

# Maquoketa Valley Return to Learn Plan Fall 2021

Revised 8.16.21



This is the current Return To Learn Plan for the Maquoketa Valley School District. We continue to receive guidance from the Department of Education, the Governor's Office, Delaware County Health and Keystone AEA. This plan will continue to evolve as we get more guidance and respond to community questions.

### **In-Person Learning**

We will have in-person learning this year for all students. We will not be providing an online option unless we have students who need this option for medical reasons. These arrangements must be made on a case-by-case basis. We will support students who must have an extended absence with options such as online interaction or sending homework home. These situations will be decided on a case by case basis.

Our priority is to keep students and staff safe so that we may continue to offer in-person learning at Maquoketa Valley. The following strategies will be in place to give us the best chance at keeping our school open and for students to participate in extracurricular activities. We appreciate your support and will need everyone to do their part to help our entire school community safe. We will continue to update this document with more information as it becomes available.

### **Face Coverings**

Iowa Governor Reynolds signed HF 847 on May 20, 2021 which prohibits a school district from adopting or enforcing a policy that requires employees, students, or the public to wear a mask while on school property. As such, masks will be optional for students, teachers, and visitors. We will support students in our school whether they choose to wear masks or not.

### **Mitigation Efforts**

Our efforts will include but not be limited to the following:

- Desks will be cleaned daily.
- Alternative classroom seating arrangements will be used to create as much space as possible between students.
- We will have hand sanitizer in each classroom, spread throughout the building in heavy traffic areas and at all building entrances
- Classroom doors will be left open as much as possible to reduce the number of hand touches on the doors.
- Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottle. If they do not have one, one will be provided by the school.
- Frequent teaching and instruction for students on healthy practices, this includes increased opportunities for handwashing and updated Wildcat Way expectations.

### **Transportation**

It is not an option for us to add additional busses or routes to accommodate for social distancing on our busses. The following guidelines will include but not be limited to the following:

- There is a requirement that all persons riding a school bus must wear masks and so we must follow this requirement at Maquoketa Valley. The Iowa Departments of Education, Department of Transportation, and Department of Public Health have all informed our district of this obligation. This is a direct quote sent to school districts from the Iowa Departments of Education and Public Health:
  - **Does the CDC mask order for public transportation apply to school buses?**
  - Yes. The CDC issued an Order effective February 1, 2021, imposing a requirement for persons to wear masks while on public transportation conveyances, and in its Frequently Asked Questions document accompanying the Order the CDC indicates that “passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems, subject to the exclusions and exemptions in the CDC’s Order.” The Iowa Department of Education provided guidance to schools regarding this issue on a webinar in May 2021. School districts with additional questions about the applicability of the Order should contact their district’s legal counsel.
- Students will have an assigned seat on the bus which will be assigned by the driver. This will be necessary in the event that the information on where students were sitting becomes necessary. This is not a punishment but a step to reduce the number of students that come in contact with each other over the course of several days. It will be important for parents to help students understand this important point.
- Busses will be sanitized after each bus route.

### Health Considerations

- COVID-19 vaccinations and proof of vaccinations are not required for employees, students, or the public.
- It is important for parents to screen their children before they come to school and keep them home if they are displaying symptoms of any illness. See the attached document called “[Common Child Illnesses and Exclusions](#)”.
- If a student or teacher becomes symptomatic they should stay home while ill and consider getting tested.
  - IDPH states COVID-19 positive persons can return to normal school activities after:
    - 10 days since symptoms first appeared and
    - 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
    - Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving\*
    - \*Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after

recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.

### **School lunch**

- The United States Department of Agriculture has authorized that school meals will be free to all students this year. Students will eat lunch and breakfast in the school cafeterias. If school is not able to be held in-person, grab and go meals will be provided.

### **Visitors**

- Visitors will be allowed as we start the school year. We will assess the situation and make changes if necessary.