

# Houghton-Portage Township Schools

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## Houghton-Portage Township Schools COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

2021-2022 School Year

March 1, 2022

HPTS 2021-2022 COVID-19 Response Plan has been a collaborative effort of the district administrators and staff to inform students, parents and district personnel on planning for the upcoming school year. It should be noted that this plan is a working document and likely to change as more relevant or pertinent information becomes available (data) or new strategies for addressing COVID-19 in public education. Throughout the summer and school year HPTS receives updates and input from the Western UP Health Department, Upper Peninsula Health System, Copper Country ISD and neighboring districts in analyzing data, formulating strategies, and adapting protocols and procedures to best meet the safety and educational needs of all our students. The HPTS COVID-19 Preparedness and Response plan is a working document and changes and information are to be reviewed as needed as part of the HPTS Board of Education's regularly scheduled meetings. HPTS will adhere to all CDC, MDHHS and/or MCHD orders regarding COVID-19 as they pertain to public schools in Michigan. If such an order is rescinded, HPTS will default to our previous guidelines if feasible.

### **Online Learning As currently constructed, HPTS will adhere to the following guidelines for online learning:**

- Online classes will be offered as an option to all students in grades 6-12. If enough students opt for a specific class in a specific grade level, a certified HPTS teacher may be assigned as a virtual instructor
- For K – 5<sup>th</sup> grade an alternative to face-to-face learning for students, will be provided through Edmentum, a third party online learning provider. HPTS administration will serve as a liaison between elementary parents and Edmentum. MAPS K-5 Virtual Academy will require a commitment from families. Once enrolled, students will be required to remain full-time in MVA for a semester at minimum. At the conclusion of the first semester, MVA students may return to in-person learning.
- If circumstances necessitate a classroom, building or district wide move to online learning, preK-12 students enrolled in online classes or Edmentum will continue in that format. All other students will receive virtual instruction from their regularly assigned teachers

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- If circumstances necessitate a classroom, building or district wide move to online learning, in-person preK-12 students will receive virtual instruction from their regularly assigned teachers. In the event of a classroom, building or district wide closure:
- HPTS will provide a rigorous and robust distance learning program for any student affected in grades preK-12. MAPS will be issuing credit and grade advancement for satisfactory completion of courses over the time of closure. Teachers will track student participation; monitor student wellness; grade assignments, homework and quizzes; provide feedback on student work; differentiate instruction; communicate through zoom, google meets, email, and google classroom.
- Students with IEP's, 504's and other learning plans will be provided accommodations that fit with virtual learning. Ancillary services will be provided to the extent staff is limited by local, state or CDC guidelines. Services such as OT, PT and speech may happen virtually if appropriate.

## **Safety Protocols Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)/Facial Coverings Requirements:**

- Effective February 25, 2022, CDC does not require wearing of masks on buses or vans operated by public or private school systems, including early care and education/child care programs.
- Facial coverings are recommended to be worn by HPTS preK-12 students, staff, and bus drivers during school transportation.
- Homemade facial coverings must be washed daily. Disposable facing coverings must be disposed of at the end of each day.

## **District and Building Implementation Plan:**

- HPTS may be required to transition to this plan on very short notice.
- Face coverings may be ordered and available to every student and staff member on a daily basis. The supply of masks located on buses and in the classrooms will be monitored by staff.
- Clear face coverings may be provided to all teachers with the option to wear the clear mask during instruction.
- Individuals (staff or students) who claim medical exemption will need to provide rationale and documentation. Mask Exemption Request
- Exempted individuals will be recorded in a master database.

## **Hygiene Recommendations:**

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- Adequate supplies of soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, paper towels, tissues, and signs reinforcing proper handwashing techniques will be provided to support healthy hygiene behaviors
- Staff will teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or the safe use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Staff and students will cough and sneeze into their elbows or cover with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately using proper hand hygiene techniques.
- Soap and hand sanitizers will be systematically and frequently checked and refilled.
- Students and teachers will have scheduled handwashing with soap and water periodically throughout the day, especially before meals.

## **District and Building Implementation Plan:**

- Every classroom will be supplied with hand sanitizer, wipes, disposable masks, etc.
- Supplies (paper towels, hand sanitizer, tissues, trash receptacles) will be checked daily and restocked in the classroom.
- Teachers will contact the office if supplies run low during the school day.

## **Safety Protocol- Spacing, Movement and Access Recommendations:**

- Desks will be spaced three to six feet apart in classrooms, space permitting.
- In classrooms where large tables are utilized, students will be spaced as far apart as feasible.
- As feasible, all desks will be arranged facing the same direction toward the front of the classroom.

## **Screening Students and Staff Recommendations:**

- All students and staff should self-screen before coming to work or school. If students/staff are displaying symptoms of COVID-19 they should stay home and monitor for 24 hours. Currently, HPTS will not temperature check or screen students before entry each day. Every school will identify and designate a quarantine area and a staff person to care for students who become ill at school.
- Symptomatic students sent home from school should be kept home until they have tested negative or have recovered according to CDC guidelines.
- Staff should conduct daily self-examinations, including a temperature check, prior to coming to work. If they exhibit principal symptoms of COVID-19 or have a temperature of 100.4 or greater, they should stay home.

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## District and Building Implementation Plan:

- HPTS will continue assisting the MCHD with contact tracing identifying individuals who are considered close contacts of a student who tests positive for COVID-19. Priority will be placed on those individuals that they were in contact with for a sustained 15 minutes or more.
- Students who develop a fever or become ill with COVID-19 symptoms at school should wear a mask and be transported by their parent or guardian, emergency contact, or ambulance if clinically unstable, off-site for testing.
- Staff who develop a fever or become ill with COVID-19 symptoms at school should wear a mask and be transported off-site for testing.
- Symptomatic students and staff sent home from school should be kept home until they have tested negative for COVID-19, or have been released according to CDC guidelines.
- Families should be notified of the presence of any laboratory positive or clinically diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in the classroom and/or school to encourage closer observation for any symptoms at home.

## Food Service Recommendations:

- Classrooms and outdoor areas should be used for students to eat meals at school, if distancing guidelines cannot be met, three to six feet and if directed by the health department.
- When cafeterias must be used, meal times should be staggered to create seating arrangements with three to six feet of distance between students. Seats are also assigned.
- Students, teachers, and food service staff should wash hands before and after every meal.

## Athletics/ Extra Curricular Recommendations:

- Spectators are currently allowed at events and the district will follow the safety guidance established by the MHSAA.
- Spectators will be encouraged to social distance three to six feet apart.
- Indoor concession will be allowed with consideration to CDC, MCHD and MDHHS guidelines for providing food and drink inside school facilities.
- A student athlete who has contracted COVID-19 will be quarantined per MDHHS guidelines

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