
Winchester Community Unit School District #1

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Dr. Kevin Blankenship, Superintendent

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Winchester School Community:

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) along with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) have provided schools with updated guidance regarding the return to in-person learning. The guidance reflects what we have learned about the transmission of COVID-19 in school settings, as more students in Illinois and across the country have returned safely to in-person learning during the 2020-2021 school year. **This guidance supports the return to in-person instruction as soon as practicable in every Illinois community.**

In consultation with our local health department, the number of COVID positive cases continues to decline as we currently have no reported cases in the schools and only two in the county. In addition, the full vaccine has been made available to our school staff. We believe that now is the time for all of our students to return to school and it is safe to do so. The ISBE, IDPH, and CDC guidance provides **that families of students who are at increased risk of severe illness (including those with special health care needs) or who live with people at increased risk must be given the option of remote instruction.**

Beginning Monday, March 22, Winchester Schools will return to a regular schedule - 3:20 pm dismissal every day except Wednesday and a 2:15 pm dismissal on Wednesdays. We expect every student to prepare to return to in person instruction on that day.

A remote learning option will be provided for only those students that have a medically diagnosed condition which places them at high risk or live with a person with a medical diagnosis placing them at high risk. No student will be allowed on remote learning without this documentation. In the event that students are placed into quarantine for COVID related reasons, the school staff will work with those individuals to provide the most appropriate learning option. All other illnesses will be handled on a case by case basis.

We are certainly excited about the new guidance and priority on returning to in person instruction. We know we will face challenges in the coming weeks but we are prepared to welcome all of our students back on campus.

We ask that all parents and students plan to return on March 22nd. Students not reporting to school and not providing medical documentation for excusal will be treated as truant. If you have any questions, please contact my office.

Yours in education,



Kevin Blankenship
Superintendent