

Project ECHO Alternative School & STARQuest Academy Regional Safe School Programs

Return to Learning Plan

The Regional Office of Education #21 has developed a Return to School Plan for the 2021 – 2022 school year. We have prepared educational plans and operational protocols based on guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the state's five phase reopening plan, Restore Illinois.

Our educational plans will return to in-person learning for the full school day of 8:00am to 2:00pm Monday thru Friday. As alternative and safe school educational programs we feel it is important to the social and emotional well being of our students to return to a structured learning environment.

In person learning is important for the educational success of students and therefore ECHO and STARQuest Academy will follow the guidance of the Illinois State Board of Education and will not offer remote learning.

Student attendance is vital to student educational success and therefore chronic student absenteeism will be reported to the Partners Against Chronic Truancy Intervention Program.

What will school look like this year?

Following guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois State Board of Education, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, ROE #21 has developed health protocols to allow for a return to in person learning once again this year. As we return to school, we will continue to practice operational protocols and layered prevention strategies:

- CDC and IDPH guidance recommend students, staff, and visitors wear face coverings when in the building, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated.
- CDC encourages people who are eligible receive the emergency use vaccination.
- Physical distancing will be utilized to the greatest extent feasible.
- Two lunch periods will continue this year and be eaten in the cafeteria.
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette will be highly encouraged and hand sanitizer widely distributed and available throughout the buildings.

- A strong emphasis will be placed on a variety of mitigation practices including, but not limited to practicing good hygiene among students, staff, and visitors, which includes frequent handwashing and sanitization of buildings. The custodial staff will continue to focus on “high touch” surfaces as well as frequent cleaning and disinfection of the restrooms.
- Parents/students/staff must continue to self-certify they are free of COVID19 symptoms prior to entering the school building. Students and staff should stay home when they have signs of infectious illness and contact their healthcare provider for testing and care.

ROE #21 will work collaboratively with the local health officials to monitor COVID19 cases in the school, county, and surrounding area. If community spread becomes an issue the ROE will adjust educational programming as necessary. We will continue to observe the most recent recommendations of the Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Department of Public Health, and the Center for Disease Control.

