

Herscher CUSD #2 Reopening Plan

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Herscher Community Unit School District #2

INTRODUCTION

In March 2020, Herscher CUSD #2 closed its school buildings for in-person learning due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and related public health orders. For the remainder of the spring semester, students engaged in remote learning throughout the district. While our preferred model of instructional delivery is a traditional educational environment, we anticipate continued public health restrictions when school resumes in the fall. The purpose of this Reopening Plan Model, is to maximize in-person learning opportunities in the event that school cannot resume due to COVID-19. Our intent is to provide in-person learning to the greatest extent possible, while also taking necessary steps to keep our students, staff, and community safe and adhering to any applicable public health orders. We also understand that some students may need a remote learning environment due to health necessities, or that a COVID-19 surge may require us to revert to remote learning for temporary periods.

This back-to-school model is based on available public health information at the time of its creation. The plan will be adjusted based on newly available data and guidance from public health officials. We greatly appreciate your feedback to support our collaborative efforts to ensure the education and health of the entire Herscher community.

The Reopening Plan Model is based on the following public health assumptions (*subject to change*):

- Public Health:
 - All persons will be required to maintain 6 feet social distancing as best as possible
 - Staff and student face coverings are required
 - Daily symptom screening expectations to be performed by parents or school staff, if necessary
 - Hand-washing and hygiene protocols
 - Group gathering limitations
 - Short-term school closures will be required by suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases
 - Additional cleaning protocols will be required
- Educating Students:
 - **In-Person learning** will be available for all students, in accordance with CDC, IDPH, and ISBE guidance and requirements
 - **Remote Learning** for ALL students in cases of school closure
 - **Remote Learning** for ONLY those students who complete the attached form and submit a doctor's note verifying they are immune-deficient.

The Reopening Plan Model consists of eight sections:

1. Public Health
2. Academics
3. Student Services
4. Operations
5. Technology
6. Communications
7. Special Education
8. Frequently Asked Questions

1. Public Health

OVERVIEW

Herscher CUSD #2 will continue to collaborate with the Kankakee County Health Department (KCHD) to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment for our students and staff. Regardless of the in-person learning model, any person entering Herscher CUSD #2 property will be required to follow all public health regulations. Below is an explanation of the health regulations we anticipate based upon current information:

KEY POINTS

1.1 Group Gatherings and Social Distancing Requirements

Currently, there are state and local public health orders limiting the size of group gatherings (no more than 50) and 6 feet social distancing expectations to the greatest extent possible, and the use of face coverings. We believe similar orders will exist when the fall semester begins.

Consequently, Herscher CUSD #2 will limit the use of large group gathering areas. A “space” is considered any room or wherever instruction takes place including outside space. Includes large areas - gymnasiums, cafeterias, hallways.

Social Distancing Requirements:

- Maintain 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
- Avoid large gatherings of greater than 50 people in large groups such as assemblies, cafeterias, field trips, staff meetings.
- Maintain social distancing on buses to the greatest extent possible. (Attempt to keep buses with 50 or less students).
- Maintain social distancing outside - includes recess. Use of playground equipment and sharing of other equipment limitations will be considered.

1.2 Number of Students and Staff Requirements

- Group gathering limitations and social distancing forces Herscher CUSD #2 to afford enough space per person in our buildings.
- To lower building capacity and preserve space for students and staff, visitors will be limited.
- To the extent possible, Herscher CUSD #2 intends to keep the same student cohorts together. For example, when possible, we may have teachers move rooms instead of students.

1.3 Building Traffic Guidelines and Symptom Screening

1.3a Prior to students departing from home parents will conduct a symptom screening process and self-certify that their child(ren) are symptom-free of COVID-19. Click here for one time form: <https://forms.gle/9eXhZoMUFZX4Tdue8>

- Visitors entering a Herscher CUSD #2 building will be temperature screened along with a series of symptom screening questions developed in partnership with the KCHD/IDPH/CDC.
- Staff may be screened for international or out of state travel. They may need to be required to quarantine for 14 days depending on guidance from KCHD/IDPH/CDC.

1.3b Each Herscher CUSD #2 building will attempt to create a one-way traffic flow with separate entry and exit doors.

- Visual cues such as floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate to students and staff the flow and direction of one-way traffic. Additional cues may be added to indicate 6 feet intervals when standing in a line.
- Furniture will be arranged to support social distancing practices.
- Schools will control the flow of traffic into and out of the building to ensure that maximum capacity plans are adjusted and managed at each entry and exit point.

1.4 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Hygiene Measures

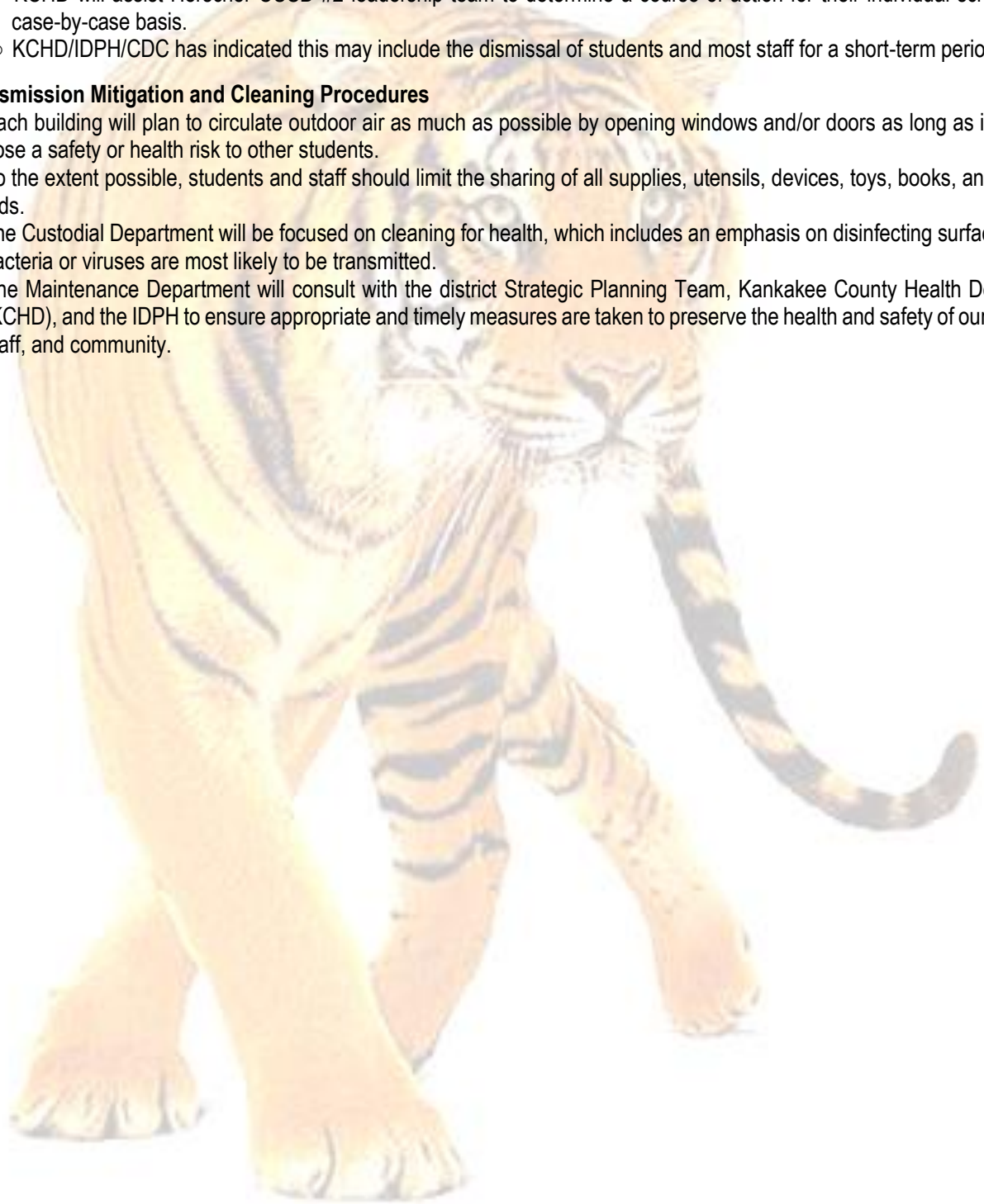
- As per ISBE guidance, the use of face coverings (*nose and mouth*) will be required for students and staff
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including face coverings (*back-ups to personal face coverings*), hand sanitizer, thermometers, and gloves will be provided to schools on a continual basis throughout the school year, beginning in August.
- Additional signage on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures including face coverings will be on display in buildings.
- Consistent scheduled times and procedures will be established throughout the day for hand hygiene, promoting hand washing.
- All staff and students will be required to stay home when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

1.5 Suspected/Confirmed COVID-19 Cases - School Decision Tree

- Symptomatic staff and students will need to go to an established isolated room (not the nurse's office, as this must be kept available) until they can safely leave the building.
- Coordination with Kankakee County Health Department (KCHD) regarding suspected and confirmed cases.
 - KCHD will assist Herscher CUSD #2 leadership team to determine a course of action for their individual schools on a case-by-case basis.
 - KCHD/IDPH/CDC has indicated this may include the dismissal of students and most staff for a short-term period.

1.6 Transmission Mitigation and Cleaning Procedures

- Each building will plan to circulate outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and/or doors as long as it does not pose a safety or health risk to other students.
- To the extent possible, students and staff should limit the sharing of all supplies, utensils, devices, toys, books, and learning aids.
- The Custodial Department will be focused on cleaning for health, which includes an emphasis on disinfecting surfaces where bacteria or viruses are most likely to be transmitted.
- The Maintenance Department will consult with the district Strategic Planning Team, Kankakee County Health Department (KCHD), and the IDPH to ensure appropriate and timely measures are taken to preserve the health and safety of our students, staff, and community.



2. Academics

OVERVIEW

Herscher CUSD #2 has embraced an educational model focused on deeper learning. We believe this model best facilitates students' mastery of the Illinois Learning Standards. No matter what limitations may be imposed on our instruction by public health guidelines, this model will remain in place for teaching and learning during the 2020-21 school year. Staff will be expected to support in-person learning to the greatest extent possible and support remote learning when necessary.

By offering in-person and remote learning for our students, Herscher CUSD #2 continues to focus on strong relationships and instruction for our students—our primary roles in the community.

Remote learning can occur asynchronously and synchronously. “Asynchronous” learning is when instruction and learning do not happen at the same time for all learners. The teacher provides learning resources and tasks in Google Classroom, Class Dojo, and/or other platforms. Students access learning at a time that works for them and their family. “Synchronous” learning is an approach where teachers and students are engaged in online learning at the same time. The teacher provides learning resources and tasks through video-conferencing enabled through Google Classroom, Zoom, and/or other platforms during a specific time.

When students come to school, they will receive instruction that is most effectively delivered in an in-person environment while still accessing online resources through Google Classroom, Zoom, and/or another platform. In-person time with students will include focused instruction that is directly connected to student needs and the expertise of professional educators. Some examples include: small group instruction (*literacy, math, language development*), hands on application of learning (*Career Technical Education experiences*), and teacher-led assessments.

Key Point 1 - The district will partner with our students and families to support students' (in-person and remote) learning when special circumstances exist to the greatest extent allowable.

- Herscher CUSD #2 will provide a roadmap for the district curriculum with learning topics so students and families can better understand academic expectations and ways to support student success.
- On-going communication will be provided to support families in the learning process including additional instructional resources to help make remote learning successful for students at home.
- Technology tips and troubleshooting guides will be available to help students and parents navigate online instructional tools, such as Google Classroom, Zoom, Class Dojo, and/or other platforms.
- We will provide models of consistent learning experiences across classrooms and schools, such as the time spent in teacher instruction and independent student work time.

Key Point 2 - We will support educators' fall planning and instructional needs with professional learning, resources and supports to:

- Develop plans to help students start the school year with strong relationships, routines, and expectations necessary for success in all learning environments and sustain those relationships and learning throughout the school year.
- Create flexible learning expectations and timelines to utilize multiple ways for students to share their learning through assignments, tasks, and projects.
- Gain a deeper understanding of the grade level curriculum and resources with a focus on prioritized Illinois Learning Standards to ensure critical learning happens.
- Review and provide meaningful feedback on student work to adjust instruction and set learning goals with students.
- Meet individual student needs through differentiated learning focused on prioritized Illinois Learning Standards.
- Adapt an instructional approach to balanced assessment practices that facilitate all learning models and provide data to inform next steps in learning.
- Support delivery of academic content, assessment, and student reflection through the appropriate and flexible use of a variety of instructional digital tools, such as online platforms, to support student learning.
- Identify anticipated student learning gaps and develop strategies to close them through ongoing staff training and resources.
- Prioritize foundational literacy and math skills and the best developmental instructional practices in a learning environment for elementary grades pre-kindergarten through 5th grade.
- Support student learning interests and needs to ensure career and college readiness for middle and high school levels aligned to Illinois graduation requirements.
- More detailed information specific to elementary, middle, and high school hybrid planning forthcoming.

Key Point 3 - We will support our educators to meet student needs in a remote and *in-person* learning environment. Professional learning opportunities will provide time and resources for educators to build relationships, plan, and teach in a remote or in-person environment. In this setting, educators will be offered:

- Ongoing professional learning on tools to meet the needs of students in a remote environment.
- Support for team meetings where teachers collaborate to make sure students are meeting academic standards and adjusting plans to meet student needs.
- Specific examples of high-quality instruction to engage students in remote learning.
- Additional support for our newest educators to ensure they meet the needs of students.
- Individualized support for educators as needed.



3. Student Services

OVERVIEW

Herscher CUSD #2 has provided ongoing resources to families and community members throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. In either a remote or in-person environment, we will continue to provide schools with the protocols and training necessary to support the mental health needs of students.

KEY POINTS

3.1 504 Support and Compliance

- We understand that any change to the learning environment has the potential to be a barrier for our learners.
- All 504 plans support and meeting protocols have been developed for both onsite and remote options. Decisions around meeting participation and communication will be made on an individual basis. 504 teams are encouraged to discuss accommodation needs for students in all learning environments—in-person and remote learning.

3.2 Social Emotional Learning

Social Workers and/or Counselors have developed a comprehensive plan for supporting in-person and remote learning that includes: providing training to staff (*trauma informed classroom management - in-person and remote in the classroom and at home, etc.*), and supporting family-school partnerships that emphasize relationship building and engagement to enhance building climate and culture.

3.3 Counseling Services

Counselors will work with their teams and administrator to determine when their services will be provided in-person or remotely. Caseloads will be considered when making these decisions.

3.4 Culture and Climate

- Social Workers/Counselors will work to support staff best practice around trauma informed practices. A focus will be placed on supporting a positive climate and culture that acknowledges universal trauma care strategies for students. Social Workers/Counselors will provide ongoing consultation to staff.
- Recognizing the need to assess the status of students' social-emotional health as they return to school, social workers and counselors are working on protocols to administer a strengths-based screener at all schools that can be used to inform levels of support for students.

4. Operations

OVERVIEW

Herscher CUSD #2 operational services understand the need to be flexible and respond to the educational model that maximizes in-person instruction and complies with local health orders. Transportation, food service, and operational functions will support students and staff. Operations and support groups include the following:

1. Athletics / Activities
2. Business Support Services
3. Maintenance / Custodial
4. Food Service
5. School and district site safety
6. Student transportation

KEY POINTS

The implementation of a service model may be adjusted or modified dependent upon the needs of students for access to district facilities and services. The guidelines followed are designed to maintain safe environments and health practices for Herscher CUSD #2 staff, students, and community members.

4.1 Athletics/Activities:

Herscher CUSD #2 will continue to promote and support student participation in athletic and activity programs to the extent permitted in the fall. Herscher CUSD #2 has, in accordance with IHSA guidelines and requirements, conducted athletic and extracurricular programs afforded to the students over the summer and will facilitate whatever is necessary to continue.

Adherence to the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) "Return-to-Play" and Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) parameters for sports and activities programs. **(IESA has not yet provided guidance for the fall 2020).**

4.2 Maintenance/Custodial:

The Maintenance/Custodial Departments will provide necessary student accommodations, both internal and external, to support educational learning. To the extent necessary, district sites will be available to create an atmosphere that is safe as possible for student experiences.

Whether in-person or remote learning environment, these facility divisions will provide the following:

- The district maintenance plan will continue as scheduled.
- Ongoing site repair, remodel, renovation, and reconstruction projects will continue.
- Facility cleaning and disinfecting following use will be completed and monitored.
- Staff allocations will be right-sized to meet the needs of the educational model.
- Work schedules modified depending on building and site use.
- Evaluate HVAC and ventilation systems to maximize circulation of outdoor air.

4.3 Food Service:

Herscher CUSD #2 will continue to provide meal service to students to the extent possible given on-site and remote learning environments. Therefore, the food service program may be a combination of in-school serving or "Grab & Go" programs similar to those implemented in spring of 2020.

- Instructional delivery model (in-person or remote) dictates the serving model(s) used
- Health and safety standard protocols by staff and serving support
- Continued compliance with Federal requirements for meals served
- Cleaning and disinfecting of facilities aligned with CDC cleaning/disinfecting School Guidance

4.4 School Safety:

Building administration, in collaboration with the Herscher Police Department, will continue to provide ongoing daily supervision of all sites to ensure safe environments for students, staff, and our community. This includes:

- Herscher Police Department 24/7 dispatch and patrol teams
- Kankakee County Sheriff's Department and Emergency Management
- Threat assessment protocols and procedures

4.5 Transportation:

Herscher CUSD #2 supports students by providing safe and timely transport services for eligible riders attending on-site programs. The district continues to serve special education and out-of-district student needs.

- Capacities of the transport service will follow ISBE and public health guidelines:
 - Number of students permitted to ride at any time
 - Symptom screening protocol enforced for all bus riders *(Done via parent certification of symptom-free student prior to riding the bus via the following link: <https://forms.gle/9eXhZoMUFZX4Tdue8>) (This is a ONE time form to be done for each student in your family.)
 - Cleaning and disinfecting protocols following student pick up and drop offs



5. Technology

OVERVIEW

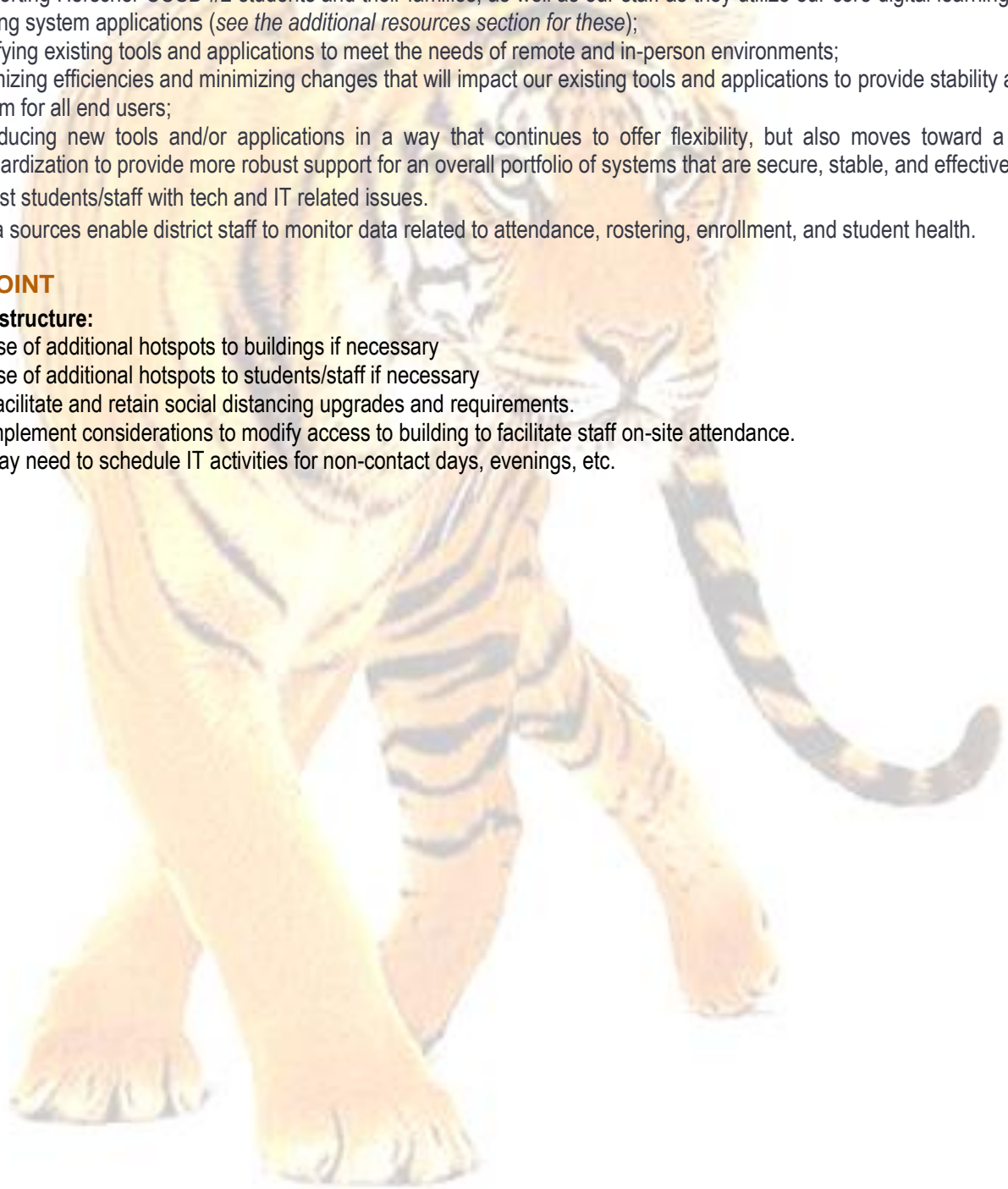
During the Fall of 2020, the IT Department will prioritize:

- Ensuring that all students and staff have access to a working device (Chromebook, iPad, laptop, desktop computer, or other);
- Collaborating with various departments, community partners, businesses, and others, as needed, in problem-solving efforts to ensure all students and staff have reliable internet access to complete their work remotely;
- Supporting Herscher CUSD #2 students and their families, as well as our staff as they utilize our core digital learning tools and existing system applications (*see the additional resources section for these*);
- Modifying existing tools and applications to meet the needs of remote and in-person environments;
- Optimizing efficiencies and minimizing changes that will impact our existing tools and applications to provide stability across our system for all end users;
- Introducing new tools and/or applications in a way that continues to offer flexibility, but also moves toward a model of standardization to provide more robust support for an overall portfolio of systems that are secure, stable, and effective.
- Assist students/staff with tech and IT related issues.
- Data sources enable district staff to monitor data related to attendance, rostering, enrollment, and student health.

KEY POINT

5.1 Infrastructure:

- Use of additional hotspots to buildings if necessary
- Use of additional hotspots to students/staff if necessary
- Facilitate and retain social distancing upgrades and requirements.
- Implement considerations to modify access to building to facilitate staff on-site attendance.
- May need to schedule IT activities for non-contact days, evenings, etc.



6. Communications

Herscher CUSD #2 aims to inform, engage, and inspire all stakeholders and the community, no matter the environment. Whether functioning in a traditional school model, implementing remote learning or a in-person learning plan, the district will continue to keep Herscher CUSD #2 employees, its families and students, and the extended Herscher CUSD #2's school community informed about the work of the district. Regardless of learning model, we relay critical and necessary information for all audiences, support crisis situations, lead community relations and family engagement, respond to the media, and direct many other "business as usual" communications strategies.

Considering the changing dynamics of the 2020-21 school year and the district's intention to potentially deliver alternative learning modes simultaneously, we anticipate an increased complexity in our communication efforts. These complexities will also be triggered by potential fluctuations in status of schools (*open or closed in response to virus outbreaks*), changing health advisories, operational or central system modifications, increased needs to generate additional resources, national or local government actions, and multi-layered crisis situations. To succeed we must remain agile, flexible, creative, and responsive. The District plans to communicate via School Messenger which will send a voice message, e-mail and text to all parents. In addition to this, the District will also post all important information on the District website and Facebook page.



7. Special Education

OVERVIEW

The Special Education Department is committed to providing free and appropriate educational opportunities for students with disabilities, to the greatest extent possible in alignment with public health guidelines. Collaboration with families has always been an integral part of the special education process and continues to be essential during this time. To address the unique needs of students with disabilities, special education providers will continue the work with families to collaboratively identify the most essential services for each student that can be provided both directly and indirectly in remote and in-person learning environments. Service plans will be adjusted as needed for the circumstances of the learning environment. We recognize that each student will have an individual plan based on the learning model selected by the district. When this happens, we will be working diligently to set detailed plans for the delivery of special education services.

KEY POINTS

7.1 Community Involvement and Support Herscher CUSD #2 schools believe student success is enhanced when schools, families, and the community work together to support learning. For this reason, the Special Education team will be offering a variety of ways to seek community input and collaboration such as community forum events and advisory committees.

7.2 Educator Support and Paraeducator/Paraprofessional Support In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, educators and paraprofessionals have been tasked to redefine how learning happens, and they have risen to the challenge with grace and innovation. To continue this momentum, the Special Education Department will carry on with creating avenues for learning and sharing new approaches. This will include professional learning sessions, online resources, working with current vendors for supplemental curriculum resources, and virtual collaboration platforms that support educators and paraprofessionals in setting the stage for this future learning.

7.3 Special Education Evaluation Herscher CUSD #2 will continue to identify, locate, and evaluate students suspected of having a disability and needing special education and related services. At the same time, the district will be mindful that students have been displaced from their typical learning environment when initiating the referral process. Some evaluation procedures can be completed in remote learning situations. Some evaluations require in-person contact with students or observations of students in school settings. Herscher CUSD #2 will conduct evaluations remotely and in-person while adhering to public health guidelines for the safety of students and staff.

7.4 Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meetings Herscher CUSD #2 is committed to providing families an opportunity to have meaningful participation in the special education process. Whether in-person or an alternative format, such as videoconferencing or by phone, Special Education teams will partner with families to determine the most practical format to conduct IEP meetings and arrange for an interpreter if necessary.

7.5 Delivery of Special Education and Related Services General education, special education, related services providers and families will discuss students' individual needs and agree to a prioritized set of services that provide access to curriculum and enable progress toward IEP goals. Services for students with specific health or support needs will be addressed in collaboration with families on an individual basis.

7.6 Progress Monitoring and Reporting Special Education teams will have in place consistent data collection and service log procedures for use in remote learning environments. Collecting data and tracking the provision of services will assist educators and families in determining the effectiveness of instruction provided, student performance on IEP goals / objectives, and assist IEP teams in making any necessary adjustments to instruction. Periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals will continue to be provided.

7.7 Accommodations and Modifications Accommodations / Modifications can be provided regardless of the educational setting. General and special education teachers will continue to collaborate in determining the appropriateness and success of a student's unique accommodations and modifications documented. The IEP team, (*general education teachers, special education teachers, related services providers, and families*), will work collaboratively to identify alternative solutions if the team believes an accommodation or modification is not appropriate or successful in a particular setting.

7.8 Confidentiality and Student Privacy Special Education and Related Service Providers use digital platforms approved by the district for secure access. Families or other household members may observe or otherwise participate in distance learning opportunities. As with an in-person observation in a classroom, educators may set ground rules regarding non-students' presence during virtual instruction.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What if I do not want my student to return to In-Person Learning? Will there be an option for them to stay home and do Remote Instruction?

At this point, the Herscher CUSD No. 2 is offering Remote Learning ONLY for students who are determined to be medically fragile or immune-deficient. The District may request a Doctor's note to support this designation. All other students will have the opportunity to return to in-person (*traditional*) school on Thursday, August 20. [Click here](#) for form which needs to be on file along with a doctor's not verifying student is immuno-deficient.

2. What about athletics and Band/Music? Is my student able to participate in these activities?

Athletic participation will be determined by the IHSA/IESA. The District will adhere to all guidance from these organizations. Music/Band participation will be allowed to the extent possible per the guidance from the Kankakee Health Department, Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois State Board of Education.

3. Does my student have to wear a mask or gloves?

Currently, the ISBE has mandated that all students and staff must wear a mask at school. Gloves have NOT been mandated. Students who have a bona fide medical reason (*with Doctor's verification*) may be excused from wearing a mask.

4. How will the District handle Driver's Education and Physical Education?

See Guidelines from the ISBE <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Part-3-Transition-Planning-Phase-4.pdf>

5. How will the District handle recess for our PK-4 students?

The District will have recess time for all students in PK-4 outside as much as possible. We will try to adhere to social distancing as best as possible and will clean/spray each area with disinfectant after each group uses the area.

6. How will the District handle a positive COVID-19 test of an employee, student or member of an employee/ student's household?

The District will work directly with the Kankakee County Health Department to determine the necessary steps for each respective case. Some options may include but are not limited to the following: the District may exclude one or more students/employees from the building for up to (14 days), the District may close for a period of 2-3 days for extensive cleaning, the District may close for a period of (14) days for a larger outbreak. During these closures, we would anticipate going to Remote Instruction for students.

7. What will the typical day look like for my student?

We are hoping to provide as normal a day as possible for our students. However, your student will notice a great deal of emphasis on social distancing and washing of hands and other hygiene-related instruction. We will be requiring all students to disinfect/wash their hands prior to entry onto the bus, prior to entry into school, prior to entry into the lunch room and prior to departure from school. Your student will also need some time to get used to the wearing of a mask as this will be new to all of us.

8. When is school going to start for students/staff?

The Board of Education has approved a few changes to our previously approved 2020-2021 school calendar. Specifically, faculty/staff will start on Monday, August 17 with a Teachers' Institute Day. August 18 and 19 will be Remote Instruction Planning Days for faculty/staff. The first day of student attendance will be Thursday, August 20 with an early dismissal scheduled at 2 pm. We will also have a 2 pm early dismissal on Friday, August 21. In addition to this, we have added a Teachers' Institute Day for September 4 and the State has mandated that there will be no school for November 3, 2020 (Election Day).

[Click here for updated 20-21 calendar](#)