

The logo features a large white circle on a dark blue background. Inside the circle, the text "VERMILION" is at the top in red, "ONE PARISH MISSION" is in the middle in white on a black horizontal bar, and "UNITED" is at the bottom in red. Four red arrows point clockwise around the circle. The background of the entire page is dark blue with white diagonal stripes.

VERMILION ONE PARISH MISSION UNITED

RESET VERMILION

VERMILION PARISH 21-22 REOPENING GUIDANCE

SUBMITTED BY

Superintendent
Tommy Byler

DATE

August 4th, 2021
3:45 pm



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Superintendent's Message

AS PER OF THE AMERICAN RECOVERY PLAN ALL SCHOOLS MUST ADVERTISE AND MAKE AVAILABLE THE SCHOOL REOPENING PLAN. THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT IS VERMILION'S RESET REOPENING GUIDANCE FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR.



To our families, employees and stakeholders,

There is no doubt that we have had an unprecedented 18 months in Vermilion Parish. With COVID, hurricanes, freezes, and distance learning challenges, and the ongoing turmoil they have all caused we must continue as education stakeholders to look toward the future. The 2021 school year starts a new journey for our students on Wednesday, August 11.

We will be rolling out several new initiatives along with continuing some of our existing successful practices. VPSB will continue to work to provide safe and secure environment for our students including honoring recommended COVID 19 protocols. This return to school plan lays out operational guidance for the 2021-2022 school year.

Each student will be provided access to a Chromebook for students PK-12. We will continue to use the Google Suite as our Learning Management System. Students will utilize Google Classroom for access to distance learning materials when necessary. We have added programs such as Pear Deck, Go Gaurdian, and Mobile Minds to aid in our technological capacity.

Our Virtual Vermilion Learning option will continue to be offered for those students who qualify. The guidelines and operational protocols for this program are in line with pre-COVID requirements. We will be returning back to our original intentions of the program prior to last year's emergency COVID distance learning protocols.

Permanent repairs from last year's hurricanes are set to begin this year. The ongoing reimbursement issues and staging of work will drive the timelines of these projects.

No matter what hurdles come our way, Vermilion intends to stand UNITED to ensure academic achievement in 2021-2022.

Tommy Byler

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



The number one priority of the Vermilion Parish School System is maintaining the health and well-being of our students and staff. We are closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation and taking guidance from the Louisiana Department of Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The 2021-2022 Return to School Guidance provides an overview of COVID-19 health and safety protocols in place throughout Vermilion Parish Public Schools. This guidance will be evaluated and adjusted as the situation evolves and as new guidance from health and government officials is received. The Vermilion Parish Public School System adheres to national, state, and local guidance and requirements or mandates for safety protocols and operational standards to help keep our schools safe and our students, families, and employees healthy. School administrators use these standards to implement protocols at the school level. The protective measures outlined within this guidance are intended for students while on school campuses.

Vermilion Parish School System operations are guided by these key principles:

- Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction is a priority.
- Based upon the current guidelines provided, the Vermilion Parish Public School System will begin the school year in the traditional school setting as safely as possible.
- Schools will no longer be required to screen students at the beginning of each school day. It is important that all students and staff properly monitor their own symptoms and conduct screenings prior to attending school or work for the safety of themselves and others.
- At this time, face coverings are mandated for all individuals Kindergarten and up.
- All passengers (including K-12 students, drivers and monitors) on a school bus must wear a facial covering while using transportation, regardless of the capacity on the bus per [Presidential Executive Order No. 13998](#) for Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel.
- Vermilion Parish Public Schools will continue its efforts toward daily cleaning and disinfecting.
- Schools will continue to establish controlled routines for entrance, exit, and class exchanges to maximize distancing to the greatest extent possible during student transitional routines during the school day.
- Students should anticipate a return to the rigorous academic coursework they have come to expect from Vermilion Parish Public Schools. Students will be held accountable for attendance and grades for the upcoming school year regardless of instructional model.



COMMUNICATION PLAN



The operational and instructional plans will be implemented in Vermilion Parish schools based upon the Governor's declaration of school openings in the state of Louisiana. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on guidance from the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Office of Public Health (OPH).

The operational and instructional plans will be reassessed at the Governor's declarations along with up-to-date information from the Louisiana Department of Health and the Louisiana Department of Education. Upon the announcement of any phase declaration, the Vermilion Parish School System will communicate the transition process and the start date for the next phase.

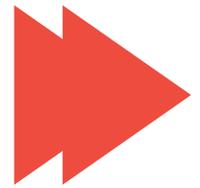
Parents and employees are strongly encouraged to access the most up-to-date information about the reopening of school and school operations through:

1. The district webpage - <https://www.vpsb.net>
2. Facebook Page - [Vermilion Parish School System](#)
3. Teacher, student, or parent emails, call-outs and/or text messages
4. Active Google Classrooms are mandatory for all grades PK-12 teachers
5. Point of contact - Justin Merritt, VPSB Risk Manager
6. Dedicated email address - legal@vpsb.net
7. Hotline - 337-740-VPSB (337-740-8772)

Parents should utilize the Student Progress Center by visiting <https://vermilion.edgear.net/progress/> or visiting their school or district websites. The Student Progress Center (SPC) will give parents access to current information regarding their child's schedule, attendance, classwork, interim progress report, report card grades, test scores, and registration information.



SYMPTOM MONITORING



According to the CDC, testing, contact tracing and isolation are among the most effective easy to manage COVID-19.

- Schools will no longer be required to screen students at the beginning of each school day. It is important that all students and staff properly monitor their own symptoms and conduct screenings prior to attending school or work for the safety of themselves and others.
- No student or staff member should attend school or work when experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms or experiencing a fever even without having other symptoms.
- Symptoms include a fever of 100.4°F or higher, new loss of taste or smell, new cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, new headache, sore throat, runny nose or congestion, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, and muscle or body aches.
- Students who become symptomatic while at school, or are in close contact with a confirmed positive, will be isolated and provided with the proper adult supervision until the student is able to return home. Isolation rooms must be disinfected after the sick child has gone home.
- It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to promptly pick up the student from school.
- In the case of a student who tests positive for COVID-19, parents are required to notify the school principal immediately.
- Local public health officials determine any additional steps related to communication, quarantining practices, enhanced cleaning or disinfection processes, or school facility closure. State of Louisiana contact tracers may conduct contact tracing activities, including school-based contacts.
- For more specific information regarding COVID-19, please see [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) | CDC](#).



CONTACT TRACING/QUARANTINES



Contact tracing and student/staff quarantines will remain in effect under the guidance of the CDC and LA Department of Health.

Given the levels of COVID-19 currently in our communities, schools should plan for and expect that some students will get COVID-19 during the school year. Schools should expect that there will be students who get COVID-19 and that those students will possibly expose other students/staff in the school setting.

- Students who are sick should stay home (regardless of illness).
- Students who have COVID-19 should stay home and remain isolated until they have recovered and have been determined to no longer be infectious according to CDC's end of isolation criteria.
- Individuals who were in close contact of the student may be identified and contacted as part of the Office of Public Health (OPH) contact tracing process.
- Close contact of a case is a person who was within six feet from the student for more than 15 minutes, determined by the OPH contact tracing process.
- All individuals meeting the close contact definition should be encouraged to seek testing immediately following notification and 5 to 7 days following last contact if the initial test was negative.
- **If both the case and the contact were engaged in consistent and correct use of a well-fitting face mask AND were within 3 to 6 feet of each other, then those close contacts do not need to quarantine.**
- Close contacts will be asked to stay home and monitor symptoms for 14 days (options to shorten duration are below).
- Not every student/faculty member in a school will need to stay home for 14 days, just those who are identified as close contacts to a case.

Options to shorten the duration of quarantine if contacts remain asymptomatic include:

- If no symptoms develop during quarantine AND they have a negative antigen or PCR/molecular test collected no earlier than day 5 after their last exposure: they may quarantine for 7 days from last contact with a COVID-19 case OR
- If no symptoms develop during quarantine and no testing is done: they may quarantine for 10 days from last contact with a COVID-19 case.
- If quarantine is shortened, daily symptom monitoring and strict adherence to prevention measures including social distancing, hand washing, and especially wearing masks/face coverings should continue until the full 14 days from last contact with a COVID-19 case.
- Because there is an increased risk of post-quarantine transmission associated with options to shorten quarantine, the 14-day quarantine period should be used in school settings where physical distancing among children is not maintained.



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- Close contacts who were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 90 days and remain asymptomatic do not need to quarantine.
 - Close contacts who are fully vaccinated (i.e., ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of one dose in a single-dose vaccine) at the time of exposure and remain asymptomatic do not need to quarantine.

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- **Teachers/Staff will not question students or other staff members about vaccination status. Vaccination status is only used during contact tracing protocols done by school administration to determine duration of quarantine.**
 - Students who are quarantined or isolated will transition to a distance learning platform or be given appropriate work assignments until they are able to return safely to school.
 - The decision to close schools is an individual, case-by-case process. That decision will ultimately be made by district and school leadership, with guidance and expertise from their Regional Medical Director.
 - Factors that will be considered in closing a school or classroom will be the level of community transmission, number of students/faculty affected and risk of spread at the school.
 - All decisions about implementing school-based strategies (e.g., dismissals, event cancellations, other social distancing measures) will be made locally, in collaboration with the superintendent/principal and Regional Medical Director.

MASKS

- Vermilion Parish will comply with all federal, state, and local mandates as it pertains to masks.
- At the present time, masks are mandated for all individuals Kindergarten and up.
- Face coverings must be solid in color with no writing or emblems, except school/district name or logo.
- Students who do not comply with the federal mandate for masks on public transportation will be reported to the school administration. The school will call the parents and the student will have to either wear the mask or find another means of transportation.
- All Vermilion parish facilities will follow the CDC guidelines
- Staff will not direct students to put on a mask when masks are not mandated.

****In the event of any recommendations becoming mandates from the federal, local or state government, the Vermilion Parish School Board will strictly adhere to these policies.**



ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS



BEFORE SCHOOL

Students riding the bus

- Buses will operate at 100% capacity.
- Masks must be worn at all times by all students Kindergarten and up as per [Presidential Executive Order No. 13998](#).
- Bus drivers must maintain updated seating charts.



Students arriving by vehicle or walking

- Students are currently required to wear a mask on campus.

Symptom monitoring upon entry into building

- No symptom monitoring at entry at this time

Breakfast

- Students will wash hands prior to collecting breakfast.
- All students will be required to collect a breakfast.
- If cafeterias are used for breakfast, students must maintain one seat space between each other.
- Grade-level/classroom/first hour locations will be designated in order to contact trace.
- Students may continue to eat breakfast in classrooms or outdoors.
- Cafeterias will serve from serving lines to the greatest extent possible

Hallways/Water Fountains

- Schools will continue to establish controlled routines for entrance, exit, and class exchanges to maximize distancing to the greatest extent possible during student transitions.
- Students will be spaced in the hallway and not crowd up, ensuring social distancing is maintained to the greatest extent possible.
- Water fountains will be available to use as filling stations, not for drinking. Students will be allowed to bring water from home (There are no guidelines on types of water bottles).
- Escorting the entire class to use the water fountain, one student after the other is not allowed. Water fountains should only be used intermittently throughout the day.
- Students are not allowed to use water fountains during class exchange.
- Sanitization of water fountains will occur every 2 hours by the custodial staff.

Use of gyms or multi-purpose buildings in morning

- The use of gyms/multi-purpose buildings are allowed without partitions.
- Students should be seated in designated grade-level/classroom/first hour locations in order to contact trace.

ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS



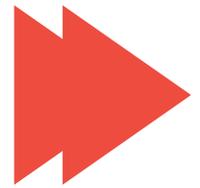
CLASSROOMS



- Social Distancing should be observed and encouraged to the greatest extent possible. (Current recommendation is: physical distance of at least three feet from other students and six feet from adults in a classroom or indoor setting, to the greatest extent possible. Adults should maintain six feet of distance from other adults to the greatest extent possible.)
- If someone is identified as a close contact and they have been vaccinated, they will be requested to show proof of vaccination to the administration and display no symptoms to bypass quarantining.
- High touch surfaces should be sanitized frequently throughout the day. In particular restrooms, light switches or equipment/supplies that have multiple student use through the day.
- Students and employees will continue to have access to handwashing stations and hand sanitizer throughout the day. Students and employees will be encouraged to utilize hand sanitization resources when entering the school, exchanging classes, before and after eating, and other times throughout the day as would be appropriate.
- Students may pass papers and use communal supplies in a classroom.
- In PE, students will be allowed to use the locker room and dress out and resume all physical activity. Staggering of locker room use may be necessary depending on ability to social distance per section. PE Locker rooms should be considered high-touch areas. Custodians should sanitize every 2 hours.
- K-5 will remain in static environments to the maximum extent possible to ensure contact tracing can be accomplished.
- Small groups, pull-out services, and intervention services are allowed but schools must have a way to contact trace. Classroom and pull-out service seating charts should be kept and maintained.
- Middle and High School are not required to be in static groups, however contact tracing must still be performed. Classroom seating charts should be kept and maintained for each section.



ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS



RECESS

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- Outdoor recess in schools may take place
 - Social distancing should be encouraged to the maximum extent possible
 - A maximum of 4 cohorts/groups/classes can mix outdoors.
 - Playground equipment may be used. High-touch surfaces and equipment should be sanitized frequently.
 - Students may remove masks outdoors.

LUNCH

- Prior to receiving lunch, all students must wash their hands.
- If using the cafeteria, middle and high school students must skip a seat in the cafeteria, unless coming by class/section.
- If cafeterias are used for lunch, elementary students who are in static groups can sit as a class without skipping seats. Student seating charts should be maintained for contact tracing purposes.
- Cafeterias will serve from serving lines to the greatest extent possible
- Eating in the classroom and/or outdoor spaces are still options.

DISMISSAL

- Students may be dismissed using pre-COVID protocols.
- Students waiting to get on a bus will put masks on while waiting for the bus and while on the bus. Students must have masks on prior to boarding the bus.





ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS



VISITORS



- School waiting areas will be open, however capacity restrictions should allow for social distancing to the greatest extent possible.
- All visitors must sign in with time of arrival.
- All visitors must wear a mask.

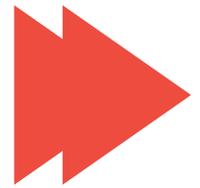
ASSEMBLIES

- Indoor assemblies are allowed, however capacity restrictions are dependent on the social distancing capabilities. If the space cannot accommodate social distancing recommendations, the assembly should take place outdoors or downsize the number of participants per rally/assembly/event.
- Meet and Greet/Orientations should adhere to assembly requirements above.

GROUP SIZE

- Maximum group sizes are no longer prescribed but an effort to remain attentive to distancing to the greatest extent possible will be pursued for both classrooms and large spaces.
- Schools will operate in static groups in lower grades when able to do so.
- Adults will work to maintain distance to the greatest extent possible when working with students within the context of effective instructional practices.
- Schools will be able to utilize large spaces such as cafeterias and gyms without the necessity of barriers or dividers between individual groups.

TRANSPORTATION



- Transportation Department buses will operate at 100% capacity.
- As specified in the [Louisiana Department of Education \(LDOE\) 2021-22 Operational Guidelines](#), all passengers (students [K-12] and adults) on a school bus must wear a facial covering while using transportation, regardless of the capacity on the bus per [Presidential Executive Order No. 13998](#) for Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel.
- This includes athletic teams, field trips, and extracurricular event usage.
- Bus drivers and all passengers should self-screen for symptoms of COVID-19 from home before entering the bus.
- Frequently touched surfaces will be wiped between each group using a disinfectant. The bus will be sanitized with a disinfectant between the morning and afternoon routes.
- Hand sanitizer and masks will be available on each bus.
- Windows may be kept open when it does not create a safety or health hazard.
- Seating charts will be maintained, updated and consistently enforced.

FOOD SERVICES

Students will be served breakfast and lunch according to nutrition guidelines. Meal service operations will vary from school to school.

- For the 2021-2022 school year, breakfast and lunch will be free for all students.
- Hand washing should occur before and after every meal by students, teachers, and cafeteria staff.
- Disposable utensils will be used for breakfast and lunch.
- Cafeterias and high-touch surfaces such as kitchen countertops, cafeteria and service tables, door handles, carts, and trays will be routinely cleaned throughout the school day.



TEACHING & LEARNING



Students should anticipate a return to the rigorous academic coursework they have come to expect from Vermilion Parish Public Schools. Students will be held accountable for attendance and grades for the upcoming school year regardless of instructional model.

There are three instructional delivery models that the Vermilion Parish Public School System is prepared to operate within at any given time throughout the 2021-2022 school year:

- **Traditional Learning:** Schools open daily to students while following recommended safety guidelines for social distancing and movement
 - **Hybrid Learning:** Combination of traditional and distance learning (A/B days in the event capacity restrictions warrant such adjustments).
 - **Distance Learning:** Remote instruction and learning based upon the virtual learning guidelines provided by the Vermilion Parish Public School System
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Regardless of instructional model, students will be responsible for their attendance and grades throughout the school year.

P.E. & ATHLETICS

There are currently no restrictions for physical education. Physical education classes may occur indoors or outdoors. There are currently no restrictions for athletic team practices and competitions. Athletics in high school will follow requirements as provided by the [Louisiana High School Athletic Association \(LHSAA\)](#).

BAND AND VOCAL MUSIC

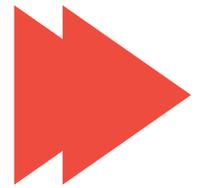
Band and vocal music will follow the [National Federation of State High School Associations](#) and the [National Association for Music Education Guidance](#).

WELLNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

The VPSB will ensure the well-being of all students and educators by providing social, emotional and behavioral health supports. The Vermilion Parish School System has also secured access to various programs and resources to ensure the well-being of our students and staff.



TEACHING & LEARNING



ASSESSING LEARNING NEEDS/INTERVENTIONS

Additional instructional support and targeted interventions will be provided as needed to students who are at risk of not graduating on time, students with exceptionalities, early grades, English Learners, and other students identified as being behind academically by teachers and parents.



STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES

Students with exceptionalities will continue to receive special education and related services in the least restrictive environment.

Gifted and talented services will continue to be offered to students in a face-to-face setting.

Please contact the Special Education Department @ (337) 898-5775 should you have any questions about your child's services.

The Vermilion Parish Public School System understands that a student's educational experience extends beyond the classroom. The district will make every effort to offer these experiences while complying with health and safety guidance.

