

# Hartsburg-Emden CUSD #21

400 West Front Street

Hartsburg, IL 62643

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## Return to School Plan

2021-2022

### **Introduction:**

On July 9<sup>th</sup>, the IDPH (Illinois Department of Public Health) adopted the national CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) guidelines for reopening school this fall; starting the 2021-22 School Year, will look somewhat different under Phase V than when we finished the school year under Phase IV.

The 2020-21 school year was unprecedented in a number of ways. COVID-19 hit the world and much mitigation and many plans were put in place to protect as many people as possible. The State of Illinois created a five (5) phase plan. Schools went from Phase III (very strict protocols) to Phase IV (moderate protocols). In Phase V, we will take the reverse approach. We will start with the less restrictive environment and move to environments that are more restrictive if COVID-19 cases increase.

As we look forward to the 2021-22 school year, we find ourselves in more familiar territory. We realize that COVID-19 is something we will continue to live with for the near future and need to do so without sacrificing the quality of educational opportunities our students deserve. However, we need flexibility to ensure the safety of students, staff, family, and community members as COVID-19 numbers change. Last year we provided as much in-person learning as possible while we placed a high emphasis on safety. We now seek to get back to the full implementation of instructional strategies and educational opportunities that create the deepest learning possible for our students while being safe. Because of our success last year and the commitment of the Hartsburg-Emden Community, we are confident, we have the tools for staying healthy and providing a full-time (8:15am – 3:14pm) education this school year.

We are happy to announce that for the 2021-22 school year we will be back to most of our regular routines with Breakfasts, PE, and Music/Band, as well as returning to school full-time.

We do have a plan for times if the rate of transmission of COVID-19 in our schools increases to certain levels, which is outlined below in our leveled plan. Just like last year, your diligence in sending healthy students to school will be of the utmost importance. We continue to ask that you symptom check your child(ren) each morning. Most of our cleaning and disinfecting protocols will continue to be in place. We are looking forward to the upcoming year and appreciate your continued support of the Hartsburg-Emden Community Unit School District #21, go Stags!!

### **Return to Learning:**

Full-time Remote Learning is not an option for the 2021-2022 school year. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) adopted a resolution supporting full-time in-person learning for this school year.

The use of Remote Learning will be limited in accordance with ISBE's declaration:

"Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, all schools must resume fully in-person learning for all student attendance days, provided that, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-30 and 105 ILCS 5/34-18.66, remote instruction be made available for students who have not received a COVID-19 vaccine or who are not eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine, only while they are under quarantine consistent with guidance or requirements from a local public health department or the Illinois Department of Public Health."

Hartsburg-Emden C.U.S.D. #21 will work with parents/caregivers and quarantined students on an individual basis to provide the best educational situations for each student. This may include teachers utilizing Remote Learning during absences.

Students that need to quarantine will be provided at least the same opportunities as other excused sick days as outlined in our student handbook, for each day out, they will be given a day back in school for makeup.

Students that are medically unable to attend for an extended period of time will need to follow the procedures for home/hospital services pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/14-13.0. Again, we will work with parents/caregivers on a case-by-case basis.

### **Safety Precautions for Students/Staff:**

Hartsburg-Emden CUSD #21 seeks to balance reasonable safety precautions with a positive, productive learning environment that results in the high levels of success for student and staff . While Hartsburg-Emden CUSD #21 cannot eliminate the risk of COVID-19, our strategies are designed to minimize the risk while maximizing educational opportunities.

Hartsburg-Emden C.U.S.D. #21 strategies for mitigating risk at all risk levels:

- Use seating charts in each class to assist with contact tracing
- Encouragement of hand washing routines
- Nightly disinfection of surfaces
- Hand sanitizer will be provided in all classrooms
- Routine disinfecting of surfaces throughout the day
- Social Distancing as much as possible
- Require the wearing of masks on buses

Preventing the spread of COVID-19 begins at home. Before sending students to school each day, parents/caregivers need to make sure that their children are:

- Fever free
- Not exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19
- Not waiting on the results from a COVID-19 test

Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to be overly cautious when considering whether or not to send a child to school. Please help us keep our school a Sick Free Zone.

Cleaning/Disinfecting – Schools and buses will continued to be completely disinfected each night using the disinfecting foggers we purchased last year. We will also be disinfecting and cleaning surfaces often throughout the day.

Social Distancing – With our smaller numbers, we will continue to be able to follow the three (3) feet social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC most of the time.

Masks – The CDC recommends that students and staff that are unvaccinated wear masks, especially in high traffic areas or when social distancing cannot be maintained. Hartsburg-Emden C.U.S.D. #21 is leaving the decision to mask-up to parents/caregivers and staff members in the classrooms (where social distancing can be maintained) when we are in Level I (low risk/least restrictive environment). Should school and/or community transmission rates increase the mask recommendations will be modified as outlined in our mitigation levels and become a requirement. If parents/caregivers wish to have their child in a mask at all times in the school building (whether or not distancing is being maintained), we ask that you notify the school and we will do our best to ensure your child(ren) is masking. The CDC is requiring masks to be worn on all school buses (by everyone, vaccinated or unvaccinated). If your child(ren) is riding the school bus, they will need to have a mask to get on the bus. This includes extra-curricular events as well.

Quarantines – Hartsburg-Emden C.U.S.D. #21 will continue to assist the Logan County Health Department with contact tracing in close contact of a positive case. Parents/Caregivers will be called and students will be quarantined if they develop symptoms in accordance with CDC guidelines. Should school and community transmission rates increase, the quarantine procedures will be modified as outlined in our mitigation levels. The guidance for close contact is still 6ft. Vaccinated students will not have to quarantine for close contact. The school will no longer send a school reach and post notification letters for each case. Notifications will come if the school moves between levels.

Close Contact – In the K-12 setting, the CDC defines close contact as being within 6ft. of another individual for more than 15-minutes. Students/staff members that have been in close contact with a verified case of COVID-19 may have to quarantine unless they have had COVID-19 within the past three (3) months or are fully vaccinated. If an unvaccinated student is wearing a mask and a student that tests positive for COVID-19 is wearing a mask, then the close contact guidance is reduced to 3ft. for quarantine for close contact. Individuals requesting no quarantine due to vaccination or having COVID-19 within the past three (3) months will have to provide appropriate documentation.

Mitigation Levels – Hartsburg-Emden C.U.S.D. #21 will determine mitigation levels by consulting the Logan County Health Department detailed metrics and using Hartsburg-Emden C.U.S.D. #21 community metrics. Each mitigation level has increased levels of mitigation to assist in keeping the spread of COVID-19 and other diseases to a minimum. In order to move to a lower level, the school buildings metrics must have been at the lower level marker for at least two (2) full weeks at a minimum.

## **Re-Opening of School:**

We are planning to start the 2021-22 school year on Level I, based on our current level of transmission in the school community. We will continue to monitor data on a daily/weekly basis to determine metrics. As metrics change we will adjust in accordance with our plan.

## **Vaccinated vs. Unvaccinated:**

If parents/caregivers wish to provide proof your child(ren) is vaccinated, students will not need to wear a mask while in school during the least restrictive levels of Phase V nor will they have to quarantine for close contact. Without proper documentation, students will be treated as if they are unvaccinated.

## **Athletic and Extra Curricular:**

Hartsburg-Emden C.U.S.D. #21 will follow the IESA (Illinois Elementary School Association) and the IHSA (Illinois High School Association) guidance for return to play approved by the IDPH. Visiting schools will be required to follow the home schools guidance.

## **Water Fountains:**

Students are strongly encouraged to bring a clear water bottle to school each day. The automatic water bottle filling stations will be available for students to fill his/her water bottle throughout the day. We are asking students not to drink from the water fountain.

## **Visitors:**

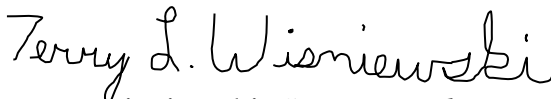
Parents/caregivers will be allowed into the office where 3ft. social distancing is maintained. All unvaccinated individuals are recommended/required to wear a mask based on the school current risk level.

## **Safety Reminders and Signage:**

Safety reminders and signs will be posted throughout the school building.

If you have questions, please send an email or call the school.

Sincerely,



Terry L. Wisniewski, *Superintendent*

**Hartsburg - Emden C.U.S.D. #21**

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## **Level 1: Low**

Hartsburg-Emden C.U.S.D. #21 and/or Logan County metrics indicate minimal cases of COVID-19.

- Masks recommended in classrooms, but not required
  - parents/caregivers are asked to notify us if you wish your child(ren) to wear masks in the classrooms where social distancing requirements are being met
- Masks strongly recommended (and we may ask/encourage students to mask-up before leaving the room) and going to high traffic areas (hallways) and in all cases where students may be closer than 3ft for more than 15 minutes
- Masks required on school buses (both vaccinated and unvaccinated, CDC requirement)
- Parents/Caregivers self-screen students prior to coming to school each day
- Quarantines for students/staff that were in close contact with a positive case and positive COVID-19 students

## **Level II: Moderate**

Hartsburg-Emden C.U.S.D. #21 and/or Logan County metrics indicate moderate cases of COVID-19.

- Masks strongly recommended in classrooms (and we may ask/encourage students to mask-up)
- Masks required outside classrooms where students are going to high traffic areas (hallways) and in all cases where students may be closer than 3ft for more than 15 minutes
  - Masks will be recommended for vaccinated students here as well (and we may ask/encourage students to mask-up in hallways and where 3ft social distancing isn't kept)
- Masks required on school buses (both vaccinated and unvaccinated, CDC requirement)
- Parents/Caregivers self-screen students prior to coming to school each day
- Quarantines for students/staff that were in close contact with a positive case and positive COVID-19 students

## **Level III: Substantial**

Hartsburg-Emden C.U.S.D. #21 and/or Logan County metrics indicate substantial cases of COVID-19.

- Masks required at all times in the school for unvaccinated students
  - Masks will be strongly recommended for vaccinated students in classrooms as well (and we may ask/encourage all students to mask-up)
- Masks required by both vaccinated and unvaccinated where students are going to high traffic areas (hallways) and in all cases where students may be closer than 3ft for more than 15 minutes
- Masks required on school buses (both vaccinated and unvaccinated, CDC requirement)
- Social Distancing protocols in the hallways
  - which may include 3' distancing and/or staggered release times
- Parents/Caregivers self-screen students prior to coming to school each day
- School will screen students and staff coming into the buildings
- Sick students will be isolated if any symptoms until they are picked up
- Quarantines for students/staff that were in close contact with a positive case and positive COVID-19 students

### **Note:**

This is our Phase V plan at the moment. If we go back into Phase IV, we will implement similar procedures we had in place last school year. If the State modifies their Phase V guidance, Hartsburg-Emden CUSD #21 will adjust accordingly. We appreciate your flexibility during these uncertain times as we attempt to get back to normalcy.