facilities by building staff will be performed.





## CONTACT TRACING

Wyoming Public School's goal is to keep our students and staff safe in our buildings. We will follow all CDC, MIOSHA, Kent County Health Department and State of Michigan guidelines to mitigate the spread of and exposure to COVID-19. However, we recognize that we will have the possibility for students and staff to be exposed and contract COVID-19. We have identified various employees as Contact Tracers in each of our buildings to assist in further reducing the spread and exposure. These individuals will follow guidelines from the CDC and work with staff, students and families to identify close contacts and alert the KCHD who will then notify close contacts in and outside of the school setting.

## PROTOCOLS

- Each school building will identify a secluded room to serve as an isolation area. This room will be outfitted with PPE for staff and student safety.
- Each building will have an identified and trained staff person to serve as the "quarantine officer". These duties will take precedence over any other responsibilities and therefore this individual must have the flexibility to leave their regular assignment at a moment's notice.
- Parent communication will be made with clear and concise directions on where and how to pick up the student and where to report for testing.
- A designated person (office staff) will maintain regular contact with the student/family after removal until test results are provided and verified before the student can return to school.
- During the time of quarantine, the student will be asked to self identify the location and individuals they came into contact with for the past 24 hours to the best of their recollection. Priority will be placed on those individuals whom they were in contact with for a sustained 15 minutes (or more) of time.

### ESTABLISHED PROTOCOL FOR IDENTIFIED CASES

If an individual, and/or multiple individuals, within a school building tests positive for COVID-19, schools will be required to work with their local health department. The following procedures can be expected to be put in place:

- WPS will interview the COVID positive person and identify which locations the individual had visited and identify all those who had close contact (defined as being within a 6-foot space for at least 15 minutes).
- The KCHD will contact those in close contact to quarantine.
- If the student or staff member is symptomatic and has not been in close contact with a COVID positive person, and has had a negative COVID test, the student or staff is excluded from school until 24 hours once they are symptom free without the use of medication.
- Students or staff who test positive must isolate for 5 days and contact the office or their supervisor immediately. The school must immediately contact KCHD and conduct contact tracing.
- WPS and the KCHD will work in coordination to determine classroom or building closures based on contact tracing.

In addition to the district establishing the precautionary measures noted above, each building will establish further protocols to fit the needs of their students and staff.

WPS will follow the guidance and School Toolkit provided by the Kent County Health Department related to positive COVID persons in our District.



## TESTING PROTOCOLS

- The District will cooperate with the Kent County Health Department regarding protocols for students and staff. Additionally, the Kent County Health Department and CDC will be consulted in the event that a student or staff member contracts COVID-19 during the school year.
- Students who develop a fever or become ill with COVID-19 symptoms at school shall be transported to a designated 'quarantine room'. Once there, they will be screened by a trained staff member, their parent or guardian or emergency contact (or ambulance if clinically unstable) will be called to pick up the student, and may be asked to get a COVID test. Families can contact their physician, local hospital, or the KCHD for testing locations.
- Staff who develop a fever or become ill with COVID-19 symptoms while at school will leave the school building, and may be asked to get a COVID test. Staff can contact their physician, local hospital or the KCHD for testing locations.
- Symptomatic students and staff sent home from school will remain home until it has been identified, through contact tracing, that they were not in close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or have been released from isolation according to the CDC and KCHD. Students or staff may also return if they have not been in close contact with a COVID positive person and have tested negative for COVID-19.
- Families shall be notified of the presence of any laboratory positive or clinically diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in the classroom and/or school by the KCHD to encourage closer observation for any symptoms at home.

# TECHNOLOGY AND ACCESS

Over the past year, we used technology in new and innovative ways. It is critical that every student has the necessary tools for accessing instruction and engaging meaningfully with their teachers and peers. The WPS Technology Department has several priorities for a successful return to school:

- Ensuring all WPS students and staff have access to a working device.
- Collaborating with WPS staff, local businesses, and community partners to ensure all WPS students and staff have reliable internet access.
- Supporting WPS students, families, and staff with the effective use of our core digital learning tools, educational platform, and online applications.
- Modifying and enhancing any existing tools and applications to best meet the needs of students (during in-person instruction and remote learning).
- Introducing new tools and applications in ways that allow for standardized use and support, while also being flexible to our changing needs.
- Continuing to maintain a robust portfolio of educational technology that is secure, stable, and effective.

# OPERATIONS

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

- The District has purchased an abundance of supplies (including hand soap/sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, other cleaning products, etc.) to ensure we can carry out all of the safety measures outlined in this plan.
- We have enhanced our cleaning protocols based on current guidelines and recommendations from the CDC, MIOSHA and Kent County Health Department (KCHD).
- Custodial staff will use deep-cleaning machines nightly to prevent the spread of germs.
- Additional custodians will be hired to support cleaning and disinfecting throughout the day.

## FOOD SERVICE

- WPS remains committed to providing meals to all of our students. Chartwells, the District's food service provider, is fully equipped to manage our food service plan in a safe and efficient manner. (Additional details about our food service procedures can be found on our website.)
- All of our food and nutrition staff are trained in food safety procedures.

## TRANSPORTATION

- Keeping our students safe starts with their transportation to and from school.
- We strongly encourage families to drive child(ren) to school or allow them to safely, and as weather permits, walk or ride to school.
- Please communicate with the transportation office if your child(ren) will be planning to ride the bus.
- Students must follow strict procedures for safely boarding and unloading the bus.
- Face masks will be required for students and drivers on the bus.
- Weather permitting, drivers will consider keeping windows open when appropriate and safe.

# ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

The Wyoming Public Schools will follow guidance from the Kent County Health Department and the Michigan High School Athletic Association.

- Our primary responsibility is to keep our student athletes safe and the Athletic Department will continue to follow the guidelines published by the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA).
- Fine Arts and other large group extracurriculars (band, choir, theater, etc.) will follow the State and local health department's guidelines for a safe participation.
- Wyoming Public School's Staff, Coaches and Student Athletes will follow Wyoming Public School's masking requirements while indoors. Any athletic programs or fine arts extracurriculars performed outside will not be required to wear a mask.
- Visiting athletes and coaches who are inside our school facilities will be required to wear a mask. When WPS athletic programs are traveling, athletes and coaches will adhere to the rules of the visiting District.
- Spectators, either indoors or outside, will be given a choice in wearing a mask. We will be physically distancing as much as possible.
- All youth sports and youth activities performed indoors must wear a mask.
- Our Athletic Department will continue to communicate with students, families, and staff about decisions regarding athletic events. Please contact the Athletic Department office with specific questions and concerns.

We will comply with all guidance published by [MHSAA](#).

Please seek additional guidance from the WPS Athletic Department for questions or concerns.



# WYOMING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

3575 Gladiola Ave. SW  
Wyoming, MI. 49345  
[www.wyomingps.org](http://www.wyomingps.org)  
#BetterTogetherWPS

