



# Pandemic Response Update

April 19, 2023

## Honey Creek Mitigation Strategies

In order to mitigate risks of exposure to the coronavirus at school, the Honey Creek Board of Trustees has defined a set of layered strategies to be implemented if/when case rates rise. These strategies will be used when necessary to guarantee the safety of our students, staff and families. Prior to their implementation, we will communicate rising risks factors in the hope we can collectively slow spread and avoid disruptions to our unique educational process.

These strategies may be implemented individually or as a group at the discretion of the executive director in consultation with members of the board.

Honey Creek Primary COVID Mitigation Strategies	
Risk Level	Strategies & Program Alterations
<b>Low Risk &amp; Low Infection Rates</b>	<b>Standard Mitigation:</b>
	• Support masking by students, staff and visitors
	• Provide masks and hand sanitizer in classrooms and office
	• Urge families to keep <a href="#">symptomatic</a> students home
	• Offer outside lunch and social distancing tables in cafeteria
	• Abide by CDC <a href="#">guidelines for infected individuals</a>
	• Abide by CDC <a href="#">guidelines for exposed individuals</a>
<b>Medium Risk &amp; Medium Infection Rates</b>	<b>Continue Strategies Above Plus:</b>
	• Strongly encourage masking by staff, students and visitors
	• Provide rapid testing on-demand for staff households
	• Encourage rapid or PCR testing of symptomatic students at home
<b>High Risk &amp; High Infection Rates</b>	<b>Continue Strategies Above Plus:</b>
	• Strongly encourage masking by staff and students
	• Temporarily suspend visitors and volunteers in the building
	• Temporarily suspend or modify cross-team programming
	• Temporarily suspend swim/activities that do not allow for masking
	• Temporarily close isolated classrooms or grade-level teams to slow rapid spread.
	• Close to in-person instruction adjacent to weekends to slow rapid spread or as needed due to critical staffing shortages

## **Determining Risk Levels**

Risk levels depend on numerous variables including the number of infections and their frequency, the grade level(s) of infections and evidence of community or school-based spread. The number of exposed or positive staff members also contributes to determining overall risk and our response. Although we closely monitor the [county-wide risk level determined by the health department](#), we will determine risk based on our school community and utilize the strategies above accordingly.

## **Communication About Risk Levels**

For the remainder of the winter months, we will frequently publish our risk level along with the larger table of mitigation strategies so families can anticipate possible disruptions. Please consult our website pandemic resource page [here](#).

## **Keeping Sick Students Home is Key**

Please familiarize yourself with the symptoms of COVID found [here](#). Keeping potentially positive students home from school will keep the disease from spreading to others. Please exercise great caution when symptoms are present and consider rapid or PCR testing right away.

## **What to do if your child is exposed to COVID?**

We ask all families to familiarize themselves with the CDC protocols for COVID exposures. That information can be found [here](#). We will continue to notify families of all new positive cases at school so each can assess their student's exposure risk.

## **What to do if your child is positive for COVID?**

Please immediately report all positive cases among students to [office@hc.wash.k12.mi.us](mailto:office@hc.wash.k12.mi.us). We urge all families to follow the CDC protocols for isolating when positive. That information can be found [here](#).

## **Masking**

The CDC guidance referenced above highlights the fundamental role of masking to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus. Universal masking was highly effective limiting spread at school last year. Although not mandatory, seasonal masking during the winter is strongly encouraged for all students, family members, staff, visitors and volunteers at Honey Creek. It is also strongly recommended at times of medium and high risk. Masking is the easiest effective way to avoid exposures and keep programming uninterrupted.

## **Lunch: Eating Outside & Social Distancing**

We will continue to offer outdoor eating as long as the weather permits. Students can also utilize expanded social-distance seating inside the cafeteria each day.

## **Information on Our Ventilation System**

Thankfully, our new building has an entirely new heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system. Due to the coronavirus, the ISD has upgraded the systems replaceable filters (Merv 8 from 13) and installed bi-polar ionization into every roof top unit. Bi-polar ionization reduces the risk of exposure to viruses, bacteria, smoke, odors, and more by allowing the air filters to improve capture rate of smaller particles than traditional HVAC systems. The units installed at Honey Creek can be seen [here](#). A video of their benefits – produced by the corporation that sells them - can be found [here](#).

## **Questions?**

If you have pandemic response policy questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact our director, Kevin Kelly, at any time. He can be reached most easily at [kkelly@hc.wash.k12.mi.us](mailto:kkelly@hc.wash.k12.mi.us). It is our goal to establish predictable, science-based and transparent approaches and your feedback is important to each. Pandemic response policies are reviewed by our board every month.