

Elida School Reopening FAQ

The information below is intended to be used as a tool for answering questions that families may have about returning to school. As the pandemic situation changes, so may district guidelines. This may include changes requested/required by law, governor, or health department. This page will be updated regularly as changes come about. Any recent changes will be color coded for easy updating, and displayed at the bottom of the page.

Return to School

Elida Local Schools will have students and staff, as of now, in session five (5) days per week beginning on August 11. It is with the encouragement of Allen County Public Health and the American Association of Pediatrics that we do not delay the start of the school year. Rather, they insist that we get students into the buildings as quickly and as much as we can. At this time, students will have this as an option or remote learning. Remote learning will be discussed below. There is not a hybrid option at this time for a number of reasons, however, the district may further look into this upon advice from the health department.

Health Department

Many of the guidelines put in place have been done in concert with advice, suggestions, and guidelines from Allen County Public Health. There are things within the plan or FAQ that we don't want to have to do (such as assigned cafeteria seating for all students), but in order to have students physically in the school buildings this year, must be done and in compliance with health department guidelines.

Face Mask/Face Shield Rules

As long as Allen County is level 1 (yellow) or 2 (orange) on the new Health Advisory Index, students in grades 3-12 will be strongly encouraged to wear appropriate masks as determined by school administrators when in school. This is especially important when moving about the building. Once students are in classrooms they will be spaced out more, but a mask is still recommended due to the pandemic. This is a decision/responsibility that will be left up to each parent/guardian. If/when Allen County is level 3 (red) on the Health Advisory Index, then *all students that are grades 3-12 (no matter the age) will be required to wear an appropriate mask and in an appropriate manner at all times in school.* We recognize there are many different types of masks/shields. Those students wishing to have a shield that is attached to a hat may do so, but should then refrain from wearing a mask so that staff may better identify the students. Shields need to hang below the chin per the health department. Teachers may, from time to time, be able to make time to have a bit of a "mask break" and will work to do so by going outdoors and spacing students out.

Staff are required to wear mask/shields at all times as required by the governor. There may be times when it is necessary for a teacher to remove a mask in order to be more effective in working with students during language arts, foreign language, speech therapy, etc. when working in close proximity to students.

Health Screen

Students and employees are expected to have a health screen or health assessment each day before attending school. Students and staff should not attend school/work if they are experiencing any of these symptoms:

- Loss of taste or smell
- Headache
- Congestion or runny nose
- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever and Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Fever or chills
- Cough

Transportation

All students needing to ride a bus to/from school will be required to wear a mask while riding the bus and be seated facing the front. Students' refusal to wear a mask in an appropriate manner or follow other bus rules may result in the loss of bus riding privileges. Building administrators will communicate these issues to parents as they arise. If your child(ren) will be riding the bus, please talk to them regularly about following these policies. We also recognize that the bus is an area where there really is no opportunity to socially distance. Students will have assigned seats and will have to sit with siblings. We do ask, for those students who have traditionally ridden the bus, that if they are not riding this year due to the pandemic that parents/guardians please notify the district at 419-331-4135 so that we can adjust bus routes and times to be reflective of this. This will also allow us to be able to space students out a bit more on the bus. [This is intended to be viewed as a long-term decision. However, should changes need to be made they should be communicated with the transportation department for approval. Those changes may not take effect immediately.](#)

Food Service

The school district will still provide breakfast/lunches to students. Cafeteria tables will be spaced out as much as possible. Students may also be required to eat in classrooms from time to time to help alleviate crowding in these areas. Students will have assigned seats/tables when they eat in the cafeteria. This will help with contact tracing should that be necessary and help to reduce exposure. Students will not be able to serve themselves. Condiments will come packaged rather than students getting their own. Again, we ask that you speak to your children to help instill the importance of washing hands with soap and water before and after lunch, and use sanitizer during this time as well. Students should also be reminded that they are not to share food with others at any time.

Classrooms

Classrooms will be set up for as much social distancing to take place as possible, but will be less than six (6) feet. Each classroom will vary and be dependent upon the number of students in each room. Barriers have been ordered for those classrooms where students share tables. Every classroom will have assigned seating for students. Classroom doors will remain open to reduce the number of touches to door handles. Teachers will not have students pass around materials that are handled by the entire class, rather teachers will hand deliver materials to students individually. Staff and students may be asked to spray or wipe down desks/chairs for those that rotate to different classrooms. All areas of the school buildings will be cleaned and sanitized regularly to decrease the likelihood of infections, but being in a public place carries a certain level of risk that cannot be

eliminated. Regarding computer usage, students will be instructed to use hand sanitizer before and immediately after use.

Book Bags

Due to the pandemic and to add another layer of health protections for students, middle school and high school students will be permitted to carry clear book bags with them throughout the day. This will help to alleviate crowding in hallways and trips to lockers for students. All items must be visible in the bag and should only be school supplies. All other materials must be kept in lockers during the day.

Recess/Physical Education

This is a necessary part of the school day for students and it will not be eliminated this year. It is important that students have some time to play and exercise while they are at school. Recess may be limited/minimized, again to reduce exposure to other students. Students may also be limited to the areas they are able to play in. Classes may look for other opportunities for breaks by taking short walks or doing other activities. Again, it is important for students to wash and sanitize hands before and after playing on any outdoor equipment.

Class Parties

Classrooms may still have celebrations for children, however, food will not be permitted to be brought in from the outside. This helps to reduce exposure and alleviates concerns about allergies.

Open House

Open House for each of the buildings will not take place as usual. The buildings may work on creating a virtual tour for students and set up alternative activities for students that will be new to each of the buildings. This may include virtual or online meetings, [and/or staggered times to enter the buildings](#).

Visitors/Volunteers

Parents/Guardians are asked to refrain from visiting the buildings unless it is absolutely necessary or an emergency. Those who do come to the building should complete a health screen prior to arrival, use hand sanitizer as they enter the building, and wear a mask if the county is level 3 (red). Secretaries may try to obtain as much information as possible and/or handle your visit through the security cameras if possible. Those people who are considered part of the educational process may still be permitted to visit and will have to follow all the same protocols as all other staff members. Student teachers, college recruiters, military recruiters, career coaches, tutors, regular volunteers, etc., will be considered part of the Elida staff.

Building Hours

The elementary building opens at 8:40 for students to be dropped off. Students will report to their homeroom where they can get breakfast. Classes start at 9 am.

The middle school doors open at 7:00 am. Students should enter through the main/front door only and report to the commons.

The high school opens its doors at 7:00 am as well. Students are released to class at 7:25. Those students who drive themselves should not enter the building before 7:25 am.

Remote Learning

Those students who may not feel comfortable returning to school, or may have health conditions that limit their return to school may enroll in Remote Learning. This option will be done using Schoology and Elida teaching staff. A registration form may be found [here](#) and should be completed by July 29. We realize this is a somewhat short time-frame, but we also know that many people have made up their mind already. Registration by this deadline will also give us an idea of what staffing we need to cover each grade level and/or subject. Parents who select this option for their child(ren) need to know that this is not a hybrid option – students are either completely online or entirely physically at school.

By registering for this, parents are affirming that their child(ren) have the technology necessary to be successful in this endeavor (including computer and internet access). Remote learning that takes place ~~may~~ will have similar demands to that of a regular classroom – which includes assignments, quizzes, tests, grading scale, etc. Yes, the intent will be for this to be more intensive and rigorous than last spring and will reflect what is being taught in the classroom. Staff participating in this will regularly [provide instruction and have](#) scheduled “office hours” for students to ask questions and get assistance. By enrolling in the online option, students are committing to participate regularly. Failure to actively participate may result in revocation of their online option. Parents and students should also recognize that this option may limit their ability to take elective courses and limit participation in co-curricular activities. Not all electives will be an option for students in remote learning. Students and families should also know that changes to participation in online learning will only take place at the end of each quarter. Those students changing mid-semester may not be able to get into all of their desired classes. Any deviation from this will be approved by building principals on a case by case basis, but should not be an expectation.

[Courses offered at the high school level for remote learning will include the following:](#)

English 9	Algebra	Physical Science – Chemistry
English 10	Geometry	Physical Science – Physics
Composition	Algebra II	Biology
Technical Writing	Math Problem Solving	Earth Science
Lit. Appreciation	Math & Money	Astronomy & Meteorology
World Studies 9	Contemporary Issues	Computer Applications I & II
US Social Studies 10	Geography	Spanish (1-3)
Political & Economic Decisions	Health	Latin (1-3)

State Assessments

Currently, it is expected that state assessments may take place. All students, both on-site and remote, will be required to participate in the appropriate assessments.

Field Trips

Field Trips will not take place this year. There are simply too many unknowns and uncontrollable parts to a field trip under these environmental conditions. Classes may participate in virtual field trips as many of these still have great educational value.

Schedule Pickup

More information will be forthcoming from each of the buildings next week.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten screening will take place on August 11 and 12 [by appointment](#). Parents will be notified regarding signing up for times. During the screening, parents will be given information about the first day(s) of school for these students along with having the opportunity to meet their teachers. [The first day of school for boys will be Thursday, August 13, and the first day for girls will be Friday, August 14.](#) **Cleaning of School**

Each building will be disinfected regularly and hand sanitizer is available throughout the building. Surfaces will be disinfected on a regular basis as well. Transfer of students from room to room will be minimized as much as possible but is not guaranteed in all cases. While there is a lot of sanitizer located throughout each building, parents are strongly encouraged to talk to your child(ren) about good hygiene and washing their hands with soap and water regularly.

Elementary Building Heat

One of the suggestions coming from the health department is to begin school as soon as we are able to. It is our hope to get as many instructional days in being physically present with students in the event we are forced to go 100 percent online. We recognize heat is an added issue in the elementary and are actively investigating an early release time for just the elementary school on those days in which the temperature is forecasted to be above 90 degrees. This will be updated in the near future. Unfortunately installing window A/C units was looked into a few years back and it was found that the building does not have the electrical capacity to make that a possibility.

Water

Students will be permitted and encouraged to bring clean and clear water bottles to school. Water fountains will not be accessible to students, however, each building will have at least one water bottle refill station. Students are reminded to make sure their name is on their bottle.

COVID-19 Protocols

Whenever there is a positive case of COVID-19 in Allen County, the health department is notified. The health department will contact the school to set in motion their protocols. If a parent is notified by their health care provider that their child tested positive, they should call Allen County Public Health to report the positive case at 419-228-4457. The health department should already have the information but it will be helpful to check. Once Elida is notified that a child or staff member has a positive test by Allen County Public Health, Elida will assist in contact tracing the staff or student. Elida will be required to compile a list of anyone who was exposed to the person at school in the past 48 hours. Exposure is defined as being around the affected person for 15 minutes or more and being within 6 feet or less of the person. The list will be given to the health department and they will contact each person or parent of the child on the list. The Allen County Public Health will make the decision to quarantine the exposed person. Elida will provide learning opportunities through Schoology for students that are placed in a mandatory quarantine by the health department, much like when they are absent from school. **Elida will not release the names of any staff or student testing positive or any staff or student being quarantined in order to protect their privacy rights.**

Any diagnosis or dissemination of information related to COVID-19 will come from the health department. The school district cannot and will not release any information without it first coming from the health department. While we want to be as transparent as possible, we must also be cognizant of student confidentiality. Information that is permissible to be shared will be upon approval of the release of that information from the health department. The communications from the health department will help to explain and define what is considered a close contact that requires quarantine. Any person who is within six (6) feet for 15 minutes or more is considered a close contact to someone confirmed to have COVID-19 that will require quarantine. Just because someone is in the same classroom or passes a student in a hallway does not make them a close contact. Again, this information and determination will be made the health department, not the school district.

Any student or employee who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 may not return to school/work until they have been released by Allen County Public Health. The length of isolation will be based on CDC guidelines and shared by the health department. As of June 2020, any student/employee must be fever free (under 100 degrees Fahrenheit) without the use of medication for 24 hours (one full day), AND shown improvement of all other symptoms for 24 hours, AND at least 10 days have passed since symptoms started. If a student/employee has tested positive for COVID-19 but does not have any other symptoms, they will be required to stay home in isolation until 10 days have passed since their positive test. The health department will also require a 14-day quarantine for anyone determined to have “close contact” to someone who has COVID-19. Again, “close contact” is to be determined by Allen County Public Health.

If a staff member or student has someone else living in their household test positive for COVID-19, the staff member or student will be quarantined by the Allen County Public Health but it does not affect the school since it is considered a secondary exposure. Therefore, no contact tracing will be required to be completed.

It will be best for the parent/guardian to take their child(ren) to school for the first day following a quarantine in the event any information needs to be shared with staff, and to demonstrate release by Allen County Public Health.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

No decision has been made on this year, and will be updated as we get closer to this taking place. It is anticipated that conferences will need to be held virtually or over the phone this year to reduce exposure.

Meetings

Most meetings will be conducted virtually this year. If this does not work for parents/guardians, staff will work with you on an individual basis to make the necessary accommodations for in-person meetings to take place.

Reminder

What we have set up has been done in working with the health department. We have asked the question...Should we delay the start of the school year? Delaying the start of the school year is being discouraged at this time. However, that could be subject to change. All planning, and execution of plans is subject to change a moment's notice.

Updates

Changes to this document will be done as needed. Any changes will be color coded. The date will be listed at the bottom of the document with a brief description.

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Edits

7/24/20 – Added high school remote courses, clarified changes to transportation, added information to kindergarten, added high school remote learning classes and sections on book bags and state assessments, etc.