

Back to School

August 9, 2021

[Boletín en Español](#)

Welcome back to the 2021-2022 school year!

We hope that you and your family were able to enjoy this summer, relax, and spend quality time together. Throughout the summer months, staff members in District 303 have been planning for full in-person learning on the first day of school that will take place for the first time since March 2020.

Last week, it was exciting to see students in our buildings during kindergarten visits, material pick-up days, and middle and high school orientation. It is apparent that they are happy to be back, too.



As we begin the year, we want to update you on several items.

Visitors to the Buildings

In order to keep our students and staff members safe, the district has made the decision to not allow visitors into the buildings at the beginning of the year. Similar to last year, students at the elementary schools will be welcomed by staff members who will assist them as they make their way to their classrooms. We will revisit this decision after Labor Day based on metrics within our community and schools.

Self-Certification

- Students and staff will no longer have to complete a daily self-certification before school
- We want to remind everyone to stay home if any of the following symptoms of COVID-19 arise such as:
 - Fever (100.4 or higher)
 - New Cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - Fatigue from unknown cause
 - Muscle or body aches from unknown cause
 - New onset of moderate or severe headache
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea

Masks in schools

On August 4, Governor Pritzker issued an Executive Order that supports safe in-person learning and mandates that masks be worn indoors by all students and staff members in pre-k through 12th-grade schools regardless of vaccination status.

District 303 will comply with the Executive Order and the School Board will not take further action at the meeting on August 9.

Additional information about the 2021-2022 school year is available here

- The [District 303 website](#)
- The Revised [Public Health Guidance for Schools](#) document issued by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Public Health
- The [CDC Guide to Masks](#)

We want to thank you all for your assistance as we commit to keeping everyone safe.

Masking is just one mitigation strategy put in place in District 303. Others include upgraded air filters, physical distancing, hand washing, respiratory etiquette, and COVID-19 testing.

Transportation

- The transportation login information has been updated and parents need to use their student's ID number as **BOTH** the username and password to log in for the first time.
- Upon logging in, you will be prompted to set a new password, confirm your email address, and create security questions to help secure your account.
- You should be able to see all of your students regardless of the student ID you use to log in.
- If you forget your eLink username or password, you can use the links on the login page to retrieve or reset them.
- Your student's school will not be able to retrieve your username or password.
- We encourage parents to check schedules again prior to the beginning of school to see if times have been updated.

[Access eLink here](#)

SHIELD Testing Enrollment

Sign up by 8/9 to begin testing the week of 8/16

One of the strategies that the CDC, IDPH, and KCPH recommend is to implement a regular COVID-19 testing program of unvaccinated staff and students – so much so that the state has made it free to all schools in Illinois. Having a testing program allows schools to greatly ease quarantine restrictions; unvaccinated individuals who participate in SHIELD testing will qualify for shorter quarantine periods if they are close contacts of someone who tests positive for COVID-19 (we expect clarification on this easing of restrictions from IDPH very soon). As our goal is to have staff and students in classrooms, in person, as much as possible, the district will begin weekly SHIELD testing the week of August 16.

If you would like to enroll your child in weekly SHIELD saliva testing program, please use this [link](#). If you register by August 9, testing will begin the week of August 16. You may enroll your child at any time. Testing will begin for your child no sooner than 5 days after your enrollment is completed.

The district and each school will establish schedules and procedures to make optional testing as quick and easy as possible.

Meal Service

- Students in grades kindergarten through 8th who attend in-person classes are eligible for free breakfast and lunch.
- Students will have the opportunity to order breakfast for the next day and pick it up as they leave school at the end of the day.
- High School students who attend in person may choose the free value meal at lunchtime. Breakfast will not be provided for high school students free of charge.