



Andrew Carnegie Elementary School

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Important Health & Safety Updates for the 2021-22 School Year

Dear CPS Parents and Guardians,

The best, safest place for our students to learn is in the classroom, and we are looking forward to welcoming your children back to full in-person learning five days a week beginning Monday, August 30. We know parents are eager to prepare their students to return, and we are writing to provide additional information about what school will look like for the 2021-22 school year.

Our decisions are based on the most current health guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) – who all agree that ensuring students have access to in-person learning five days a week is the highest priority. The district's health and safety protocols are designed to provide all students with the in-person education they deserve while keeping everyone in our school communities healthy and safe.

Masks/Cloth Face Coverings

Based on feedback from our public health experts at the local, state, and federal levels, as well as the [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#), we will require that masks/cloth face coverings continue to be worn indoors by everyone, regardless of vaccination status, except for while eating or drinking. This includes students, educators, support staff, and all visitors to school buildings. Face coverings may be removed for outdoor activities, such as recess and some sports activities. Continuing to require masks will help make sure those in our school communities who are not yet eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine, which encompasses the majority of our students, remain as safe as possible.

Social Distancing

As part of our safety plan, CPS will ensure that three feet of social distancing is maintained wherever possible. We know that there will be times when this is not possible due to the population of schools and classrooms, and will use additional health and safety strategies, including air purifiers, hand sanitizer, cleaning and disinfecting, contact tracing, and cloth face-coverings to maximize safety for students and staff.

Daily Meals

To help ensure social distancing during breakfast and lunch, some students will eat in their classrooms and others will eat in their school cafeteria. When children are eating in school cafeterias or other designated meal spaces, they will stay three feet apart where possible and will be allowed to remove their masks while eating and drinking. This strategy will allow for health measures to be in place even during unmasked times and will enable each school to schedule lunch periods based on what works best for their students and staff.

Our goal is to keep all students healthy and safe while they learn in-person five days a week with their teachers and peers so they can receive the education and supports they need and deserve. Based on widespread scientific consensus, we know that proven strategies like the ones announced today will keep students healthy, safe and supported. We will continue to follow public health guidance in partnership with the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and update our health protocols as needed. We look forward to welcoming students back on Monday, August 30 and will continue to provide you with updates as guidelines for the new school year are finalized.

Sincerely,

José M. Torres, PhD
Interim Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Public Schools