

Tonica CCSD #79



Implementation of Illinois State Board of Education Starting the 2020 – 2021 School Year Part 3 – Transition Joint Guidance Reopening Guide

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Approved by the Board of Education

Reopening Framework Design Team

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Preface

The complex task of the Reopening Framework Design Team was to take the Illinois State Board of Education Part 3 – Transition Joint Guidance for Schools that keeps the health and safety as the primary lens and filter in the development of the plan while providing a quality educational experience for students but also trying to minimize the impact on families. This plan is a living document and subject to change and revision based upon both internal and external conditions and guidance.

One thing that the Design Team recognized at the onset is that public education was not prepared or designed for such a complex and immediate reaction to the conditions that necessitated change. As we navigate this together we will find problems but also manage to solve those problems as best as possible. We ask that all stakeholders be supportive, flexible and know the best intentions for the Tonica Learning Community are first and foremost.

Introduction

On June 23, 2020 the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) released to the public and schools Part 3 – Transition Joint Guidance for Schools to reopen for the 2020 – 2021 School Year. The document provided school districts guidance regarding creating a safe and healthy environment related to the existence of Covid-19 and being under a Pandemic. Contained in the guidance were recommendations and mandates regarding instruction, health and safety protocols using Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) guidance, school calendar, and transitions to more restrictive Phases as part of the Restoring Illinois Five Phase Plan. This reopening guide focuses on the Illinois Phase 4 elements as they pertain to Illinois Schools. Under this Phase and included in the ISBE Guidance document is the desire for Illinois Schools “to strongly encourage In-Person instruction” but to “note that this does not signify a return to pre-pandemic operations”. This includes appropriate social distancing, face coverings [for in-person learning/presence at a school building and on school transportation], and enhanced sanitation measures.

Under Illinois Phase 4, IDPH guidelines include:

- Use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings,
- Regulating gatherings of more than 50 persons in a space (i.e. room, gym, cafeteria – not a building capacity),
- Observing social distancing, currently 6 feet or greater, to the greatest extent as possible; [however spacing less than 6 feet is allowable due to the face covering stipulation]
- Increasing cleaning and disinfection practices,
- Performing daily health screenings that include symptom screening and temperature verification especially when boarding a bus or arriving at school via walker or drop off,
- Implementation of mandated absence(s) in the presence of COVID-19 related symptoms.

Using the guidance provided by ISBE and the IDPH, Tonica Grade School formed a team to review the guidance and create a framework that will lead the District on a pathway to reopen for the 2020 – 2021 school year. The framework development looked at Tonica Grade School’s ability to best maximize In-Person Learning but also provide Remote Learning as a blended/hybrid instructional model using the IDPH health and safety protocols.

This Reopening Guide will provide parents information regarding the framework elements and the structure under which In-Person Learning and Remote Learning will be implemented. A key factor regarding how the structure is finalized will be based upon parent feedback through a survey and at registration. Tonica’s plans at this time is to have In-Person Learning made available to ALL Tonica Grade School students each school day in addition to having a Remote Learning Option while so permitted by the State of Illinois, ISBE and IDPH. The State Superintendent has determined that days of instruction (In-Person, Remote Learning, Blended or Hybrid) must include at least five (5) clock hours of a combination of instruction and school work for each student. The school hours for In-Person Learning will depend greatly on the levels of Remote Learning provided to students. The In-Person and Remote Learning School Day hours would occur during traditional school hours; however, dismissal time for In-Person learning would adjust as needed.

At any time, Tonica Grade School may shift to a higher level or complete Remote Learning based upon a variety of circumstances including cases of Covid-19, inability for the school to effectively operate In-Person learning or mandates to close In-Person Learning. After reviewing this document and understanding Tonica's reopening plan, parents will be asked to provide feedback whether their child(ren) will participate in Remote Learning or In-Person Learning.

IDPH Guidance Regarding Symptoms/Limiting Contact/Quarantine

Note: The term 'student' was replaced with 'person' in this plan

A person is considered "Probable COVID-19" if they exhibit two or more symptoms:

- Fever (above 100.4 degrees) or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

If a person has a temperature above 100.4 degrees they can only return to school after being fever free for 72 hours without medication plus an initial 24 hours to allow for fever reduction. ***At minimum, four (4) days would be required counting non-school attendance days. A student would be shifted into Remote Learning temporarily until able to return to school.***

If a person exhibits two or more symptoms they will need to be sent home with recommendations to follow up with their family doctor. The student's siblings do NOT need to be sent home at this time unless they are experiencing symptoms, *except for siblings or ride sharing students for when a temperature greater than 100.4 exists and they were within six (6) feet for more than 15 minutes. This may result in siblings not being able to board the bus or enter the school.*

If a person is sent home with two or more symptoms and is NOT tested for COVID they are not able to return to school unless they have been fever free for at least 72 hours without medication AND it has been 10 days since the start of symptoms AND they are feeling well and symptoms have subsided.

If a person is tested for COVID and is NEGATIVE the person may return to school when they are fever free for 72 hours without medication AND feeling better. The Covid-19 test needs to be administered at least six (6) days after the onset of symptoms.

Any person must remain at home quarantined while waiting for test results.

If a person sees their doctor and is found to have strep, ear infection or other illness that is not COVID at this time the person may return to school when cleared by their doctor.

General Procedure – Temperature/Non Covid-19 Temperature

Tonica Grade School is revising its past procedure regarding students with a temperature at or above 100 degrees but not exceeding 100.4 degrees. Students may not return to school for 24 hours after being fever free without the use of fever reducing medicine plus an initial 24 hours to allow for fever reduction. Minimum days for a student to be out for this type of temperature is 2 school days but more until fever free without the use of fever reducing medicine.

School Calendar

The basic school calendar will remain relatively unchanged. However, the first student start day has been moved to AUGUST 18, 2020. August 13th and 14th will remain Teacher Institute days, however August 17th will be a remote learning planning day. On August 18th In-Person and Remote Learning will begin. Up to four (4) more Remote Learning Planning Days may be announced (no In-Person or Remote Learning) with at least one week of notice if possible. Updates to the school calendar will be announced and also posted on the school website on the Calendar page.

School Day - Hours

The hours for In-Person hours at school will be adjusted with dismissal times earlier than what was a traditional 3:10 pm dismissal. This will be required to provide Remote Learners with instructional supports and services. The In-Person dismissal time will be adjusted depending on the levels of Remote Learning needed. Early dismissal times already on the school calendar would remain unless an earlier time is required for Remote Learning. It is anticipated that a change in dismissal time would be provided one week in advance.

Building Conditions/Heat Days

While In-Person Learning is taking place there will also be consideration for 'heat day' early dismissals that may be earlier than the scheduled early release for In-Person/Remote Learning days. It is acknowledged that for the first few weeks wearing a face covering will need to be balanced with building conditions. More frequent face breaks will be part of the day as nobody expects or would think wearing face covering for hours at a time is feasible or practical. Also, Junior High classes will transition to first floor rooms in the building until cooler weather arrives.

Registration

At registration a parent will need to provide the district with their choice regarding In-Person Learning or Remote Learning to start the school year. Parents opting for Remote Learning will require their child(ren) to use that instructional model in school year quarter increments.

Survey

There will be parent survey sent out after this plan is released to allow parents to make informed decisions regarding survey questions. The survey is intended to gauge technology needs, levels of Remote Learning for the school, and other factors to help develop the needs of Tonica students.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Extracurricular activities will be on a case by case basis using guidance from the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) in conjunction with ISBE and the IDPH. Hosting fall sports is still unknown awaiting the guidance from IESA. The District may choose to not host a sport that is allowable by the IESA based upon various factors focusing on the health and safety of our students, staff and families.

In-Person Learning Plan

In-Person Daily School Hours

- Standard In-Person Day
 - Arrival 7:50
 - 8:10 a.m. Begin Instructional School Day

- Lunches
 - 11:00 K – 2
 - 11:30 3 – 5
 - 11:55 6 – 8
- ***TBD – Dismissal Time Depending on the Level of Remote Learning; Adjusted as required***
- Early Dismissals
 - 2:00 p.m. and 11:30 a.m. that are on the district calendar would remain the same unless an earlier dismissal time is announced for Remote Learning needs
 - In-Person learning students completed for the day for attendance but assignments and activities assigned as in the past
- ***Heat Dismissal/Partial Remote Learning Required***
 - Approximately 12:30 p.m. with lunch served (Announced at least a day in advance)
 - Required Remote Learning assignment or activity assigned and must be turned in by the next school day in order for the student to receive a full day of attendance on the Early Release Heat Dismissal

General Information

- Available to ALL students initially; the District may designate Remote Learning for a student that is not able to meet the In-Person requirements for health and safety protocols
- Hours for In-Person Learning will vary depending on Remote Learning Levels within our Blended/Hybrid Model
- Students/School may transition to Remote Learning as circumstances impact the ability of the school to effectively provide In-Person Learning
- As levels of In-Person Learning transition to more Remote Learning special consideration to maintain In-Person Learning will be provided first to students with an Individualized Education Plan, second to students with a 504 Plan, then to students based upon gaps in learning skills
- Student classes/subjects in the elementary will focus on each traditional grade level subject but as In-Person Learning were to be reduced the focus would target Literacy and Math and may require students to complete assignments at home to balance out the five (5) hours of instruction and school work requirement
- Junior High classes will target each subject area but as In-Person Learning were to be reduced each subject may have a shortened class period or rotate during the week; students may be required to complete assignments at home to balance our the five (5) hours of instruction and school work requirement
- Grading and attendance would follow traditional procedures and those outlined in the Student & Parent Handbook but would be adjusted for a Blended/Hybrid Learning Day would be utilized along with In-Person Learning by a student
- The limit on gathering sizes is 50 in a space; procedures are in place to adjust the traditional gathering in the gym to include non-breakfast elementary students to go to classrooms and junior high non-breakfast students to be socially distanced by at least 6 feet in the main gym; classrooms and other traditional learning spaces would be limited to just the grade level/class

Face Coverings

- Face covering is one that provides for droplet protection, loops around the ears or head, covers the nose, mouth and fits against the chin creating a containment pocket for the nose and mouth
- Face coverings will be required to be worn inside the building, outside the building if 6 feet of social distance is not maintained, and be worn before a student may board a school bus and kept in place while on the school bus
- The school will have a very limited number of face coverings depending if ISBE delivers the one per student washable face covering; parents will need to provide a face covering that meets the definition in this section

- Face Breaks from masks will be scheduled frequently during the day based upon student age and building conditions.
- Face shields – ISBE and IDPH have determined in their guidance that a face shield is not a suitable substitute for a face covering; a face shield would be considered for a student to wear and be permitted to have for In-Person Learning if a doctor provides a note that the student has a pre-existing condition in which a face covering (mask) poses a risk to a student, the note needs to include the ailment or diagnosis preventing the wearing of a face covering (mask)
- Face shield Instructional Consideration – The District may determine that in some, very limited cases, a face shield may be worn by a student in which the instructional interactions require the seeing of expression or formation of words; the parent would need to approve the use of a face shield for parts of the day when needed, parents would need to provide the face shield if the district were not able to provide one assigned to that student

Arrival to School

- Arrival time 7:50; no student will be permitted to enter until 7:50
- Students driven to school need to remain in their vehicle and brought through the circle drive; students would exit their vehicle upon the direction of staff upon reaching the first vehicle position; please be patient as buses will unload and students may not exit until their vehicle reaches the designated exit position and staff signal to exit
- Students may not be dropped off in the parking lot or other area allowing for a vehicle to leave prior to a child being cleared for entry into the building at the circle drive location
- All students will need to be brought to the circle drive area; it is requested that walking to school be limited and if a family is provided bus service the student ride the bus or be driven to school

Health and Safety

- Students and staff will maintain six (6) feet of distance when possible
- Parents are responsible for keeping their child(ren) home for the times indicated if they are showing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 as listed, or later revised, under the section of **IDPH Guidance Regarding Symptoms/Limiting Contact/Quarantine**
- Temperature checks and screening of students and staff for the signs of Covid-19 as listed, or later revised, under the section of **IDPH Guidance Regarding Symptoms/Limiting Contact/Quarantine**
- A student with a temperature above 100.4° or exhibit two (2) or more symptoms will be quarantined and parent contacted to pick their child up from school. A parent will need to contact their medical provider for evaluation, treatment, and information on when they can return to school (student would transition to Remote Learning)
- ISBE guidance restricts the use of a nebulizer at school; asthma inhalers are permitted
- Students arriving via the school bus will have their temperature checked and screened for symptoms before being permitted to board or if the District utilizes a Self-Certification system for bus riders the screening would also occur upon arrival
- A temperature above 100.4 degrees will require a student to be out of school for at least four (4) school days and may only return after 72 hours of being fever free without the use of fever reducing medication (Remote Learning would be provided)
- Students that need to go home due to exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19 will have a supervised, quarantine space provided and parents contacted

Diagnosed Case of Covid-19

- If there is a diagnosed case of COVID-19 the health department will contact the school and provide guidance regarding school operations

- Persons that were within six (6) feet for 15 or more minutes will be placed on a 14 day quarantine and be symptom free in order to return to the building
- A diagnosed case of COVID-19 will be evaluated as to the impact on the educational environment which may mean portions or the entire school transitions to Remote Learning

Transportation

- Ridership will be limited to no more than 48 students (current bus ridership should allow all students that have bus service to ride)
- Bus riding may be suspended for a student that does not follow the rules associated with bus riding to include not wearing a face covering or moving seat locations.
- Before a student can board the bus one of two procedures will be used; however, a parent or responsible adult needs to be within sight of the bus stop in case as student is not permitted to board
 - Procedure 1 – If a bus monitor is provided, the monitor will temperature check and screen students for Covid-19 symptoms to clear them to board if they are symptom free and wearing a face covering
 - Procedure 2 – If a bus monitor is not available a parent will need to self-certify daily, using a form provided by the District, that their child does not have a temperature over 100.4° and does not have any of the symptoms listed on the form; a student will need to present the form to the driver and be wearing a face covering in order to board the bus
- **Not Cleared to Board:** A parent or designated adult by the parent needs to be available at the bus pick-up point in the event student is not cleared to board. A bus will not depart with a child left at the stop which will delay the route and arrival at school for many students. This will have a domino effect for other parents that need to leave for work or other appointments. The District will attempt to use student emergency contacts or if a District staff person is available go to the stop to supervise the child until a parent/authorized adult arrives. The District may call law enforcement to report an unsupervised child after 30 minutes have passed.
- **Not Cleared to Board Parent Release:** A parent or legal guardian may provide the school with a release letter allowing their child in grades 5th through 8th grade (along with their younger siblings) the ability to walk home in the event they are not able to board the bus due to Covid-19 symptoms or not having a face covering. The bus driver/company will be provided a copy of the release. A call to the parents by school staff will be made as soon as practicable after 7:30 a.m. if this were to occur.

Building Health and Safety Protocols

- Sanitizing and disinfecting will be increased during the day with touch surfaces in all rooms being addressed before another group enters the space
- Water fountain drinking spouts will be deactivated; however there are two bottle filling stations and students are encouraged to have a water bottle, with their name, for use at school that goes home daily for cleaning
- Increased hand washing opportunities will be provided

Cafeteria – Lunch/Breakfast

- To start the year students will be able to use the cafeteria or alternate location with six (6) feet of separation without needing to wear a face covering
- Location markers will be visible for students to separate by six (6) feet
- The face covering is to remain on until seated and put back on before leaving their seat
- Cafeteria staff will follow protocols for safe food handling and service
- Student home packed lunches need to have items that students can open and access all on their own.

Recess

- Students may take their face coverings off if they maintain six (6) feet of distance
- We realize that this may be difficult for younger students and the staff will manage the as best as possible; note that this is a situation in which a student may be closer than six (6) feet from another person while not wearing a mask

Remote Learning Plan

The guidance provided by ISBE contained substantial changes from what Remote Learning looked like in the spring. These changes include: using school grading procedures (school work/assignments are not optional) and attendance is to be tracked and recorded with a code of Truant for non-engagement days.

Pathways to Remote Learning

1. A student/family member has a documented medical condition and a doctor provides a note indicating the medical concern and that Remote Learning is needed
 - a. Students with a known medical concern would need a Doctor's noted to clear the student for In-Person Learning
2. A parent has a general concern about the school's In-Person plan or personal health and safety concerns regarding their child attending school for In-Person learning
3. The School District transitions a student from In-Person learning when a student is not able to follow the health and safety protocols of the In-Person Learning Plan
4. Circumstances require the district to shift a student to Remote Learning including student incompatibility with In-Person Learning requirements

When a parent opts for Remote Learning a student would only transition to In-Person Learning at the change of Quarter. A student with a medical condition in which a doctor indicates Remote Learning is best would only return at the quarter and that a doctor states that the medical condition is no longer an issue. When the school places a student in Remote Learning due to incompatibility with In-Person Learning requirements, a one-time transition back to In-Person Learning after one week will be permitted if the parent indicates their child will be able to follow the health and safety procedures. A student will transition back to Remote Learning if the procedures are not followed.

Attendance

Attendance for Remote Learning is a combination of engagement with the teacher/class remotely and completion of assignments/activities. A minimum five hour instructional day is required and assignments will be calculated to be part of the five hours in addition to the remote/engagement with a teacher.

Student attendance will generally follow three codes for Remote Learning

1. Full Day of Attendance: Student engages remotely for each assigned time and completes Remote Learning assignments/activities for that day
2. Half/Partial Day of Attendance: Student does not engage in all the Remote Learning times and does not complete all the Remote Learning assignments
3. Full Day Absent/Truant: Student had no engagement remotely with the teacher/staff and did not complete at least 50% of the daily assignments/activities.

Assignments/Activities

Students in Remote Learning are going to have as close to the same expectations of learning grade/subject level skills. Some work maybe altered or adjusted at the discretion of the teacher.

- Elementary students are planned to use ClassDojo as the engagement platform with interactions using either Zoom or Google Video Conferencing.
- Junior High students will use their Google school account for Google Classroom and either Zoom or Google Video Platform to interact with teachers.

Grading

Student grades will use the established grading policies outlined in the Student & Parent Handbook to include due dates.

Engagement

Engagement is a required component of the revised Remote Learning Guidance from ISBE. Attendance and grading will be based upon engagement levels. Unexcused absences/truancy is required to be reported to the Regional Office of Education Attendance Program

The District's team understands that engaging during school hours may be difficult in some situations; however, email outside of staff hours and completion of assignments via online is permissible for staff to review the next school day.

Remote Learning Day – In Progress of Development

- Morning remote check-in with a teacher(s) at 8:30 am – 8:45 am
 - Review the day's activities
- Student works on assignments, submits to the learning platform by dismissal of the In-Person Learning Day
- Afternoon Extended Remote Learning engagement with a teacher(s) until the traditional dismissal time

It is possible that the District may incorporate longer periods of Remote Learning video streaming bringing the Remote Learner into the In-Person Learning Environment. This is still in the developmental stages.

Technology

The District is in the process and has ordered several Chromebook devices for use by students that do not have a screen larger than a cell phone or would be in a situation where that larger screen would be used at the same time as another household member. An internet connection however is not provided by the school.