



2021-2022 EPCSC KG-12 COVID Protocols Based on Community Spread

KG-12 Recommendations	(Low to moderate spread)	(Substantial Spread)
School Status	In-person learning	In-person learning (unless staffing cannot be maintained)
Health Screening	All staff/students screen prior to coming to school	All staff/students screen prior to coming to school
Mask Status	Masks optional	Masks optional, unless mandated by state and local health officials
Physical Distancing	Social distancing encouraged whenever possible	Social distancing encouraged whenever possible
Cafeteria	Normal spacing	Lunch in cafeteria with reduced capacity tables
Hand Sanitizing/Washing	Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette is taught and encouraged	Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette is taught and encouraged
Cleaning	Increased cleaning and focus on high-touch surfaces throughout the day	Increased cleaning and focus on high-touch surfaces throughout the day
Contact Tracing *	Notify parents of close contact exposure	Notify parent of close contact exposure
Bus	Masks optional	Masks optional, unless mandated by state and local health officials
Extra-Curricular Activities	Masks optional	Masks optional, unless mandated by state and local health officials

2021-2022 Return to Learn Plan

East Porter will return to five-day (full-time) instruction during the 2021-2022 school year.

School Day Hours

<u>School</u>	<u>School Start Time</u>	<u>School End Time</u>
Kouts Elementary School	7:40 a.m.	2:45 p.m.
Kouts Middle/High School	7:40 a.m.	2:45 p.m.
Morgan Township Elementary School	7:40 a.m.	2:45 p.m.
Morgan Middle/High School	7:40 a.m.	2:45 p.m.
Washington Township Elementary School	7:40 a.m.	2:45 p.m.
Washington Township Middle/High School	7:40 a.m.	2:45 p.m.

School Calendar

East Porter will follow the revised school calendar that was adopted on April 12, 2021. The school calendar is available on the East Porter website.

Health Protocols

[COVID-19 TESTING LOCATIONS](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccination Locations](#) or Dial 211

Isolation = Exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms

Quarantine = A known close contact to a COVID-19 case (within 6 feet for 15 min).

COVID-19 Related Symptoms

Students and/or staff members who are **symptomatic** and experiencing any of the following should report them to the school nurse and/or their personal healthcare provider for further guidance:

- Cough or Shortness of Breath
- Sore Throat
- Headache (particularly new onset of severe headache)
- Diarrhea, Nausea or Vomiting/Abdominal Pain
- New Loss of Taste or Smell

Exclusion (Isolation and/or Quarantine) from School/Work

East Porter will not be determining quarantine, but will notify parents of close contact, when in a classroom. Based on guidance from the Indiana State Department of Health and/or Porter County Health Department, students and staff members may be excluded from school/work if they exhibit COVID-19 related symptoms. **Vaccinated individuals will not be required to quarantine. However, they will be required to isolate (if symptomatic).**

Students and staff members will be excluded from school/work if they test positive for COVID-19. Exclusionary timelines established by the Indiana Department of Health and/or Porter County Health Department will be followed at all East Porter locations.

Return to School After Exclusion

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the Indiana State Department of Health and/or are released by a physician (medical documentation required).

Self-Screening

East Porter students and staff members need to [self-screen](#) before arriving at school/work each day. Students and employees exhibiting COVID-19 related symptoms without being otherwise explained should not attend school until they are released by a healthcare provider and/or meet any isolation requirements established by the Indiana State Department of Health (unless they are fully vaccinated).

Attendance

Student Attendance

East Porter personnel will request specific symptom information when absences are reported along with COVID-19 diagnoses and/or potential COVID-19 exposure. Information obtained will be shared with our nursing staff.

East Porter Staff Attendance

Employees who experience the onset of any COVID-19 symptoms at work should immediately notify a school nurse or school administrator.

Since COVID-19 vaccines are readily available, staff absences due to COVID-19 will be addressed through the use of the staff member's accumulated benefit days.

Preventative Measures

COVID Monitoring

If required by local requirements, positive cases of COVID-19 will be reported to the Porter County Health Department for reporting purposes, school closure guidance and potential contact tracing efforts. East Porter will track attendance trends daily to determine any patterns of absence due to illness throughout the corporation.

In addition, Indiana law requires schools to track and monitor attendance to assist in the determination of a viral outbreak within the East Porter schools (512 IAC 1-2-2). Schools shall report to the local health department and the IDOE when the percentage of student absences from a school is equal to or greater than the threshold rate of twenty percent (20%) of the enrolled student population.

Face Coverings

Face coverings are optional.

Bus Riders-All bus riders will follow the face covering requirements that coincide with the East Porter COVID-19 Response Model (listed above) unless otherwise required by the State or Federal mandates.

Although families may supply their own face coverings, East Porter will have an ample supply of disposable face coverings for all students and staff members. Cloth face coverings should be laundered each day.

Face Coverings:

- Must securely cover the nose and mouth
- May be cloth or disposable
- Must not contain any messaging (school name and/or logo is acceptable)
- Must not distract the learning environment
- No references or picture of the following:
 - Drugs
 - Alcohol
 - Tobacco
 - Gangs
 - Foul or suggestive language or patterns and/or
 - Symbols deemed as a distraction to the learning process

The building principal will make the final decision as to the appropriateness of a face covering.

COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. According to the governmental health officials, face coverings usage can substantially reduce this form of transmission.

Key points on face coverings:

- Be careful not to touch eyes, nose, and mouth while wearing face coverings to prevent potential contamination.
- Wash hands thoroughly before putting on face covering.
- Remove the face covering carefully and wash hands thoroughly after removing.
- Wash the face covering each day.

- Wearing cloth face coverings does not replace the need to continue frequent hand washing, avoiding touching the face, and practicing social distancing, which are the best tools to help prevent the spread of illness.
- Face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.

Face Covering Modification or Exemptions

Some students and staff members may have conditions that impact their ability to wear a face covering. Staff or students who have a condition and seek modifications or exemption from the face covering requirements must make a request to their school for the exemption or modification. Medical documentation may be required. Each school will initiate a certification process of any underlying condition or disability as well as an interactive dialogue (for staff) or IEP meeting or Section 504 meeting (for students) to respond to requests and to ensure the safety of the school environment.

Refusal to Wear a Face Covering

Students may be asked to wear a face covering (when required) during the school year (based on level). If refusing to wear a face covering (when required), students will be reminded of the expectation and expected to comply with the request. Failure to do so will result in exclusion from school.

Social Distancing

East Porter will make attempts to socially distance students when possible. However, it is important to note the three feet of social distancing will be difficult during the school year. Depending on the level, students may be required to wear face coverings when social distancing cannot be maintained. Examples would include buses, passing periods, cafeteria (when not eating), small-group instruction, and/or classrooms where social distancing may not be possible.

Sanitation Stations

Sanitation Stations will be available in all East Porter schools. Various types of stations will be utilized including sanitation wipes and hand sanitizer (foam, liquid and/or gel with at least 60% alcohol content).

Hygiene

Hand washing and avoiding touching of the face, eyes, nose, or mouth are important steps a person can take to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others. If soap and water are not readily available, students and staff should use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol. Students should be reminded to avoid touching non-essential items and should not pick up items found on the floor.

Daily Operations

Arrival/Dismissal

Buildings may utilize signs and other visual cues to direct traffic flow and encourage social distancing for students and staff.

Visitors

Based on recommendations from public health officials, East Porter will restrict nonessential visitors during time of substantial spread.

Special Education Case Conferences & 504 Committee Meetings

Case Conference Committee (CCC) and Section 504 meetings are deemed essential and require a parent/guardian to meet with the team on an as-needed basis. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, parents may request to participate in a CCC or 504 meeting telephonically or via virtual meeting option. The decision to participate via an alternative format rests with the parent/guardian.

Field Trips

Although field trips provide memorable and educational experiences for students, East Porter believes effective social distancing in an uncontrolled environment becomes difficult. As a result, all field trips will be postponed or cancelled when East Porter is in a substantial spread.

Recess

East Porter believes recess is an important part of the school day for elementary and intermediate students.

Hallways/Passing Periods/Transition Periods

During substantial spread, visual cues for expected traffic flow may be used by East Porter schools. In addition, operational procedures at each school will be analyzed with the intent to reduce student transitions (if possible).

Safety Drills

Safety drills are required by the Indiana law (IC 20-34-3-20). As a result, the East Porter County School Corporation will continue to prepare and drill for potential emergencies.

Student Supplies

During substantial spread, parents should make every effort to reduce the amount of materials, supplies, and personal belonging going to and from school each day. Staff members should be cognizant of this requirement and limit required school supplies to only essential items. In addition, East Porter staff members should make a concerted effort to reduce student exposure to high-touch, shared resources at school (art supplies, books, electronic devices, etc.). Supplies utilized by students which are owned by East Porter should be cleaned/sanitized on a regular basis. Computer devices should be taken home each day and sanitized.

Water Bottle Filling Stations

Water bottle filling stations will be available in all East Porter schools. Filling stations will be cleaned/sanitized on a regular basis.

Student Nutrition (Breakfast & Lunch)

Some of the strategies that may be utilized during substantial spread include:

- Grab and go meals – eliminates self-serve food items and utilizes disposable utensils
- Assigned seating
- Visual cues placed throughout the cafeteria to control movement
- Prohibit food sharing
- Sanitation station availability in all cafeterias

Transportation

East Porter's school bus is a student's first contact with the school in the morning and the last point of contact in the afternoon. Thus East Porter understands the importance of establishing safety protocols regarding student transportation.

Social Distancing

The Transportation Department will attempt to social distance students when possible. However, it is important to note the three feet of social distance will be difficult depending on the number of students who ride a bus.

Students will follow face covering requirements as outlined in the East Porter COVID-19 Response Model.

Bus Cleaning & Sanitation

All buses will be cleaned and/or sanitized at the end of every day using an East Porter approved cleaning agent.

Athletics

East Porter anticipates that all athletic teams will meet on a regular scheduled basis. Specific guidelines for each activity will be share by the coach.

Athletic programs will follow the same guidelines identified in the East Porter COVID-19 Response Plan.

Extra/Co-Curricular Activities

East Porter anticipates that all academic teams, clubs, etc. will meet on a regular scheduled basis. Specific guidelines for each activity will be shared by the coach/sponsor.

Extra-Curricular Activities will follow the same guidelines identified in the East Porter COVID-19 Response Plan.

Facilities

Cleaning & Sanitation

All East Porter facilities will be cleaned/sanitized with cleaning supplies with the capability to kill COVID-19.

Daily disinfecting of high-touch surfaces in rooms will take place. High-touch areas include:

- Doorknobs
- Playground Equipment
- Restroom Sinks
- Toilets
- Light Switches
- Desks
- Pencil Sharpeners
- Media Centers
- Phones
- Walls
- Locker Rooms
- Etc.