



IDOE Releases Guidelines to Get Students Back in Class This Fall

By Educator Barnes – June 5, 2020

IDOE released [IN-CLASS \(Indiana’s Considerations for Learning and Safe Schools\): COVID-19 Health and Safety Re-entry Guidance](#), a 38-page document detailing recommendations on how schools should reopen this fall. With school start dates in Indiana typically falling during the last week of July and the first week of August, it is critical for school districts to have this guidance now.

School district leaders will have to determine how the guidance is implemented and if it can be implemented. As knowledge continues to change, this guidance could also evolve.

Here are some highlights:

- Consider revising school calendars to year-round learning or add in additional breaks as long as 180 days of mandatory instruction are met
- Implement instruction in-person, at home, or through a hybrid model
- Create a continuous learning plan in case instruction is interrupted as it was this school year
- Screen students and staff for COVID-19 symptoms
- Have students and staff wear face masks
- Keep water fountains off limits
- Have students and staff stay in the same group during the school day
- Discourage attendance awards
- Eliminate field trips
- Increase space between students and have all desks facing one direction
- Assign seats on the bus and in the classroom
- Stagger arrival and dismissal
- Install sneeze guards in the cafeteria
- Eliminate food sharing tables
- Minimize the number of students at recess and sanitize equipment between groups

These recommendations will change the way schools operate. Governor Holcomb plans to give additional information in early July. School leaders cannot wait until then. They must determine how these guidelines can be implemented now.

School buildings will not return to normal when they open. Due to the autonomy this plan gives district leaders, education in schools across the state could be carried out in different ways.