



# Illinois State Board of Education

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www.isbe.net

**Darren Reisberg**  
*Chair of the Board*

**Dr. Carmen I. Ayala**  
*State Superintendent of Education*

August 20, 2020

Good afternoon,

We have received feedback from the field asking to be notified of any updates to resources related to the return to school. Therefore, we are sharing the below updates that have occurred this week. I also want to take this opportunity to reiterate that while there are six “non-negotiables” when it comes to the return to in-person instruction -- appropriate PPE, increased cleaning/disinfecting, social distancing, no more than 50 individuals gathering in one space, symptom screenings/temperature checks, and the option for remote learning -- the remainder of the resources and materials provided are intended to be supplemental recommendations, not mandates or requirements. Districts should continue to work closely with their local health departments on all health decisions to ensure the safety of their students and staff.

The IDPH Exclusion Decision Tree was updated today. View the document here:  
<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IDPH-COVID19-Exclusion-Decison-Tree.pdf>

The updates include:

- A footnote clarifying that based on available data and science, schools, in consultation with their local health department, must make local decisions informed by local context.
- Clarification that for those symptomatic students/staff sent home due to COVID-like symptoms, and without a healthcare provider’s note or negative test, quarantine would be limited to household members. A footnote was added to indicate that if masking and/or social distancing were not employed, additional close contacts may also be quarantined, e.g., unmasked bus rider sitting right next to the ill person who had fever and loss of taste and smell as his/her symptoms. Additionally, the return to school documentation for these individuals was changed to a note from parent/guardian documenting that the ill student and/or household contacts are afebrile without fever-reducing medication and symptoms have improved.

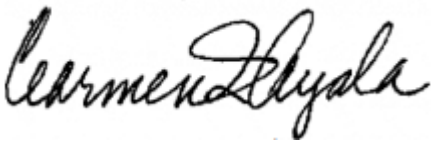
There have also been updates this week to the IDPH Frequently Asked Questions document, including guidance around the use of N95 masks. View the document here:  
<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/IDPH-School-FAQs.pdf>. Updates are indicated by the date next to each question in the document. Most recent updates are in red.

Next, the PPE Procurement document was updated to include nonpublic schools. It also clarifies that the process outlined is not for orders to sustain normal operations, but for emergency supplies that schools cannot get through normal channels and are necessary to start the school year. View the document here: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/PPE-Info.pdf>.

Lastly, please fill out the Fall 2020 Learning Plans Survey if you have not done so already or if your return-to-school plans have changed since your initial submission. Also, please update your submission if your plans change in the future. The survey is available here for new submissions and/or edits: <https://www.isbe.net/learningsurvey>.

Please continue to send questions to the [ISBE COVID-19 team](#). Thank you for all of your valuable feedback and please don't hesitate to reach out for assistance as we continue to navigate this situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carmen I. Ayala". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "C".

Dr. Carmen I. Ayala  
State Superintendent of Education  
Illinois State Board of Education