



**Almont Community Schools  
Office of the Superintendent  
4701 Howland Rd.  
Almont, MI 48003**

**PH: 810-798-8561 Fax: 810-798-2367**

Dr. William Kalmar  
*Superintendent*

August 10, 2021

Dear Almont Community Schools Families,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 School Year!

Since the end of July we have experienced a flurry of discussions and recommendations regarding the reopening of school and COVID-19 because of the emergence of a new variant of the virus. We have worked with the Lapeer County Health Department, fellow Lapeer County school leaders, our teacher's union, administration and attorney to develop a balanced plan for the return to school.

While the plan included in this document will not satisfy every family whose children attend our schools, we hope that everyone can recognize the effort that has been spent, countywide, to try and develop a plan which draws from our local experience with COVID-19 over the last eighteen months. We have relied on our own data to support the positions we believe provide us with the best balance between safety and the ability to provide effective student learning opportunities.

That being said, a reliance on data also means that our reopening plan is subject to change if conditions in our community change.

In addition to our reopening document, I have also attached a joint letter from the collective school leaders of Lapeer County, which include the superintendents and leaders of the Chatfield School, Dryden Schools, Lapeer Intermediate School District, Imlay City Schools, Lapeer Community Schools and the North Branch Area Schools. This letter shares our collective position regarding the start of our school year.

Each of our schools will also be sending home reopening letters which have more specific explanations regarding the policies and procedures for each unique building.

If you have specific questions or concerns which I can address, please do not hesitate to call me, or to email me at [bkalmar@almondschools.org](mailto:bkalmar@almondschools.org).

I wish you all the greatest success in the 2021-2022 school year!

Sincerely,

William Kalmar, PhD

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**Vision**

**Every student will own their future through academic and personal success**

# Return to School Update: Lapeer County Public School Districts

As we inch toward the return to in-person instruction for the majority of students in Lapeer County, the leaders of the County’s six public school districts and the Lapeer County ISD will continue to work in cooperation with the Health Department to ensure a safe start to the school year. While the pandemic has taken its toll on all of us, our goal is to bring students back into a safe and comfortable environment this month – *and to keep them there*. It is paramount that our students return to school for in-person learning and to ensure that opportunity is available whenever and wherever possible.

With that in mind, we want to put forth a joint plan for the least-disruptive return to school for our students. Please bear in mind that, as from the beginning of the pandemic, there may be changes to this plan moving forward based on the status of the virus as well as any potential mandates or legislative changes at the state level. Our desire is to communicate a consistent message to ensure our approach moving forward is sensible and concise.

## Return to School Guidelines

Component	Our Approach
Masks	Recommended, but not required in schools. Masks are required on school buses.
Social Distancing	Recommended wherever possible, not required.
Screening/Testing	Not required. Parents are encouraged to check students for symptoms daily.
Reporting	Known cases among students and staff are still required to be reported to the District. The District will publicly report all school-associated probable or positive cases of COVID19.
Symptomatic Illness	Any student who is sick with symptoms of any infectious disease must stay home.
Ventilation	Ventilation systems in buildings will operate within original design specifications. We will continue to keep windows open on school buses, whenever possible, to ensure proper ventilation.
Contact Tracing/Isolation/Quarantine	Districts will continue to do contact tracing in collaboration with the Lapeer County Health Department. Parents will have the option to quarantine students identified as close contacts.
Cleaning	Standard daily cleaning protocols using products approved by the CDC to mitigate surface transmission of the Novel Coronavirus.

If there are updates regarding COVID-19 health and safety requirements, we will communicate those as necessary.

Thank you for your cooperation,

The Lapeer County Superintendents



## **Almont Community Schools 2021-2022 School Year COVID-19 Guidance**

### **1. *What form will instruction at the Almont Community Schools take this year?***

All instructional programs will be offered in-person. We will not be offering fully online or hybrid instruction this school year. We will continue to offer online credit recovery at Almont High School and we will be using an online program for select medically fragile special education students.

### **2. *Will students be required to wear facial coverings this year?***

The use of facial coverings is optional for students in school.

The use of facial coverings is mandatory on all buses regardless of a student's vaccination status. This is by an order from the Centers for Disease Control (this also extends to travel on airlines, etc...).

### **3. *What constitutes an acceptable facial covering for the buses?***

The Centers for Disease Control have an excellent website which highlights the important components of a proper facial covering at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

### **4. *What if my student cannot wear a mask on the bus?***

If a student is medically unable to tolerate a mask, medical documentation, from the child's medical care provider, must be provided. In the documentation, the medical expert must explicitly state the individual's name and must explicitly state that the individual is "medically unable to tolerate a mask or face covering."

### **5. *What if my student refuses to wear a mask on the bus?***

If a student refuses to follow this mandatory safety protocol, they may be removed from district transportation until they agree to comply. A parent meeting may be required. Continued refusal may result in permanent removal from school transportation and additional student discipline.

### **6. *Will the school district provide students with masks?***

We will not provide masks to students, but masks will be available on buses should an extenuating circumstance arise. Families should plan to provide their bus riding children

with masks throughout the school year. If you believe you are not able to provide a mask for your child, please contact the office of your child's school for assistance.

**7. Will students be required to be vaccinated in order to attend school this year?**

No, students under the age of twelve are not eligible to be vaccinated yet.

Vaccination for students who are over the age of twelve are not required to attend school.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), the Lapeer County Health Department (LCHD) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) all recommend COVID-19 vaccinations for anyone eligible to take the vaccine.

A current list of vaccination sites can be found at the Lapeer County Health Department website: <https://lapeercountyweb.org/index.php/departments/county-health-department>

**8. Will the school district offer band, choir, marching band, athletics and before-and-after school clubs and activities?**

Yes. We plan to offer all of our band, choir, marching band, and athletic programs as well as before and after school clubs and activities.

**9. Will spectators be permitted at school events? Athletics? Will spectators require facial coverings or vaccinations to attend school events?**

Yes, spectators will be permitted at school events and athletics.

No, spectators wearing facial coverings at events is optional.

No, spectators will not be required to be vaccinated to attend school events.

We expect any spectator to screen themselves for COVID-19 symptoms prior to coming to a school event or athletic event and to stay home if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

**6. Will parent volunteers and/or guests be permitted in schools this year?**

Yes, but more information regarding volunteers and guests in schools will be forthcoming and specific to each school.

When permitted, we expect any volunteer to screen themselves for COVID-19 symptoms prior to coming to a school and to stay home if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

We will still offer the option of remote meetings for parents.

**7. Will student athletes be required to be tested for COVID-19 to participate in school sports?**

No, the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSSA) is not requiring the testing of student athletes.

In the winter and spring seasons of 2021, we tested over 1,100 athletes for COVID-19. Only .04% of these tests were positive.

**8. *If a student tests positive for COVID-19, when can they return to school?***

If a student tests positive for COVID-19, they may only return when their physician approves of their return in writing.

**9. *Will quarantines be required this year for students potentially exposed to COVID-19 because they have been in close proximity to the infected individual?***

Students exposed to COVID-19 in their own household will be required to quarantine from school for ten days. On the seventh day, a quarantined student may take an antigen test for COVID-19 and, if the test is negative, the student can return to school immediately. This test must be conducted by a health care provider or pharmacy. Exposed students do not have to quarantine if they have had COVID-19 in the last ninety days or if they have been vaccinated for COVID-19.

Positive cases of COVID-19 will be referred to the Lapeer County Health Department and any contact tracing will be conducted by them. The Lapeer County Health Department may recommend that an exposed student quarantine from school. If families choose to follow this recommendation, teachers and school administrators will facilitate providing that student with school work during their quarantine. Students who quarantine will face no academic penalties for doing so (absences will be excused).

Last school year, in compliance with MDHHS guidelines, we quarantined hundreds of students repeatedly for potential COVID-19 exposures. At no time did we ever see even 1% of these quarantined students develop COVID-19. Therefore, the school will not be imposing quarantines on students based on potential COVID-19 exposures.

**10. *Will the schools contact parents if their student has been potentially exposed to COVID-19?***

Yes, if a case of COVID-19 occurs in school, and a student is believed to have been in close proximity to that infected individual, the school will notify that student's parents.

The school district will also continue to provide a dashboard of current cases of COVID-19 on our school's website. This dashboard will be updated within twenty-four hours of any newly discovered case on campus.

**11. *Should parents still screen students each morning for COVID-19 symptoms?***

Yes, parents are reminded that students with the following symptoms should stay home from school:

Fever or chills

Cough

Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Fatigue

Muscle or body aches

Headache

New loss of taste or smell  
Sore throat  
Congestion or runny nose  
Nausea or vomiting  
Diarrhea

Parents are also reminded that if a student shows any of the following symptoms, they should seek emergency medical care immediately:

Trouble breathing  
Persistent pain or pressure in the chest  
New confusion  
Inability to wake or stay awake  
Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone

**10. Will accommodations be made regarding student attendance if a parent keeps a student with COVID-19 symptoms home?**

Yes. If a parent chooses to keep a child home because they may have symptoms of COVID-19, they should communicate that as soon as possible with the main office of that student's school.

**11. What will cleaning be like at the Almont Community Schools this year?**

All cleaning and sanitizing procedures at the Almont Community Schools will meet or exceed the standards set forth by *The State of Michigan Guidelines for Operating Schools Safely* and the new *Recommendations for Safer School Operations during COVID-19*.

Hand sanitizer stations remain in use for classrooms and common areas.

Bottle filling stations are available in all three schools.

Enhanced cleaning will be done multiple times a week after school in classrooms, gymnasiums, restrooms, locker rooms, weight rooms and other common areas.

Proper ventilation maintenance is being conducted in all schools and potential improvements are being reviewed.

**12. If I have building specific questions, who should I contact?**

**Almont High School**

Principal Elizabeth Gallagher  
(810) 798-8595  
[egallagher@almontschools.org](mailto:egallagher@almontschools.org)

**Almont Middle School**

Principal Kimberly VonHiltmayer  
(810) 798-3578  
[kvonhiltmayer@almontschools.org](mailto:kvonhiltmayer@almontschools.org)

**Orchard Primary School**

Principal Jamie Miller

**Transportation Department**

Director Kara Cunningham

(810) 798-7019  
[jmiller@almontschools.org](mailto:jmiller@almontschools.org)

(810) 798-8773  
[kcummingham@almontschools.org](mailto:kcummingham@almontschools.org)

**13. Who should I contact in the state government regarding COVID-19 rules and regulations?**

**Governor Gretchen Whitmer**

<https://somgovweb.state.mi.us/GovRelations/ContactGovernor.aspx>

**Elizabeth Hertel, Director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services**

<https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-84171---,00.html>

**In Lapeer County: State**

**Senator Kevin Daley**

<https://www.senatorkevindaley.com/contact/>

**State Representative Gary Howell**

<https://gophouse.org/member/repgaryhowell/posts>

**In St. Clair County District 25 Senator**

**Dan Lauwers**

<https://www.senatordanlauwers.com/>

**In Oakland County**

**Senator Rosemary Bayer District 12**

<https://senatedems.com/bayer/contact/>

**In Macomb County**

**Representative 10<sup>th</sup> District Lisa**

**McClain**

<https://mcclain.house.gov/>

**8<sup>th</sup> District Senate Seat is vacant**

[District08@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:District08@senate.michigan.gov)