



Arbor Park Middle School

Fall 2020 Return Plan: Parent Information



August 4th, 2020

Dear Arbor Park Middle School Parents and Students,

Welcome to the beginning of 2020-2021 school year at Arbor Park Middle School! We hope that you have had an enjoyable summer. It is this time of year that we become energized for the students and staff to return to learning as we continue to prepare for the upcoming year. This year we will continue the theme for Arbor Park Middle School of “Choose Respectful and Kind.” This Code consists of the following character traits: Positive Attitude, Integrity, Respect, Safety, Responsibility and Compassion. It is our hope that every individual connected to APMS implements these traits throughout the school year, and beyond. This theme also supports our mission statement, which states Arbor Park School District Schools provide a partnership with students, staff, parents, and the community that will create a learning environment that enables all children to reach their full potential and to ensure quality and equity for all to succeed.

In preparation for the 2020-21 school year, Arbor Park School District 145 has created detailed plans for multiple educational scenarios based on recommendations from local health experts and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) regarding the potential impact of COVID-19.

Our greatest hope is that schools can resume as normal starting this coming fall, but we believe we have the responsibility to proactively plan for the varying and unknown impact of the virus for the foreseeable future.

The following plan is to ensure a smooth and healthy transition back into the school setting for all members of the school community. This plan is specific to Arbor Park Middle School (APMS) and to the age group of students who attend our 5th-8th grade programs. Our plan will consist of protocols created by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Arbor Park School District 145 (APSD 145). The developmental levels of children have been taken into consideration as planning for new routines and procedures.

As a part of our planning process, staff will incorporate opportunities to familiarize students with these protocols along with practicing to ensure an understanding of procedures. Each section below will be specific to the daily in-person functioning at Arbor Park Middle School by students and staff and will remain consistent throughout the 2020-2021 school year as we implement in-person instruction.

We are requesting that if you have not completed the online district survey regarding your child’s fall status, please do so before this Friday August 7th. If you have already completed the survey you do not need to resubmit. Please use the following link to access the survey: <https://www.arbor145.org/News/8#sthash.nu7k6Sk1.dpbs>

Regardless of the in-person learning model, all persons entering our school properties will be required to follow all public health regulations. Below is an explanation of the health regulations and updated procedures we anticipate based upon current information. **All the following procedures are subject to adjustment based on updated information and guidance.**

General Informational Updates for 2020-21 School Year:

- ✓ **Our first day of school is Monday, August 24th and will be a full day of education for students.**
- ✓ Planners and 8 pocket folders are available to students.
- ✓ Students will arrive at 7:40am and depart at 2:31pm.

- ✓ Students will not be utilizing lockers this school year. They will be using their own backpacks at their individual desks.
- ✓ Students will receive class schedules, and parents will receive updated information about our school year closer to the starting date in August.
- ✓ **All families must report any student absence (in-person or remote learning) to the APMS Main Office (708-687-5330) by 7:30am.**
- ✓ Students will be issued a photo identification badge and lanyard free of charge. I.D. badges have been bar coded with their student number and will be used to access their student accounts and for other school business.
- ✓ All Arbor Park school staff and students are expected to wear I.D. badges daily.
- ✓ In August, APMS will host a Virtual Back-to-School Event digitally on our school website (www.arbor145.org). More information will be sent closer to first day of attendance.

APMS Reopening Plan 2020:

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Group Gatherings and Social Distancing Requirements:

- Arbor Park Middle School classroom size will be limited to smaller capacities.
- Current state and local public health orders limit the size of group gatherings to 50 and include a minimum of 6 feet social distancing expectations with mandatory wearing of masks.
- Arbor Park Middle School will limit the use of large group gathering areas such as the school gym, lunchroom, field trips, and bathroom breaks.
- When necessary, classrooms will follow a building wide schedule for use of these large gathering areas, allowing only one group of students to occupy those areas. This will assist in limiting the capacity of large areas and will allow for social distancing.
- [Social Distancing Guidelines](#) set by IDPH will be implemented at Arbor Park Middle School in order to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment for all.

Number of Students and Staff Requirements:

- Group gathering limitations and social distancing forces Arbor Park Middle School to afford enough space per person in our buildings. To meet these needs, we may need to utilize space differently than previous school years.
- Visitors to Arbor Park Middle School will be limited.
- To the extent possible, Arbor Park Middle School intends to keep the same student cohorts together throughout the academic day.
- Classroom occupancies, in respect to social distancing and grade level needs, will be limited to reduce physical proximity while maintaining supervision by an APMS staff member.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Hygiene Measures:

- Face coverings (over both nose and mouth) will be **required** by everyone who is on school grounds and inside the school building. This includes all APMS students, staff, and any approved visitors.
 - Guidance and recommendations on face coverings can be found on the [IDPH Masks](#) and [Face Coverings](#) Guidelines.
- Students are encouraged to be responsible and bring their own PPE (face coverings, hand sanitizer, etc.).
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including face coverings (as needed), hand sanitizer, thermometers, and gloves will be located in a variety of areas throughout the school.
- Additional signage on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures including face coverings will be on display in classrooms, hallways, and on the school tv informational monitors.
- School floors will have markings to both promote social distancing and provide visuals for students to know where to stand.
- Consistent scheduled times and procedures will be established throughout the day for hand hygiene, promoting [General Hygiene](#).
- **All staff and students will be required to stay home when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.** ([IDPH “What if I’ve Been Exposed”](#)).
- Symptomatic staff and students in the building will go to an established isolated room/location until they can safely leave the building. Parents will be notified immediately and will be required to come to the school to pick up their child.

Building Entry Guidelines and Symptom Screening:

Upon building entry, a symptom screening process will take place. Students, staff, and visitors entering Arbor Park Middle School will be temperature screened and asked to respond to a series of symptom screening questions developed in partnership with IDPH.

- School staff will be trained by our district Registered Nurses (RNs) and will be provided safety protocols in August on how to identify and respond to symptoms of illness.
- Staff will work with our school nurse on appropriate lessons related to the first days of school.
- APMS staff will be assigned specific posts to assist in the flow of traffic into and out of the building to ensure that maximum capacity plans are adjusted and managed at each entry and exit point. This will increase entry efficiency and enable staff to recognize if certain students are presenting ill.

Upon entry, all APMS students will proceed to their assigned classrooms where their teacher will provide them hand sanitizer and verify appropriate PPE. Visual cues such as decals, colored tape, and signs will indicate to students and staff the flow and direction of traffic to be used throughout the school.

In the event a child or staff member were to be diagnosed with having COVID-19, students/staff who were in contact with the individual will be required to be in quarantine for 14 days in accordance with IDPH, CDC, and ISBE Guidelines.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures for Drop-off and Pick-up:

Bus Transportation Arrival:

- Students will be temperature screened prior to bus entry.
- Students exhibiting a temperature above 100.4° at the bus stop will not be allowed entry.
- All students using bus transportation will enter APMS through Door #4. There will be separate building entry points for each grade level in the bus drop-off area (observing social distancing while entering).

Parent Drop-off Arrival:

- All students dropped off by parents in the front of the building, from the drop off lane, will proceed to Door #16 (Entry into Small Gym). This will be the one entry point for parent drop-off of students and remain consistent throughout the school year (**Door #15 will no longer be used as a before-school entry door**).
- Students arriving will queue in front of Door #16, observing marked social distancing guidance while they enter to be screened.
- Any child who demonstrates having a temperature when dropped off will be moved to the designated safety area for immediate parent pick-up.
- Only students will be allowed to enter the school building during drop-off. All visitors should report to Door #1 (Front Office) and follow posted guidance.
- If a parent needs to speak with a staff member, we encourage an email or phone call be sent to the teacher to schedule a virtual appointment.
- All students will exit the building after 2:31pm.

Parents needing to pick up their child during the school day will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Masks are required for entry into the building.
- All visitors are required to enter the building through Door #1 and follow posted retrieval procedures in atrium for student retrieval.

Attendance:

Student attendance reporting will be used for IDPH, CDC, and ISBE compliance reporting, truancy, accountability, and media requests.

- Attendance will be required for all students.
- Parents will be required to give detailed reasons for each absence daily to the main office.
 - This will include reporting on students who are absent due to COVID-19 symptoms or are being quarantined.
- Reporting a student absence must be completed by 7:30am the date of the absence (708-687-5330)
- A doctor's note will be required for students who have been absent more than 2 days.

Transportation:

The Transportation department supports students by providing safe and timely transport services for eligible riders attending on-site programs to and from school. Capacities of the transport service will follow public health guidelines including:

- Number of students permitted to ride at any time.
- Symptom screening protocol enforced for all bus riders.
- Cleaning and disinfecting protocols following student pick up and drop offs.

Cleaning Procedures:

Custodial staff will be focused on cleaning for health, which includes an emphasis on disinfecting surfaces where bacteria or viruses are most likely to be transmitted.

The district's Custodial Department will continue to consult with the IDPH, CDC, and ISBE Guidelines to ensure appropriate and timely measures are taken to preserve the health and safety of our students, staff, and community.

Culture and Climate:

Our district social workers and counselors have created a list of resources to assist families with ongoing support. This list can be found on our district website under the title COVID-19 [Resources](#). Arbor Park School District 145 is committed to providing our students and families with the necessary support needed in maintaining the mental health needs of students, staff, and families.

- Arbor Park Middle School staff will work together with families to implement and support best practices around trauma informed practices.
- A focus will be placed on supporting a positive climate and culture that acknowledges universal trauma care strategies for students.
- Best practice guidelines will be available to support students who may need more support.
- Our district social workers and counselors will provide ongoing consultation to staff.
- Recognizing the need to assess the status of students' social-emotional health as they return to school, social workers will work with staff on creating protocols that will inform the levels of support that may be needed for students.

Lunch Service:

Arbor Park Middle School offers the opportunity to purchase lunch through PushCoin for students. APSD 145 will continue to provide meal service to students to the extent possible given on-site and remote learning

environments. Therefore, the meal service program may be a combination of in-school serving and/or a “grab & go” program.

- Remote and on-site attendance dictates the serving model(s) used.
- Students in school will indicate their lunch choice at the start of each school day present. Sack lunches will be delivered to the classroom by building personnel before their designated lunch time.
- On-site lunches will be eaten in their classroom, with staff supervision, in accordance with social distancing procedures.
- Please refrain from sending lunch items in lunch boxes. Lunches brought from home will need to be sent in disposable bags. This is a recommendation from the CDC to decrease the possibility of spreading viruses.
- If a parent must drop off a lunch, they will follow the following procedures:
 - Once parent/adult arrives at the school, they will park in the nearest adjacent lot to Door #1 (APMS Main Office).
 - Parent will ring the office bell to notify the school of arrival, student name, and grade level.
 - Parent will label and place the lunch on a table outside the door for a staff member to retrieve.

Technology:

During the Fall of 2020, our district Panda Department will ensure the following for APMS:

- That all students and staff have access to a working device (Chromebook, iPad, laptop, desktop computer, or other)
- Will collaborate with various departments, community partners, businesses, and others, as needed, in problem-solving efforts to ensure all students and staff have reliable internet access to complete their work remotely in the event of school closures
- Will support students and their families, and our staff as they utilize our core digital learning tools and existing system applications
- Will modify existing tools and applications to meet the needs of in person or remote environments
- Will optimize efficiencies and minimize changes that will impact our existing tools and applications to provide stability across our system for all end users
- Will continue to introduce new tools and applications in a way that continues to offer flexibility, but also moves toward a model of standardization to provide more robust support for an overall portfolio of systems that are secure, stable, and effective.

School Day Structures:

Given the guidelines and constraints of social distancing and best practices to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, APMS has developed new practices and models of structuring the student school day. Current models have been developed to provide learning opportunities to the greatest extent possible while adhering to public health guidelines.

Traditional meetings at the start of the school year and any school events will be conducted remotely until otherwise communicated. Teachers will hold all beginning-of-year communication sessions via TEAMS for parents to be able to participate and view the process in the event remote learning needs to be implemented. These meetings will assist families in learning the technology, meeting staff, and give the opportunity to ask questions they may have.

- Parents will have the opportunity to view instructional recordings on how to use TEAMS.
- Parents will have access to “how to” videos or handouts that will be posted on our district website.
- Parents will have an opportunity to participate in virtual meetings with their teacher if a need arises.

We are recommending remote learning to all families that can. In-person learning for students will be very different to the traditional school day that students and parents are accustomed to. In order to minimize contacts, students will be in 1 classroom throughout the day, aside from bathroom breaks and will only be in contact with 1-2 staff members. Students will receive their instruction via Teams, just like those that are learning from home.

In Person Learning Snapshot:

- Students will remain in the classroom on their devices and meet with their teacher virtually to participate in virtual lessons taught by the teacher.
- Students will be with a staff supervisor throughout the day
- Students can access lessons and meetings via TEAMS to learn from their teacher.

Remote Snapshot:

- Students will have access to the same lessons and live TEAMS meetings that in person students will have.
- Lessons will be posted on TEAMS for students to retrieve.
- Students will be joining TEAMS meetings to learn from their teacher.

Classroom Environments:

- Classroom furniture will be arranged to support social distancing practices.
- Students will refrain from sitting together where at least 6 feet of social distancing is not possible.
- Students will have their own school supplies and will refrain from sharing or using another student's items.
- Manipulatives utilized for academic activities will be assigned for individual student use.
- Students will be required to bring their own water bottles to minimize the use of water fountains.

Special Considerations for Students with Disabilities:

- For students with Individual Education Programs and Section 504 plans, the district will adhere to all aspects of those plans as appropriate for either in-person or remote learning.
- All special education and related services will be delivered remotely for students opting not to attend school. Staff will work with parents to ensure access and engagement in all relevant goal areas.
- In order to minimize exposure, services may be delivered in person directly or provided remotely for students attending in person. Case managers will communicate with parents to discuss and outline the provision of services. Some individualization of services can be achieved within the safety guidelines.
- District will adhere to all timelines for annual reviews and re-evaluations with a focus placed on review of existing data to minimize student contact with multiple adults for in-person testing. Initial evaluations will be carefully planned with parents. As always, the district's MTSS plan ensures there is no delay in providing the services a child needs during the evaluation process.
- IEP and other parent meetings will be held via Microsoft TEAMS through the same account at the student's learning activities.
- Special Education students requiring homebound instruction for serious illness will participate in Remote Learning with additional support until such time that it is safe for staff to enter homes.

Bathroom Breaks:

- A schedule will be created for whole class bathroom breaks.
- The number of students allowed entry into the bathroom at the same time will be limited.
- Decals will be placed on the floors as markers for students to stand on as they wait for their turn.
- Bathrooms will be disinfected in between classroom usage by the custodial staff.

Kids Club:

As a school district, we recognize that many parents rely on us to not only educate but also supervise children while they are at work. While public health and social-distancing guidelines currently limit our functional use of space, structures are being explored to support this need for our families.

Before and after school in-district Kids Club child-care providers are working to create specific plans to serve our Arbor Park School District families. Determination of locations and availability will be made based on public health guidelines. These guidelines will include the potential of limited capacity of school buildings, reduced ratios, and the need to clean and disinfect spaces before and after school sessions. Communication to families regarding availability will occur as soon as possible.

Emergency Contact Information:

Parents, we ask your help in keeping our building contact records up to date by filling them out completely online through ALMA, or by contacting the main office in a timely fashion. Please understand the vital importance of updating your student's emergency information. This ensures that our office and staff know the best way to reach you if ever the need arises. This will be crucial not only for emergencies, but for our ability to communicate with families in general. As we continue to move towards more and more electronic communication, your email address is particularly important to update.

If you have any questions or need assistance regarding contact records, please contact our main office at (708) 687-5330, open weekdays between 7:00 AM and 3:30 PM.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO):

Our school is very excited to team up again with such a supportive PTO and community. If you have not already signed up during registration using PushCoin, please bring/send in the PTO Membership Forms that are enclosed and fees to continue the tradition of membership from our great school community.

Again, information explained is subject to update or revision based on state and local guidance. It is in everyone's best interest to review this guidance frequently to ensure proper protocols are followed.

On behalf of the Arbor Park Middle School staff, welcome to a new school year! We are excited about all the positive things this year will hold for your students!

Sincerely,

David Evans Bradley Dizonno

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Principal Assistant Principal

Arbor Park Panther Pride!