Schuyler Community Schools
Return to School Committee (2)
Monday, July 20, 2020 9:00 AM
Schuyler Community Schools Board Room
120 West 20th Street
Schuyler, NE 68661

I. Discussion Items
II. AGENDA

Prepared by: Christina Bywater, Secretary to the Board

Planning a Safe Return to School in Nebraska

Scenario 1: Minimal Community Spread

Virus Status	✓ Few, if any, active COVID-19 cases locally. ✓ This would correspond to late Phase three of early stage Four of the Nebraska Directed Health Measures.[1]
How to Keep School Communities Safe	✓ School preparedness activities primarily focused around awareness and updating emergency operations plans. ✓ Close and continuing communication between school and local public health leaders focused on local basic reproductive number and any changes in disease surveillance that would necessitate a change to “minimal to moderate spread” community spread status. ✓ Evaluate whether there are students or staff at risk for severe illness and develop or refine plans for remote work and education if necessary.[1] ✓ Encourage sick students and staff to stay home and consider waiving requirements for doctor’s excuse notes. ✓ Familiarize staff and students with approved personal protective equipment and policies for use in school. ✓ Clean and disinfect work and school areas regularly.
School Operating Status	✓ Open for in-person instruction.

Mental and Social Emotional Health

- ▢ Establish a crisis response team that includes school principals, school nurses, mental health specialists, and parents, to focus on student and staff mental health and wellness using trauma informed models.
- ▢ Assess natural resources (personnel, existing partners) to determine if there is a need for external support, and reach out to the existing vendor community to assess the potential for expanded work.
- ▢ Evaluate staff mental health readiness utilizing questionnaires, surveys, and direct outreach. If any screening does occur, it should comply with privacy and HIPAA requirements.
- ▢ Where feasible, institute a universal mental health screening tool that can be used for both teachers and students. If any screening does occur, it should comply with privacy and HIPAA requirements.
- ▢ Provide resources for staff self-care, including resiliency strategies.
- ▢ Designate a mental health liaison (school-based) who will work with the district, local public health agencies, and community partners.
- ▢ Consider additional resources required to serve special needs populations.

Hygiene

- ▢ Provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors (e.g. , soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for safe use by staff and older children, paper towels, and tissues).
- ▢ Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or the safe use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol by staff and older students.
- ▢ Systematically and frequently check and refill hand sanitizers
- ▢ Encourage staff and students to cough and sneeze into their elbows, or to cover with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- ▢ Limit sharing of personal items and supplies such as writing utensils.
- ▢ Keep students' personal items separate and in individually labeled cubbies, containers or lockers.

- Limit use of classroom materials to small groups and disinfect between uses or provide adequate supplies to assign for individual student use.

Spacing and Movement

- Changes to class sizes and spacing unnecessary; can resume normal seating.

- No changes in movement between classes is required.

Screening Students

- Children who become ill at school should be placed in a designated area of quarantine with a surgical mask in place. Nurses should wear N95 masks when caring for these students.

- Students sent home from school should be kept home until they have tested negative or have completely recovered according to CDC guidelines.

- Students are allowed to enter the building at only 1-2 sites and must egress from other exits to keep traffic moving in a single direction.

- Parents are not allowed in the school building except under extenuating circumstances determined by district and school officials; adults entering the building should wash or sanitize hands prior to entering.

- Only one parent per child should be allowed to enter except under extenuating circumstances determined by district and school officials.

- Strict records, including day and time, should be kept of non-school employees entering and exiting the building.

- Parents are encouraged to check student's temperature at home every morning using oral, tympanic, or temporal scanners; students with a temperature of 100.4 or greater should stay home and consider coronavirus testing if no other explanation is available.

- Parents are encouraged to ask their children or monitor for symptoms of COVID-19, including cough, congestion, shortness of breath, or gastrointestinal symptoms every morning. Any positives should prompt the parent to keep the student home from school.

- If resources allow, temperature checks on students can be performed once per day by staff; febrile students should be sent to the nurse's office for transport home.

Testing Protocols for Students and Responding to Positive Cases

- Students who develop fever or fall ill at school should be transported by their parents, or ambulance if clinically unstable, for off site testing.

- Parents should be notified of the presence of any positive cases in the classroom and/or school to encourage closer observation for any symptoms at home.

- Students sent home from school should be kept home until they have tested negative or have completely recovered according to CDC guidelines.

- In the event that a student tests positive, immediate efforts should be made to contact any close contacts (those who spent more than 10 minutes in close proximity to the student) so that they can be quarantined at home. Classmates should be closely monitored for any symptoms. At this time, empiric testing of all students in the class is not recommended, only those that develop symptoms require testing.

- Parents are encouraged to check student's temperature at home every morning using oral, tympanic, or temporal scanners; students with a temperature of 100.4 greater should stay home and consider coronavirus testing if no other explanation is available.

- Parents are encouraged to ask their children or monitor for any cough, congestion, shortness of breath, or gastrointestinal symptoms every morning. Any positives should prompt the parent to keep the student home from school and seek out testing.

Responding to Positive Tests Among Staff and Students

- In the event of a positive test among staff or a student, the classroom or areas exposed should be immediately closed until cleaning and disinfection can be performed.

    - If the person was in the school building without a facial covering, or large areas of the school were exposed to the person, short term dismissals (2-5 days) may be required to clean and disinfect the larger

areas. This decision should be made in concert with the local public health department.

- If possible, smaller areas should be closed for 24 hours before cleaning to minimize the risk of any airborne particles.

- Cleaning staff should wear an N95 respirator when performing cleaning of these areas along with gloves and face shield. Districts should work with local public health departments to fit staff for N95 respirators.

Dining, Gathering and Extracurricular Activities

- Encourage students, teachers, and cafeteria staff to wash hands before and after every meal.

- Meal activities continue per normal operating procedures.

- When possible, students and teachers wash hands before and after every event.

- Large scale gatherings are allowed per normal operating status.

- Extracurricular activities and gatherings conducted normally.

- After school programs are open and operating normally.

Athletics

- All activities are allowed to continue per normal procedures.

- Spectator events are allowed per normal procedures.

Personal Protective Equipment

- No personal protective equipment is required for staff or students.

- Regular use of hand sanitizer and hand washing is encouraged.

Cleaning

- School campuses should undergo normal cleaning on a daily basis.

- Strongly recommended that frequently touched surfaces including lights, doors, benches, bathrooms, etc. should undergo cleaning with either an

EPA-approved disinfectant or dilute bleach solution (⅓ cup bleach in 1 gallon of water) at least twice daily.[2]

- Libraries, computer labs, arts, and other hands-on classrooms should undergo standard cleaning procedures per normal operating status.

- Strongly suggested that student desks should be wiped down with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or dilute bleach solution at the beginning and end of every day.

- Strongly suggested that playground equipment and athletic equipment can be cleaned with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or dilute bleach solution twice daily.

- Strongly suggested that staff should wear gloves, surgical mask, and face shield when performing all cleaning activities.

Busing and Student Transportation

- School busing operations proceed normally.

- No changes to schedules or seating patterns on the buses are required.

Medically Vulnerable Students and Teachers

- Systematically review all current plans (e.g., Individual Healthcare Plans, Individualized Education Plans or 504 plans) for accommodating students with special healthcare needs and update their care plans as needed to decrease their risk for exposure to SARS-coV-2.
- Create a process for students/families and staff to self-identify as high risk for severe illness due to SARS-coV2 and have a plan in place to address requests for alternative learning arrangements or work re-assignments.
- Enable staff that self-identify as high risk for severe illness to minimize face-to-face contact and to allow them to maintain a distance of 6 feet from others, modify job responsibilities that limit exposure risk, or to telework if possible.

Scenario 2: Minimal to Moderate Local Community Spread

Virus Status	✓ Percent of positive tests, daily hospitalizations, and number of deaths clearly declining. ✓ Need for continued social distancing, use of facial coverings, and mitigation in school and workplace settings. ✓ Gathering sizes limited to small numbers. ✓ This would correspond to phase 2 of Nebraska Directed Health Measures. ✓ Healthcare system capacity continues to strengthen. ✓ Robust testing, contact tracing, and containment protocols in place. ✓ This

How to Keep School Communities Safe	✓ School preparedness and response activities shift from ongoing surveillance to a series of active mitigation measures. ✓ Schools should be prepared to immediately implement social distancing measures that include: ✓ Reducing the frequency of large gatherings, ✓ Altering schedules, ✓ Limiting inter-school interactions, and ✓ Deploying distance learning. ✓ Short-term dismissals of 2-5 days and suspension of extracurricular activities should be expected for cleaning and contact tracing purposes. ✓ Students and teachers at increased risk of severe illness should be prepared to implement distance teaching and learning modalities.
School Operating Status	✓ Situation dependent

Mental and Social Emotional Health

- Establish a crisis response team that includes school principals, school nurses, mental health specialists, and parents, to focus on student and staff mental health and wellness using trauma informed models.
- Evaluate staff mental health readiness utilizing questionnaires, surveys, and direct outreach. If any screening does occur, it should comply with privacy and HIPAA requirements.
- Where feasible, institute a universal mental health screening tool that can be used for both teachers and students. If any screening does occur, it should comply with privacy and HIPAA requirements.
- Provide resources for staff self-care, including resiliency strategies.
- Designate a mental health liaison (school-based) who will work with the district, local public health agencies, and community partners.
- Consider additional resources required to serve special needs populations.[2]

Hygiene

- Provide adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors (e.g. , soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for safe use by staff and older children, paper towels, and tissues).
- Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or the safe use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol by staff and older students.
- Systematically and frequently check and refill hand sanitizers
- Encourage staff and students to cough and sneeze into their elbows, or to cover with a tissue. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Limit sharing of personal items and supplies such as writing utensils.
- Keep students' personal items separate and in individually labeled cubbies, containers or lockers.
- Limit use of classroom materials to small groups and disinfect between uses or provide adequate supplies to assign for individual student use.

Spacing, Movement and Access

- Spacing is six feet between desks.
- In early grades, K-2, where tables are utilized, recommend spacing students as far apart as feasible
- Arrange all desks facing the same direction toward the front of the classroom.
- Class sizes should be kept to less than 20 students or less (as afforded by necessary spacing requirements and personnel).
    - If all students cannot fit in the classroom space available, it is recommended that a staggered school schedule that incorporates alternative dates of attendance or use of virtual teaching be implemented.
- Teachers should try to maintain six feet of spacing between themselves and students as much as possible.
- Assemblies of less than 50 students at a time are discouraged but allowed as long as facial coverings remain in use.
- Large scale assemblies of more than 50 students should be discontinued.
- Facial coverings should be worn at all times in hallways for grades K-12, as feasible or tolerated and/or most essential in times where physical distancing is difficult. Any one that has trouble breathing or is unconscious should not wear a facial covering. Any one that is incapacitated or unable to remove the facial covering without assistance, should not wear a facial covering.
- Classroom windows should be open as much as possible and conditions allow.
- As able, schools should try to cohort groups of students to isolated hallways or areas that can be monitored for positive cases if there is a SARS-coV-2 exposure.
- As able, specialists from laboratories, libraries, and other specialized services or locations should be brought to the classrooms instead of having students transit to those locations.
- Flow of foot traffic should be directed in only one direction, if possible.

- If one way flow is not possible, hallways can be divided with either side following the same direction.

- Efforts should be made to try and keep six feet of distance between persons in the hallways.

- Staggered movements at incremental intervals should be used if feasible to minimize the number of persons in the hallways as able.

- Floor tape or other markers should be used at six foot intervals where line formation is anticipated.

- Provide social distancing floor/seating markings in waiting and reception areas
- Mark six feet of spacing to remind students and staf to always stay six feet apart in lines and at other times when they may congregate
- Provide marks on the doors of restrooms to indicate proper social distancing
- Have staff monitor arrival and dismissal to discourage congregating and ensure students go straight from a vehicle to their classrooms and vice-versa

Screening Students

- Children who become ill at school should be placed in a designated area of quarantine with a surgical mask in place. Nurses should wear N95 masks when caring for these students.

- Students sent home from school should be kept home until they have tested negative or have completely recovered according to CDC guidelines.

- Students are allowed to enter the building at only 1-2 sites and must egress from other exits to keep traffic moving in a single direction.

- Parents are not allowed in the school building except under extenuating circumstances determined by district and school officials; adults entering the building should wash or sanitize hands prior to entering.

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- Parents are encouraged to ask their children or monitor for symptoms of COVID-19, including cough, congestion, shortness of breath, or gastrointestinal symptoms every morning. Any positives should prompt the parent to keep the student home from school.

- If resources allow, temperature checks on students can be performed once per day by staff; febrile students should be sent to the nurse's office for transport home.

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- Students who develop fever or become ill at school should be transported by their parents, or ambulance if clinically unstable, for off site testing.

- Parents should be notified of the presence of any positive cases in the classroom and/or school to encourage closer observation for any symptoms at home.

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- In the event that a student tests positive, immediate efforts should be made to contact any close contacts (those who spent more than 10 minutes in close proximity to the student) so that they can be quarantined at home. Classmates should be closely monitored for any symptoms. At this time, empiric testing of all students in the class is not recommended, only those that develop symptoms require testing.

- Parents are encouraged to check student's temperature at home every morning using oral, tympanic, or temporal scanners; students with a temperature of 100.4 greater should stay home and consider coronavirus testing if no other explanation is available.

- Parents are encouraged to ask their children or monitor for any cough, congestion, shortness of breath, or gastrointestinal symptoms every morning. Any positives should prompt the parent to keep the student home from school and seek out testing.

Responding to Positive Tests Among Staff and Students

- In the event of a positive test among staff or a student, the classroom or areas exposed should be immediately closed until cleaning and disinfection can be performed.
    - If the person was in the school building without a facial covering, or large areas of the school were exposed to the person, short term dismissals (2-5 days) may be required to clean and disinfect the larger areas. This decision should be made in concert with the local public health department.
- If possible, smaller areas should be closed for 24 hours before cleaning to minimize the risk of any airborne particles.
- Cleaning staff should wear an N95 respirator when performing cleaning of these areas along with gloves and face shield. Districts should work with local public health departments to fit staff for N95 respirators.

Dining, Gathering, and Extracurricular Activities

- If cafeterias need to be used, meal times must be staggered to create seating arrangements with six feet of distance between students.
    - Disposable utensils should be employed.
    - Serving and cafeteria staff should use barrier protection including gloves, face shields, and surgical masks; N95 respirators are not required.
- Assemblies of up to 50 students at a time are discouraged but allowed as long as facial coverings remain in use.
- Outside guests are not allowed to attend.
- Large scale assemblies of more than 50 students should be discontinued.
- Off-site field trips discontinued.
- Students, teachers, and cafeteria staff wash hands before and after every meal.

- If possible, classrooms should be utilized for eating in place, taking into consideration food allergies.
- If possible, school supplied meals should be delivered to classrooms with disposable utensils.
- These assemblies, schools will offer telecasting of events if able.
- Students and teachers wash hands before and after every event.
- After school programs may continue with the use of facial coverings.

Athletics

Required

- Students, teachers, and staff wash hands before and after every practice, event, or other gathering. Every participant should confirm that they are healthy and without any symptoms prior to any event.
- All equipment should be disinfected before and after use.
- Schools should follow guidance from the Nebraska High School Athletics Association and local public health departments when deciding which sports can be safely conducted and with any restrictions required.
    - Spectators are allowed provided that face facial coverings are used by observers at all times.
- (E) Weight room and physical conditioning activities should follow guidance from the Nebraska High School Athletics Association.
- Sports that do not allow adequate distancing such as football, wrestling, basketball, etc. should be discontinued.
- Large scale spectator or stadium events are not allowed
- Locker rooms and group changing areas should be closed.
- Handshakes, fist bumps, and other unnecessary contact should be minimized.

- Any uniforms or other clothing that need to be washed/laundered at school can be washed in warm water with regular detergent. These should be single use without sharing of ice towels or other materials.

- Each participant should use a clearly marked water bottle for individual use. There should be no sharing of this equipment.

Personal Protective Equipment

- All staff and students should wear facing coverings at all times except for meals; facial coverings may be homemade or disposable level one (basic) grade surgical masks. Any one that has trouble breathing or is unconscious should not wear a facial covering. Any one that is incapacitated or unable to remove the facial covering without assistance, should not wear a facial covering.

- Gowns, hair coverings, and shoe covers are not required.

Cleaning

- Frequently touched surfaces including lights, doors, benches, bathrooms, etc. should undergo cleaning with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or dilute bleach solution should now be cleaned every two-four hours.

- Libraries, computer labs, arts, and other hands on classrooms should undergo cleaning with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or dilute bleach solution should now be cleaned after every class period. Efforts should be made to minimize sharing of materials between students as able.

- Student desks should be wiped down with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or dilute bleach solution after every class period.

- Playground equipment and athletic equipment can be cleaned with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or dilute bleach solution twice daily.

- Staff should wear gloves, surgical mask, and face shield when performing all cleaning activities.

Busing and Student Transportation

- Clean and disinfect transportation vehicles regularly. Children must not be present when a vehicle is being cleaned.

- Ensure safe and correct use and storage of cleaning and disinfection products, including storing products securely away from children and adequate ventilation when staf use such products.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in the vehicle (e g , surfaces in the driver's cockpit, hard seats, arm rests, door handles, seat belt buckles, light and air controls, doors and windows, and grab handles) prior to morning routes and prior to afternoon routes.
- Keep doors and windows open when cleaning the vehicle and between trips to let the vehicles thoroughly air out.
- Clean, sanitize, and disinfect equipment including items such as car seats and seat belts, wheelchairs, walkers, and adaptive equipment being transported to schools.
- Create a plan for getting students home safely if they are not allowed to board the vehicle.
- Create a policy that if an individual becomes sick during the day, they must not use group transportation to return home and must follow protocols outlined above.
- If a driver becomes sick during the day, they must follow protocols for sick staff above and must not return to drive students.
- Encourage the use of hand sanitizer before entering the bus. Where possible, hand sanitizer should be supplied on the bus.
- Where possible, allow for six feet of social distancing between students, and between students and the driver, while seated on vehicles if feasible (e.g., by utilizing larger vehicles with more seats, by increasing frequency of routes to reduce occupancy, one rider per seat in every other row)
- (Consider keeping windows open while the vehicle is in motion to help reduce spread of the virus by increasing air circulation, if appropriate and safe

Medically Vulnerable Students and Staff

- Systematically review all current plans (e.g., Individual Healthcare Plans, Individualized Education Plans or 504 plans) for accommodating students with special healthcare needs and update their care plans as needed to decrease their risk for exposure to SARS-coV-2.
- Create a process for students/families and staff to self-identify as high risk for severe illness due to SARS-coV2 and have a plan in place to address requests for alternative learning arrangements or work re-assignments
- Enable staff that self-identify as high risk for severe illness to minimize face-to-face contact and to allow them to maintain a distance of 6 feet from others, modify job responsibilities that limit exposure risk, or to telework if possible.

Scenario 3: Significant Community Spread

Virus Status	✓ ✓ A rapidly increasing percentage of positive COVID-19 tests and daily hospitalizations over a 14-day period ✓ Public health capacity that is likely exceeded including an inadequate number of contact tracing professionals for the local community ✓ Testing capacity that is likely inadequate for needs of the local community ✓ This would correspond with phase One of Nebraska Directed Health Measures
How to Keep School Communities Safe	✓ Nebraska leaders have decided to return to Phase One of the Directed Health Measures or complete shutdown of the state. ✓ School preparedness and response activities shift from an ongoing surveillance footing to a series of active mitigation measures. ✓ Schools should be closed for all in-house activities for an extended period of time
School Operating Status	✓ Schools are closed for in-person instruction.

Suggested Protocols

Spacing and Movement

- Schools are closed for in-person instruction.

Screening Students

- Schools are closed for in-person instruction.

Dining, Gathering and Extracurricular Activities

- Schools enact off site food programs.

Athletics

- All athletics are suspended.

Personal Protective Equipment and Hygiene

- Schools are closed for in-person instruction.

Cleaning

- Schools are closed and cleaning practices adjusted to maintain school buildings in clean and well functioning order.

Busing and Student Transportation

- All busing operations are suspended.

Medically Vulnerable Students and Teachers

- All teaching should be moved to video conferencing platforms[3] .

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[1] Defined as having advanced age >55, hypertension, diabetes, pulmonary disease including asthma and/or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and those with immunosuppression or on immunosuppressive medications.

[2] https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2

NE - confirm with public health.

NE - for review/updates from your team.

NE - not sure what language you use here.

COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Re-entry

The purpose of this guidance is to support education, public health, local leadership, and pediatricians collaborating with schools in creating policies for school re-entry that foster the overall health of children, adolescents, staff, and communities and are based on available evidence. Schools are fundamental to child and adolescent development and well-being and provide our children and adolescents with academic instruction, social and emotional skills, safety, reliable nutrition, physical/speech and mental health therapy, and opportunities for physical activity, among other benefits. Beyond supporting the educational development of children and adolescents, schools play a critical role in addressing racial and social inequity. As such, it is critical to reflect on the differential impact SARS-CoV-2 and the associated school closures have had on different races, ethnic and vulnerable populations. These recommendations are provided acknowledging that our understanding of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic is changing rapidly.

Any school re-entry policies should consider the following key principles:

- School policies must be flexible and nimble in responding to new information, and administrators must be willing to refine approaches when specific policies are not working.
- It is critically important to develop strategies that can be revised and adapted depending on the level of viral transmission in the school and throughout the community and done with close communication with state and/or local public health authorities and recognizing the differences between school districts, including urban, suburban, and rural districts.
- Policies should be practical, feasible, and appropriate for child and adolescent's developmental stage.
- Special considerations and accommodations to account for the diversity of youth should be made, especially for our vulnerable populations, including those who are medically fragile, live in poverty, have developmental challenges, or have special health care needs or disabilities, with the goal of safe return to school.
- No child or adolescents should be excluded from school unless required in order to adhere to local public health mandates or because of unique medical needs. Pediatricians, families, and schools should partner together to collaboratively identify and develop accommodations, when needed.
- School policies should be guided by supporting the overall health and well-being of all children, adolescents, their families, and their communities. These policies should be consistently communicated in languages other than English, if needed, based on the languages spoken in the community, to avoid marginalization of parents/guardians who are of limited English proficiency or do not speak English at all.

With the above principles in mind, **the AAP strongly advocates that all policy considerations for the coming school year should start with a goal of having students physically present in school**. The importance of in-person learning is well-documented, and there is already evidence of the negative impacts on children because of school closures in the spring of 2020. Lengthy time away from school and associated interruption of supportive services often results in social isolation, making it difficult for schools to identify and address important learning deficits as well as child and adolescent physical or sexual abuse, substance use, depression, and suicidal ideation. This, in turn, places children and adolescents at considerable risk of morbidity and, in some cases, mortality. Beyond the educational impact and social impact of school closures, there has been substantial impact on food security and physical activity for children and families.

Policy makers must also consider the mounting evidence regarding COVID-19 in children and adolescents, including the role they may play in transmission of the infection. SARS-CoV-2 appears to behave differently in children and adolescents than other common respiratory viruses, such as influenza, on which much of the current guidance regarding school closures is based. Although children and adolescents play a major role in amplifying influenza outbreaks, to date, this does not appear to be the case with SARS-CoV-2. Although many questions remain, the preponderance of evidence indicates that children and adolescents are less likely to be symptomatic and less likely to have severe disease resulting from SARS-CoV-2 infection. In addition, children may be less likely to become infected and to spread infection. Policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within schools must be balanced with the known harms to children, adolescents, families, and the community by keeping children at home.

Finally, policy makers should acknowledge that COVID-19 policies are intended to mitigate, not eliminate, risk. No single action or set of actions will completely eliminate the risk of SARS-CoV-2 transmission, but implementation of several coordinated interventions can greatly reduce that risk. For example, where physical distance cannot be maintained, students (over the age of 2 years) and staff can wear face coverings (when feasible). In the following sections, we review some general principles that policy makers should consider as they plan for the coming school year. For all of these, education for the entire school community regarding these measures should begin early, ideally at least several weeks before the start of the school year.

Physical Distancing Measures

Physical distancing, sometimes referred to as social distancing, is simply the act of keeping people separated with the goal of limiting spread of contagion between individuals. It is fundamental to lowering the risk of spread of SARS-CoV-2, as the primary mode of transmission is through respiratory droplets by persons in close proximity. There is a conflict between optimal academic and social/emotional learning in schools and strict adherence to current physical distancing guidelines. For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that schools "space seating/desks at least 6 feet apart when feasible." In many school settings, 6 feet between students is not feasible without limiting the number of students. Evidence suggests that spacing as close as 3 feet may approach the benefits of 6 feet of space, particularly if students are wearing face coverings and are asymptomatic. Schools should weigh the benefits of strict adherence to a 6-feet spacing rule between students with the potential downside if remote learning is the only alternative. Strict adherence to a specific size of student

groups (eg, 10 per classroom, 15 per classroom, etc) should be discouraged in favor of other risk mitigation strategies. Given what is known about transmission dynamics, adults and adult staff within schools should attempt to maintain a distance of 6 feet from other persons as much as possible, particularly around other adult staff. For all of the below settings, physical distancing by and among adults is strongly recommended, and meetings and curriculum planning should take place virtually if possible. In addition, other strategies to increase adult-adult physical distance in time and space should be implemented, such as staggered drop-offs and pickups, and drop-offs and pickups outside when weather allows. Parents should, in general, be discouraged from entering the school building. Physical barriers, such as plexiglass, should be considered in reception areas and employee workspaces where the environment does not accommodate physical distancing, and congregating in shared spaces, such as staff lounge areas, should be discouraged.

The recommendations in each of the age groups below are not instructional strategies but are strategies to optimize the return of students to schools in the context of physical distancing guidelines and the developmentally appropriate implementation of the strategies. Educational experts may have preference for one or another of the guidelines based on the instructional needs of the classes or schools in which they work.

Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K)

In Pre-K, the relative impact of physical distancing among children is likely small based on current evidence and certainly difficult to implement. Therefore, Pre-K should focus on more effective risk mitigation strategies for this population. These include hand hygiene, infection prevention education for staff and families, adult physical distancing from one another, adults wearing face coverings, cohorting, and spending time outdoors.

Higher-priority strategies:

- Cohort classes to minimize crossover among children and adults within the school; the exact size of the cohort may vary, often dependent on local or state health department guidance.
- Utilize outdoor spaces when possible.
- Limit unnecessary visitors into the building.

Lower-priority strategies:

- Face coverings(cloth) for children in the Pre-K setting may be difficult to implement.
- Reducing classmate interactions/play in Pre-K aged children may not provide substantial COVID-19 risk reduction.

Elementary Schools

Higher-priority strategies:

- Children should wear face coverings when harms (eg, increasing hand-mouth/nose contact) do not outweigh benefits (potential COVID-19 risk reduction).
- Desks should be placed 3 to 6 feet apart when feasible (if this reduces the amount of time children are present in school, harm may outweigh potential benefits).
- Cohort classes to minimize crossover among children and adults within the school.
- Utilize outdoor spaces when possible.

Lower-priority strategies:

- The risk reduction of reducing class sizes in elementary school-aged children may be outweighed by the challenge of doing so.
- Similarly, reducing classmate interactions/play in elementary school-aged children may not provide enough COVID-19 risk reduction to justify potential harms.

Secondary Schools

There is likely a greater impact of physical distancing on risk reduction of COVID in secondary schools than early childhood or elementary education. There are also different barriers to successful implementation of many of these measures in older age groups, as the structure of school is usually based on students changing classrooms. Suggestions for physical distancing risk mitigation strategies when feasible:

- Universal face coverings in middle and high schools when not able to maintain a 6-foot distance (students and adults).
- Particular avoidance of close physical proximity in cases of increased exhalation (singing, exercise); these activities are likely safest outdoors and spread out.
- Desks should be placed 3 to 6 feet apart when feasible.
- Cohort classes if possible, limit cross-over of students and teachers to the extent possible.
    - Ideas that may assist with cohorting:
        - Block schedule (much like colleges, intensive 1-month blocks).
        - Eliminate use of lockers or assign them by cohort to reduce need for hallway use across multiple areas of the building. (This strategy would need to be done in conjunction with planning to ensure students are not carrying home an unreasonable number of books on a daily basis and may vary depending on other cohorting and instructional decisions schools are making.)
        - Have teachers rotate instead of students when feasible.
        - Utilize outdoor spaces when possible.
        - Teachers should maintain 6 feet from students when possible and if not disruptive to educational process.
        - Restructure elective offerings to allow small groups within one classroom. This may not be possible in a small classroom.

Special Education

Every child and adolescent with a disability is entitled to a free and appropriate education and is entitled to special education services based on their individualized education program (IEP). Students receiving special education services may be more negatively affected by distance-learning and may be disproportionately impacted by interruptions in regular education. It may not be feasible, depending on the needs of the individual child and adolescent, to adhere both to distancing guidelines and the criteria outlined in a specific IEP. Attempts to meet physical distancing guidelines should meet the needs of the individual child and may require creative solutions, often on a case-by-case basis.

Physical Distancing in Specific Enclosed Spaces

Bussing

- Encourage alternative modes of transportation for students who have other options.
- Ideally, for students riding the bus, symptom screening would be performed prior to being dropped off at the bus. Having bus drivers or monitors perform these screenings is problematic, as they may face a situation in which a student screens positive yet the parent has left, and the driver would be faced with leaving the student alone or allowing the student on the bus.
- Assigned seating; if possible, assign seats by cohort (same students sit together each day).
- Tape marks showing students where to sit.
- When a 6-foot distance cannot be maintained between students, face coverings should be worn.
- Drivers should be a minimum of 6 feet from students; driver must wear face covering; consider physical barrier for driver (eg, plexiglass).
- Minimize number of people on the bus at one time within reason.
- Adults who do not need to be on the bus should not be on the bus.
- Have windows open if weather allows.

Hallways

- Consider creating one-way hallways to reduce close contact.
- Place physical guides, such as tape, on floors or sidewalks to create one-way routes.
- Where feasible, keep students in the classroom and rotate teachers instead.
- Stagger class periods by cohorts for movement between classrooms if students must move between classrooms to limit the number of students in the hallway when changing classrooms.
- Assign lockers by cohort or eliminate lockers altogether.

Playgrounds

Enforcing physical distancing in an outside playground is difficult and may not be the most effective method of risk mitigation. Emphasis should be placed on cohorting students and

limiting the size of groups participating in playground time. Outdoor transmission of virus is known to be much lower than indoor transmission.

Meals/Cafeteria

School meals play an important part in addressing food security for children and adolescents. Decisions about how to serve meals must take into account the fact that in many communities there may be more students eligible for free and reduced meals than prior to the pandemic.

- Consider having students cohorted, potentially in their classrooms, especially if students remain in their classroom throughout the day.
- Create separate lunch periods to minimize the number of students in the cafeteria at one time.
- Utilize additional spaces for lunch/break times.
- Utilize outdoor spaces when possible.
- Create an environment that is as safe as possible from exposure to food allergens.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after eating.

Cleaning and Disinfection

The main mode of COVID-19 spread is from person to person, primarily via droplet transmission. For this reason, strategies for infection prevention should center around this form of spread, including physical distancing, face coverings, and hand hygiene. Given the challenges that may exist in children and adolescents in effectively adhering to recommendations, it is critical staff are setting a good example for students by modeling behaviors around physical distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene. Infection via aerosols and fomites is less likely. However, because the virus may survive in certain surfaces for some time, it is possible to get infected after touching a virus contaminated surface and then touching the mouth, eyes, or nose. Frequent handwashing as a modality of containment is vital.

Cleaning should be performed per established protocols followed by disinfection when appropriate. Normal cleaning with soap and water decreases the viral load and optimizes the efficacy of disinfectants. When using disinfectants, the manufacturers' instructions must be followed, including duration of dwell time, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), if indicated, and proper ventilation. The use of EPA approved disinfectants against COVID-19 is recommended (EPA List N). When possible, only products labeled as safe for humans and the environment (eg, Safer or Designed for the Environment), containing active ingredients such as hydrogen peroxide, ethanol, citric acid, should be selected from this list, because they are less toxic, are not strong respiratory irritants or asthma triggers, and have no known carcinogenic, reproductive, or developmental effects.

When EPA-approved disinfectants are not available, alternative disinfectants such as diluted bleach or 70% alcohol solutions can be used. Children should not be present when disinfectants are in use and should not participate in disinfecting activities. Most of these products are not safe for use by children, whose "hand-to-mouth" behaviors and frequent touching of their face and eyes put them at higher risk for toxic exposures. If disinfection is needed while children are in

the classroom, adequate ventilation should be in place and nonirritating products should be used. Disinfectants such as bleach and those containing quaternary ammonium compounds or “Quats” should not be used when children and adolescents are present, because these are known respiratory irritants.

In general, elimination of high-touch surfaces is preferable to frequent cleaning. For example, classroom doors can be left open rather than having students open the door when entering and leaving the classroom or the door can be closed once all students have entered followed by hand sanitizing. As part of increasing social distance between students and surfaces requiring regular cleaning, schools could also consider eliminating the use of lockers, particularly if they are located in shared spaces or hallways, making physical distancing more challenging. If schools decide to use this strategy, it should be done within the context of ensuring that students are not forced to transport unreasonable numbers of books back and forth from school on a regular basis.

When elimination is not possible, surfaces that are used frequently, such a drinking fountains, door handles, sinks and faucet handles, etc, should be cleaned and disinfected at least daily and as often as possible. Bathrooms, in particular, should receive frequent cleaning and disinfection. Shared equipment including computer equipment, keyboards, art supplies, and play or gym equipments should also be disinfected frequently. Hand washing should be promoted before and after touching shared equipment. Computer keyboard covers can be used to facilitate cleaning between users. Routine cleaning practices should be used for indoor areas that have not been used for 7 or more days or outdoor equipment. Surfaces that are not high touch, such as bookcases, cabinets, wall boards, or drapes should be cleaned following standard protocol. The same applies to floors or carpeted areas.

Outdoor playgrounds/natural play areas only need routine maintenance, and hand hygiene should be emphasized before and after use of these spaces. Outdoor play equipment with high-touch surfaces, such as railings, handles, etc, should be cleaned and disinfected regularly if used continuously.

UV light kills viruses and bacteria and is used in some controlled settings as a germicide. UV light-emitting devices should not be used in the school setting, because they are not safe for children and adults and can cause skin and eye damage.

Testing and Screening

Virologic testing is an important part of the overall public health strategy to limit the spread of COVID-19. Virologic testing detects the viral RNA from a respiratory (usually nasal) swab specimen. Testing all students for acute SARS-CoV-2 infection prior to the start of school is not feasible in most settings at this time. Even in places where this is possible, it is not clear that such testing would reduce the likelihood of spread within schools. It is important to recognize that virologic testing only shows whether a person is infected at that specific moment in time. It is also possible that the nasal swab virologic test result can be negative during the early incubation period of the infection. So, although a negative virologic test result is reassuring, it does not mean that the student or school staff member is not going to subsequently develop

COVID-19. Stated another way, a student who is negative for COVID 19 on the first day of school may not remain negative throughout the school year.

If a student or school staff member has a known exposure to COVID-19 (eg, a household member with laboratory-confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection or illness consistent with COVID-19) or has COVID-19 symptoms, having a negative virologic test result, according to CDC guidelines, may be warranted for local health authorities to make recommendations regarding contact tracing and/ or school exclusion or school closure.

The other type of testing is serologic blood testing for antibodies to SARS-CoV-2. At the current time, serologic testing should not be used for individual decision-making and has no place in considerations for entrance to or exclusion from school. CDC guidance regarding antibody testing for COVID-19 is that serologic test results should not be used to make decisions about grouping people residing in or being admitted to congregate settings, such as schools, dormitories, or correctional facilities. Additionally, serologic test results should not be used to make decisions about returning people to the workplace. The CDC states that serologic testing should not be used to determine immune status in individuals until the presence, durability, and duration of immunity is established. The AAP recommends this guidance be applied to school settings as well.

Schools should have a policy regarding symptom screening and what to do if a student or school staff member becomes sick with COVID-19 symptoms. Temperature checks and symptom screening are a frequent part of many reopening processes to identify symptomatic persons to exclude them from entering buildings and business establishments. The list of symptoms of COVID-19 infection has grown since the start of the pandemic and the manifestations of COVID-19 infection in children, although similar, is often not the same as that for adults. **School policies regarding temperature screening and temperature checks must balance the practicality of performing these screening procedures for large numbers of students and staff with the information known about how children manifest COVID-19 infection, the risk of transmission in schools, and the possible lost instructional time to conduct the screenings.** Schools should develop plans for rapid response to a student or staff member with fever who is in the school regardless of the implementation of temperature checks or symptom screening prior to entering the school building. In many cases, it will not be practical for temperature checks to be performed prior to students arriving at school. **Parents should be instructed to keep their child at home if they are ill.** Any student or staff member with a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection should not be present in school.

In lieu of temperature checks and symptom screening being performed after arrival to school, **methods to allow parent report of temperature checks done at home may be considered.** Resources and time may necessitate this strategy at most schools. The epidemiology of disease in children along with evidence of the utility of temperature screenings in health systems may further justify this approach. Procedures using texting apps, phone systems, or online reporting rely on parent report and may be most practical but possibly unreliable, depending on individual family's ability to use these communication processes, especially if not made available in their primary language. Although imperfect, these processes may be most practical and likely to

identify the most ill children who should not be in school. School nurses or nurse aides should be equipped to measure temperatures for any student or staff member who may become ill during the school day and should have an identified area to separate or isolate students who may have COVID-19 symptoms.

COVID-19 infection manifests similarly to other respiratory illness in children. Although children manifest many of the same symptoms of COVID-19 infection as adults, some differences are noteworthy. According to the CDC, children may be less likely to have fever, may be less likely to present with fever as an initial symptom, and may have only gastrointestinal tract symptoms. A student or staff member excluded because of symptoms of COVID-19 should be encouraged to contact their health care provider to discuss testing and medical care. In the absence of testing, students or staff should follow local health department guidance for exclusion.

Face Coverings and PPE

Cloth face coverings protect others if the wearer is infected with SARS CoV-2 and is not aware. Cloth masks may offer some level of protection for the wearer. Evidence continues to mount on the importance of universal face coverings in interrupting the spread of SARS-CoV-2. Although ideal, universal face covering use is not always possible in the school setting for many reasons. Some students, or staff, may be unable to safely wear a cloth face covering because of certain medical conditions (eg, developmental, respiratory, tactile aversion, or other conditions) or may be uncomfortable, making the consistent use of cloth face coverings throughout the day challenging. For individuals who have difficulty with wearing a cloth face covering and it is not medically contraindicated to wear a face covering, behavior techniques and social skills stories(see resource section)can be used to assist in adapting to wearing a face covering. When developing policy regarding the use of cloth face coverings by students or school staff, school districts and health advisors should consider whether the use of cloth face coverings is developmentally appropriate and feasible and whether the policy can be instituted safely. If not developmentally feasible, which may be the case for younger students, and cannot be done safely (eg, the face covering makes wearers touch their face more than they otherwise would), schools may choose to not require their use when physical distancing measures can be effectively implemented. School staff and older students (middle or high school) may be able to wear cloth face coverings safely and consistently and should be encouraged to do so. Children under 2 years and anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance should not wear cloth face coverings.

For certain populations, the use of cloth face coverings by teachers may impede the education process. These include students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students receiving speech/language services, young students in early education programs, and English-language learners. Although there are products (eg, face coverings with clear panels in the front) to facilitate their use among these populations, these may not be available in all settings.

Students and families should be taught how to properly wear (cover nose and mouth) a cloth face covering, to maintain hand hygiene when removing for meals and physical activity, and for replacing and maintaining (washing regularly) a cloth face covering.

School health staff should be provided with appropriate medical PPE to use in health suites. This PPE should include N95 masks, surgical masks, gloves, disposable gowns, and face shields or other eye protection. School health staff should be aware of the CDC guidance on infection control measures. Asthma treatments using inhalers with spacers are preferred over nebulizer treatments whenever possible. The CDC recommends that nebulizer treatments at school should be reserved for children who cannot use or do not have access to an inhaler (with spacer or spacer with mask). Schools should work with families and health care providers to assist with obtaining an inhaler for students with limited access. In addition, schools should work to develop and implement asthma action plans, which may include directly observed controller medication administration in schools to promote optimal asthma control. If required while waiting for a student to be picked up to go home or for emergency personnel to arrive, when using nebulizer or a peak flow meter, school health staff should wear gloves, an N95 facemask, and eye protection. Staff should be trained on proper donning and doffing procedures and follow the CDC guidance regarding precautions when performing aerosol-generating procedures. Nebulizer treatments should be performed in a space that limits exposure to others and with minimal staff present. Rooms should be well ventilated or treatments should be performed outside. After the use of the nebulizer, the room should undergo routine cleaning and disinfection.

School staff working with students who are unable to wear a cloth face covering and who must be in close proximity to them should ideally wear N95 masks. When access to N95 masks is limited, a surgical mask in combination with a face shield should be used. Face shields or other forms of eye protection should also be used when working with students unable to manage secretions.

On-site School Based Health Services

On-site school health services should be supported if available, to complement the pediatric medical home and to provide pediatric acute and chronic care. Collaboration with school nurses will be essential, and school districts should involve School Health Services staff early in the planning phase for reopening and consider collaborative strategies that address and prioritize immunizations and other needed health services for students, including behavioral health and reproductive health services.

Education

The impacts of lost instructional time and social emotional development on children and adolescents should be anticipated, and schools will need to be prepared to adjust curricula and instructional practices accordingly without the expectation that all lost academic progress can be caught up. Plans to make up for lost academic progress because of school closures and distress associated with the pandemic should be balanced by a recognition of the likely continued distress of educators and students that will persist when schools reopen. If the academic expectations are unrealistic, school will likely become a source of further distress for students (and educators) at a time when they need additional support. It is also critical to maintain a balanced curriculum with continued physical education and other learning experiences rather than an exclusive emphasis on core subject areas.

Students With Disabilities

The impact of loss of instructional time and related services, including mental health services as well as occupational, physical, and speech/language therapy during the period of school closures is significant for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities may also have more difficulty with the social and emotional aspects of transitioning out of and back into the school setting. As schools prepare for reopening, school personnel should develop a plan to ensure a review of each child and adolescent with an IEP to determine the needs for compensatory education to adjust for lost instructional time as well as other related services. In addition, schools can expect a backlog in evaluations; therefore, plans to prioritize those for new referrals as opposed to re-evaluations will be important. = Many school districts require adequate instructional effort before determining eligibility for special education services. However, virtual instruction or lack of instruction should not be reasons to avoid starting service such as response-to-intervention (RTI) services, even if a final eligibility determination is postponed.

Behavioral Health/Emotional Support for Children and Adolescents

Schools should anticipate and be prepared to address a wide range of mental health needs of children and staff when schools reopen. Preparation for infection control is vital and admittedly complex during an evolving pandemic. But the emotional impact of the pandemic, financial/employment concerns, social isolation, and growing concerns about systemic racial inequity — coupled with prolonged limited access to critical school-based mental health services and the support and assistance of school professionals — demands careful attention and planning as well. Schools should be prepared to adopt an approach for mental health support.

Schools should consider providing training to classroom teachers and other educators on how to talk to and support children during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Students requiring mental health support should be referred to school mental health professionals.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among adolescents or youth 10 to 24 years of age in the United States. In the event distance learning is needed, schools should develop mechanisms to evaluate youth remotely if concerns are voiced by educators or family members and should be establishing policies, including referral mechanisms for students believed to be in need of in-person evaluation, even before schools reopen.

School mental health professionals should be involved in shaping messages to students and families about the response to the pandemic. Fear-based messages widely used to encourage strict physical distancing may cause problems when schools reopen, because the risk of exposure to COVID-19 may be mitigated but not eliminated.

When schools do reopen, plans should already be in place for outreach to students who do not return, given the high likelihood of separation anxiety and agoraphobia in students. Students may have difficulty with the social and emotional aspects of transitioning back into the school setting, especially given the unfamiliarity with the changed school environment and experience. Special considerations are warranted for students with pre-existing anxiety, depression, and other mental health conditions; children with a prior history of trauma or loss; and students in early education

who may be particularly sensitive to disruptions in routine and caregivers. Students facing other challenges, such as poverty, food insecurity, and homelessness, and those subjected to ongoing racial inequities may benefit from additional support and assistance.

Schools need to incorporate academic accommodations and supports for all students who may still be having difficulty concentrating or learning new information because of stress associated with the pandemic. It is important that schools do not anticipate or attempt to catch up for lost academic time through accelerating curriculum delivery at a time when students and educators may find it difficult to even return to baseline rates. These expectations should be communicated to educators, students, and family members so that school does not become a source of further distress.

Mental Health of Staff

The personal impact on educators and other school staff should be recognized. In the same way that students are going to need support to effectively return to school and to be prepared to be ready to process the information they are being taught, teachers cannot be expected to be successful at teaching children without having their mental health needs supported. The strain on teachers this year as they have been asked to teach differently while they support their own needs and those of their families has been significant, and they will be bringing that stress back to school as schools reopen. Resources such as Employee Assistance Programs and other means to provide support and mental health services should be established prior to reopening. The individual needs and concerns of school professionals should be addressed with accommodations made as needed (eg, for a classroom educator who is pregnant, has a medical condition that confers a higher risk of serious illness with COVID-19, resides with a family member who is at higher risk, or has a mental health condition that compromises the ability to cope with the additional stress). Although schools should be prepared to be agile to meet evolving needs and respond to increasing knowledge related to the pandemic and may need to institute partial or complete closures when the public health need requires, they should recognize that staff, students, and families will benefit from sufficient time to understand and adjust to changes in routine and practices. During a crisis, people benefit from clear and regular communication from a trusted source of information and the opportunity to dialogue about concerns and needs and feel they are able to contribute in some way to the decision-making process. Change is more difficult in the context of crisis and when predictability is already severely compromised.

Food Insecurity

In 2018, 11.8 million children and adolescents (1 in 7) in the United States lived in a food-insecure household. The coronavirus pandemic has led to increased unemployment and poverty for America's families, which in turn will likely increase even further the number of families who experience food insecurity. School re-entry planning must consider the many children and adolescents who experience food insecurity already (especially at-risk and low-income populations) and who will have limited access to routine meals through the school district if schools remain closed. The short- and long-term effects of food insecurity in children and adolescents are profound. **Plans should be made prior to the start of the school year for how students participating in free- and reduced- meal programs will receive food in the**

event of a school closure or if they are excluded from school because of illness or SARS-CoV-2 infection.

Immunizations

Existing school immunization requirements should be maintained and not deferred because of the current pandemic. In addition, although influenza vaccination is generally not required for school attendance, in the coming academic year, it should be highly encouraged for all students. School districts should consider requiring influenza vaccination for all staff members. Pediatricians should work with schools and local public health authorities to promote childhood vaccination messaging well before the start of the school year. It is vital that all children receive recommend vaccinations on time and get caught up if they are behind as a result of the pandemic. The capacity of the health care system to support increased demand for vaccinations should be addressed through a multifaceted collaborative and coordinated approach among all child-serving agencies including schools.

Organized Activities

It is likely that sporting events, practices, and conditioning sessions will be limited in many locations. Preparticipation evaluations should be conducted in alignment with the AAP Preparticipation Physical Evaluation Monograph, 5th ed, and state and local guidance.

Resources

- Coalition to Support Grieving Students
- Using Social Stories to Support People with I/DD During the COVID-19 Emergency
- Social Stories for Young and Old on COVID-19

Additional Information

If you need a print version of this guidance, use the Print icon at the top of the page or download a pdf here.

- Information for Parents on HealthyChildren.org: Returning to School During COVID-19
- Guidance Related to Childcare During COVID-19
- Guidance on Providing Pediatric Well-Care During COVID-19
- List of latest AAP News articles on COVID-19
- *Pediatrics* COVID-19 Collection
- COVID-19 Advocacy Resources(Login required)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Considerations for Schools
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: School Decision Tree
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Activities and Initiatives Supporting the COVID Response

Interim Guidance Disclaimer: The COVID-19 clinical interim guidance provided here has been updated based on current evidence and information available at the time of publishing. Guidance will be regularly reviewed with regards to the evolving nature of the pandemic and emerging evidence. All interim guidance will be presumed to expire in December 2020 unless otherwise specified.

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American Academy of Pediatrics

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Considerations *for* Developing Re-Opening Plans *for* Nebraska's Schools



Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association

Jack Moles, Executive Director

INTRODUCTION

- Member Superintendents and Educational Service Unit Administrators of the Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association (NRCSA) have developed ideas for consideration to support districts and communities in determining their plans and strategies for reopening schools. NRCSA's Considerations for Developing Re-opening Plans for Nebraska's Schools provides a tiered approach of ideas that schools may choose to consider before students and employees return to school buildings, along with considerations that may be applicable throughout the school year. It is designed to help districts prioritize the health and safety of students and teachers as they open school buildings and deliver instruction for the 2020-2021 school year.

- This document is not intended to provide prescriptive or restrictive guidelines to districts. It is simply a framework for districts as they build their re-opening plans. NRCSA recommends school districts continue to monitor CDC, state agency, and local and district health department guidance and comply with directives as these are issued. The Nebraska Department of Education's "Launch Nebraska" → **https://www.launchne.com/** will be especially important for the district as it develops its local plan. It may also be advisable to confer with the school district's attorneys on some issues. The information provided in this document is not mandated, or state required. Local school districts have the authority and flexibility to meet their individual needs and be responsive to their communities.

- Nothing in this document should be construed as a mandate, and the committees which compiled these considerations did so with an intent to always provide room for, and respect for, the latitude of local control. Superintendents, school officials and local Boards of Education are the best determinants of decision making at the local level. They know their communities best.

  Each committee was chaired by a Nebraska School District Superintendent or ESU Administrator and co-chaired or assisted by a colleague. Committees included diverse membership representing predominantly superintendents, but also ESU administrators and specialists.

MODEL

While state decisions may decide the general format that school takes in the fall, it will fall to the local administration and Board of Education to decide the fine details of any format. Basically, the general formats that may be utilized with the opening of the new school year will fall into one of three modes based on community spread of Covid-19. These modes are (1) low or no spread, (2) minimal or moderate spread, or (3) substantial spread. The general formats that the school year may take, based on these modes would appear to be as follows:

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
School buildings are open, with minimal restrictions. The district may choose to initiate preventative practices or additional proactive protocols.	School buildings are open, but use may be minimal, altered, or staggered. Such use may be based on social distancing directives.	School buildings are closed. The closure may be short-term or extended and will likely be based on state (NDE) or district health declaration.

Considerations *for* Developing Re-Opening Plans *for* Nebraska's Schools



Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association

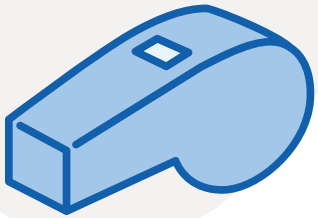
Jack Moles, Executive Director

SUB-COMMITTEES

Member Superintendents and Educational Service Unit Administrators of the Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association (NRCSA) have developed ideas for consideration to support districts and communities in determining their plans and strategies for reopening schools. NRCSA's Considerations for Developing Re-opening Plans for Nebraska's Schools provides a tiered approach of ideas that schools may choose to consider before students and employees return to school buildings, along with considerations that may be applicable throughout the school year. It is designed to help districts prioritize the health and safety of students and teachers as they open school buildings and deliver instruction for the 2020-2021 school year.

A committee chair and secretary were identified for each committee. These individuals served on a Steering Committee. Also serving on the Steering Committee were several Education Service Unit administrators, as well as Project Coordinators John Skretta (ESU 6 Administrator) and Jack Moles (NRCSA Executive Director). The committee chairs and secretaries were (first name listed is the Chair, second name is the Secretary/Co-Chair):

CUSTODIAL/HEALTH:	Mark Lenihan (Wayne Supterintendent) Stephanie Kaczor (Riverside Superintendent)
TRANSPORTATION:	Brian Rottinghaus (Pawnee City Superintendent) Joe Sherwood (Morrill Superintendent)
SPED/504:	Heather Nebesniak (Ord Superintendent) Amy Shane (O'Neill Superintendent)
CALENDAR/LOGISTICS:	Brent Hollinger (Cross County Superintendent) Jim Widdifield (Minden Superintendent)
INSTRUCTION/CLASS SIZE:	Vern Fisher (Gibbon Superintendent) Deb Paulman (ESU 16 Administrator)
ACTIVITIES:	Alan Garey (Medicine Valley Superintendent) Jeff Edwards (Northwest Superintendent)
FOOD SERVICE:	Lori Liggett (Gordon-Rushville Superintendent) Curtis Cogswell (McCool Junction Superintendent)
PERSONNEL:	Shawn Scott (Adams Central Superintendent) Ginger Meyer (previously Scribner-Snyder Superintendent, now Chadron Superintendent)



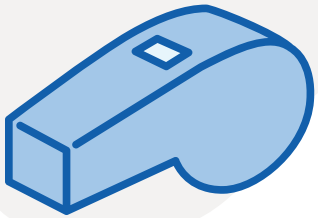
ACTIVITIES

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
Building open as usual	Modified use of buildings	School buildings shut down

NSAA ACTIVITIES ↘

The Nebraska School Activities Association's (NSAA) **"Return to Activities" document** will provide guidance on high school NSAA-governed activities.

MIDDLE SCHOOL/JR. HIGH ACTIVITIES ↘	District/School considerations:	District/School considerations:	District/School considerations:
No contact Activities  (i.e. Cross Country, Track & Field) Activities that can be done with physical distancing and no sharing of equipment.	• Full practice and competitions. • For away contests, Activities Director should contact host school district to determine local guidelines for competition. For any significant changes or special conditions that impact parents/visitors/spectators, communicate those to stakeholders in advance.	Refer to NSAA Return to Activities Information sheet.	Refer to NSAA Return to Activities Information sheet.
Limited Contact Activities  (i.e. Volleyball, Baseball, Softball) Activities that involve close contact but with protective equipment in place.	• Full practice and competitions. • For away contests, Activities Director should contact host school district to determine local guidelines for competition. For any significant changes or special conditions that impact parents/visitors/spectators, communicate those to stakeholders in advance.	Refer to NSAA Return to Activities Information sheet.	Refer to NSAA Return to Activities Information sheet.
Contact Activities  (i.e. Football, Wrestling, Baskeball, Soccer, Music) Activities that involve close contact but lack significant protective barriers.	• Full practice and competitions. • For away contests, Activities Director should contact host school district to determine local guidelines for competition. For any significant changes or special conditions that impact parents/visitors/spectators, communicate those to stakeholders in advance.	Refer to NSAA Return to Activities Information sheet.	Refer to NSAA Return to Activities Information sheet.



ACTIVITIES *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD Building open as usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down

NSAA ACTIVITIES ↘

The Nebraska School Activities Association's (NSAA) **"Return to Activities" document** will provide guidance on high school NSAA-governed activities.

NDE ACTIVITIES ↘	District/School considerations:	District/School considerations:	District/School considerations:
(i.e. FFA, FCCLA, FBLA, SkillsUSA, DECA, HOSA, Educators Rising)	**Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as:** • Providing hand sanitizer for students and staff. • Allowing students and staff to wear face masks/coverings. • Follow social distancing practices established. • Each individual school or student chooses to attend an activity or not. **Follow NSAA guidelines for sporting events and practices**	• Abide by the maximum number of people allowed to congregate as defined. • Identify and utilize large spaces. • Stagger the schedule for large group gatherings. • Discourage the congregation of students in parking lots and common areas • Virtual conferences, workshops, meetings **Follow NSAA guidelines for sporting events and practices**	School buildings are closed. Abide by the maximum number of people allowed to congregate as defined by the Governor's current statewide Executive Order



CALENDAR/LOGISTICS

	LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down
PANDEMIC RESPONSE/ RETURN TO SCHOOL COMMITTEE ↘	Admin, school board members, teachers, staff, school nurse, parents, community members, local health department	Admin, school board members, teachers, staff, school nurse, parents, community members, local health department	Admin, school board members, teachers, staff, school nurse, parents, community members, local health department
Frequency	No less than once per month	No less than once per week	No less than twice per week
Purpose	To provide a framework for communicating, preventing, responding to, and recovering from a pandemic outbreak and any resulting life-threatening complications that may impact the school. The development of the plan will include the local Public Health District as well as input from teachers, administration, parent representatives, and other members of the community as appropriate. The plan is part of the district's school safety/crisis team plan. Parts of the plan may include but not limited to: District Team, Communication, Prevention Considerations, Response/Treatment Considerations, and Resources.		
Plan	**Reopening Plan from ESU 3**		
Communication	Communication may include: frequent updates from leaders using multiple communication modalities; posters/ infographics, web material, and social media; signage throughout facilities directing risk-minimizing behavior such as hand washing and surface sanitizing procedures, COVID-19 symptoms and how to stop the spread, screening and testing access, princess, and requirements		
Prevention Consideration *(including cold/ flu season)*	• Prevention considerations may include: activities to reduce the spread of a virus, social distancing, school cleaning and disinfecting, educating students/staff/parents to eliminate concern, hygiene practices embedded in classroom and symptoms checks, increasing nursing staff utilizing nurse clerks. • **Consider School Nurse Clerk**		
	• Committee responsible for communicating with each other. Frequency would be determined by color as stated above. • Monitor restrictions and removal of restrictions based upon the changing dhm's. Adjust the plan accordingly. • Maintain consistent communication with local health department to ensure best practices. • Adjust plans for the following aspects of school based upon the current color assigned to the district: length of school day, number of school days, transportation, food services, movement throughout the building, classroom arrangements.		
	→ **What to do with staff/student**	→ **What to do with staff/student**	→ **What to do with staff/student** **Staff with underlying health conditions**



CALENDAR/LOGISTICS *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
Building Open as Usual	Modified use of buildings	School buildings shut down

RESPONSE/TREATMENT CONSIDERATIONS ↘

Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the following:

- A learner, faculty, staff or visitor is symptomatic for COVID-19
- A learner, faculty, staff or visitor test positive for COVID-19
- A learner, faculty, staff or visitor is exposed to an individual positive for COVID-19

The process should include:

- Processes to trace & contact relevant parties who may have been exposed
- Communication with environmental services to facilitate rapid cleaning and disinfecting surfaces to immediately limit learners, faculty and staff exposure
- Working with families and local authorities to take appropriate steps to prevent, diagnose and if necessary, quarantine/isolate or refer for treatment
- Working with public health authorities to make emerging antiviral therapy and/or vaccines available in a timely way as they become available.
- Develop and implement a return to school policy in coordination with local public health authorities for all recovering individuals, those returning from caring for an infected individual and those returning to the community from international and high-risk national locations
- Screening, list of support services available in the community for learners, faculty, and staff for loss of resilience, stress, depression and suicidal ideation
- Training for learners, faculty, and staff on the signs of mental health such as loss of resilience, stress, depression and suicidal ideation
- Learner access to mental health supports such as school counselors, school social workers, etc.
- Have available for staff, parents, and families educational materials on loss and grief and ways to cope with stress
- Identify a mental health team that among other things can identify students and families in need of emotional and psychological support and refer to school community services/supports if needed

COMMUNICATION PLAN ↘

Internal Communication

- Send out message about starting school on-time
- **Safety protocols** 🗋
- **Survey Staff** 🗋
- Blackboard Connect
- App notifications
- **CDC - School Decision Tree** 🗋
- **Teacher Checklist** 🗋
- Alternative Staff Procedures
- **Additional Safety Protocols** 🗋
- Post Safety Protocols
- Send out message of alternative start date
- Remote Learning Procedures
- Alternative Start Dates
- Scheduling
- Alternative Staff Procedures



CALENDAR/LOGISTICS *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
Building Open as Usual	Modified use of buildings	School buildings shut down

COMMUNICATION PLAN *continued...* ↘

External Communication

- **Parent Survey**
- Send Out Message
- Start Dates
- **Safety Protocols**
- **Parent Checklist**
- **Fact Sheet - English**
- **Fact Sheet - Spanish**
- Additional Safety Protocols
- Days out of school/duration
- **Cloth Face Covering - English**
- **Cloth Face Covering - Spanish**
- Add Safety Protocols to Website
- Communication in the Fall
- E-Learning procedures
- Grading
- Schedules for classes

ENTERING THE BUILDING ↘

Schools are open implementing standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures such as:

District Considerations:

- Provide hand sanitizer for students, staff, and visitors at all entryways
- Limit unnecessary congregations of students and staff:
  - ◊ Have students report directly to classrooms
  - ◊ Have multiple areas for smaller groupings
  - ◊ Separate groups in the gymnasium
- Post signage in classrooms, hallways and entrances to communicate how to minimize the spread. Covid-19 symptoms, preventative measures, good hygiene, and school specific protocols

School buildings are open with the potential for addition precautionary practices in place

District Considerations:

- Designate limited entrances to the building and provide hand sanitizing stations at each of those entrances
- Post signage in classrooms, hallways and entrances to communicate how to minimize the spread. Covid-19 symptoms, preventative measures, good hygiene, and school specific protocols
- Designate flow patterns for entering and exiting the building and mark spacing lines to assist with distancing

School buildings are closed: District/school leaders should require only essential staff to report in-person to carry out functions that are absolutely necessary

District Considerations:

- District/school leaders must remain purposeful in determining roles, responsibilities, and reporting requirements for staff, refraining from blanket reporting requirements
- District/school leaders should leverage virtual tools and platforms whenever possible to conduct essential business and minimize in-person reporting
- District/school leaders might consider splitting staff to attend on alternate days for limited collaboration, for example HS on one day, elementary staff on a different day, or subject level teachers attending one day, consider shortened days



CALENDAR/LOGISTICS *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down

ENTERING THE BUILDING *continued...* ↘

- Establish a protocol for what to do with students and staff who feel ill/experience symptoms after coming to school
  - ◊ Create an isolation room or area, such as a cot in a corner of the classroom, a small office, or an empty classroom that can be used to isolate a sick student. Ensure proper adult supervision of an isolated child as needed
  - ◊ Follow CDC guidance on how to disinfect the building if someone is sick
  - ◊ If a sick child has been isolated in the facility, clean and disinfect surfaces in the isolation room or area after the sick child has gone home
  - ◊ Identify areas used by the person who is sick and restrict use of these areas until cleaned, if possible.
  - ◊ Communicate with other parents in that classroom or cohort group

- Establish a protocol for what to do with students and staff who feel ill/experience symptoms after coming to school
  - ◊ Follow CDC guidance on how to disinfect the building if someone is sick
  - ◊ If a sick child has been isolated in the facility, clean and disinfect surfaces in the isolation room or area after the sick child has gone home
  - ◊ Identify areas used by the person who is sick and restrict use of these areas until cleaned, if possible.
  - ◊ Communicate with other parents in that classroom or cohort group

NE Dept of Labor - Protecting Workers during the Pandemic 🗋

POSITIVE CASE IN THE SCHOOL/SCHOOL CLOSURE ↘

Remote Learning Plans

Review/Update Remote Learning Plans in Summer of 2020 or Fall of 2020 based on Spring Remote Learning

Review/Update Remote Learning Plans in Summer of 2020 or Fall of 2020 based on Spring Remote Learning. Initiate/Start your Remote Learning Plan for 2020-2021 school year if you have students or staff quarantined at home with COVID19 while school is in session.

Initiate/Start your Remote Learning Plan for 2020-2021 School year if school is closed. Determine if remote learning or enrichment based on closure length.



CALENDAR/LOGISTICS *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down

POSITIVE CASE IN THE SCHOOL/SCHOOL CLOSURE continued... ↘

Facility Usage	Work with school administrators, school nurses, and other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms.	Schools consider alternative scheduling with certain grades attending (M, W, F) and others (T, TH) one week, then alternating to lower numbers in facility. Consider keeping K-6 or K-8 facilities operational with students attending during mandated closing and go with 100% remote learning with 9-12.	Consider keeping K-6 or K-8 facilities operational with students attending during mandated closing and go with 100% remote learning with 9-12? Can Schools receive a waiver from state allowing elementary students to continue receiving in-school education? Recommendation to NDE is to still allow small groups to attend school to work (Shop, SPED, 504)
Attendance			NDE/State School Board allow schools to teach remote learning and have those days "count" towards attendance if school chooses to do 100% remote learning.
Grading			NDE/State School Board allow schools to grade work and count towards GPA, class rank, etc. in remote learning environment if school chooses to do 100% remote learning.
Technology Needs	School may consider moving toward a 1:1 device:student for K-12 to provide assurance for district in the case of possible future shutdowns.	School may consider moving toward a 1:1 device:student for K-12 to provide assurance for district in the case of possible future shutdowns.	If school is required to go 100% remote learning, consideration of having a 1:1 device/student ratio for K-12.
Student Accessibility			100% wireless accessibility for ALL students in district? If not, implementing plan to provide 100% access. Perhaps purchasing iPads that have cellular service.



CALENDAR/LOGISTICS *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down

POSITIVE CASE IN THE SCHOOL/SCHOOL CLOSURE continued... ↘

Return to Work Agreements	Review/Update Return to Work Agreements with BOE and school attorneys to determine if they worked well for school district during spring of 2020	Possibly using Return to Work Agreements to keep some of workforce at home during a mild spread.	Initiate Return to Work Agreements for classified staff based on district philosophy on how to pay classified during closure.
Last 1st Semester Closure			School district could consider moving the end of 1st semester to after January 1, initiate a new calendar option that would then have school go longer into spring than originally planned.

CALENDAR OPTIONS ↘

- Consider various calendars
- Start on time
- Start, stop, then start again
- Start later than planned
- Start early
- Extend the school day to reduce the # of contact days
- **Reduced Calendar Day with Longer Hours** 🗋

Calendar Examples:

- **Minden Alternative Calendar-Late Start Before Labor Day** 🗋

Starting Early Calendar ideas:

- **August 4th Early Start** 🗋
- **Thayer Central Alt Calendar** 🗋



CUSTODIAL/HEALTH

	LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down
EMPLOYEE & STUDENT SAFETY ↘	**District/School may consider:**	**District/School may consider:**	**District/School may consider:**
Screening	• Whether and which screenings will be used. • Communication with parents to monitor student symptoms at home before school. • Designated areas for students/ staff who show or report symptoms. • Sending students home from school and consider keeping home until they have tested negative or have completely recovered according to CDC guidelines.	• Whether allowed visitors/ vendors will be required to be screened before entering. • Entering the building(s): ◊ Health checks at entrances? ◊ Different entrances for different groups? ◊ Staggered start times/bus unloading-loading? • Designated areas for students/ staff who show or report symptoms. • Sending Students home from school and consider keeping home until they have tested negative or have completely recovered according to CDC guidelines.	Whether allowed visitors/vendors will be required to be screened before entering.
PPE - Face Masks/Shields	• Consider if masks will be required. • Students and staff may choose to wear masks.	• Consider if masks will be required. • Students and staff may choose to wear masks.	• Students will not be allowed in buildings. • Consider whether staff are required to wear masks.
Visitor Restrictions	• If there will be restrictions on visitors/vendors. • Consider whether school will allow parents in school building in designated areas only such as office for appropriate circumstances determined by district and school officials.	• Which, if any, visitors will be limited? • Are there alternate entrances which can be used by vendors? • Consider working with vendors to require face coverings. • Consider not allowing parents in building unless a circumstance is determined appropriate by district and school officials.	• Identify which visitors/vendors are essential. • Are there alternate entrances which can be used by vendors? • Consider working with vendors to require face coverings. • Alternate drop-off points for vendors to limit their entry into the buildings.



CUSTODIAL/HEALTH *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down
EMPLOYEE & STUDENT SAFETY *continued...* ↘	**District/School may consider:**	**District/School may consider:**	**District/School may consider:**
School Nurse/Designated Symptom Monitor **School Nurse Symptom Monitor Guide** 🗋	• Monitor students and staff who are reported with symptoms. • Monitor students and staff with health related issues. • Consider assigning a staff member in lieu of a school nurse. • Consider training bus drivers, secretaries, first point of contact for symptom monitoring.	Consider involving trained staff in more detailed symptom monitoring.	Consider monitoring everyone who enters building.
Health Guidance for Exposure **Student/Staff Symptoms Check List** 🗋	• Consider public health recommendations. • Assist public health in contact tracing. • Consider communication plan to students, staff, families, and community.	• Consider public health recommendations. • Consider relaxing attendance for students whose parents aren't comfortable sending to school. • Consider concerns of staff who are in an at-risk category. • Consider hybrid/remote learning - and/or reducing number of students in classrooms and buildings. • Consider communication plan to students, staff, families, and community.	• Consider public health recommendations. • Consider no or limited attendance in buildings until public health decision to move to yellow. • Consider communication plan to students, staff, families, and community.
Social Distancing	Consider social distancing to the extent possible, especially in commons areas, busing, activities.	Consider staggering classes, limiting commons area usage, consider number of students in rooms/on buses, consider no use of lunch areas or stagger lunches to create more room.	Follow 6 foot social guidelines for anyone in the building.



CUSTODIAL/HEALTH *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down

FACILITIES CLEANING ↘	District/School may consider:	District/School may consider:	District/School may consider:
Student Desks	Have cleaning supplies available to clean between classes. Designate who will be responsible for this cleaning.	Clean between classes by students entering. Clean their desk/seat.	
Teacher Workspace	Have cleaning supplies available to clean.	Consider cleaning area at least once a day.	Consider cleaning area at least twice a day.
Classrooms	Have cleaning supplies available to clean.	Clean in between classes by students.	Deep cleaning as needed.
Cafeteria/Commons Areas	Have cleaning supplies available to clean.	Arranged seating, scheduled lunch times. Consider expanding the commons area to classrooms and the gym. Clean or sanatize between groups of students.	
Buses	Have cleaning supplies available to clean.	Consider cleaning/fogging after each trip.	
Restrooms During Day	• Daily cleaning and supplies available for janitorial staff. • Hand Sanitizer before and after entering the restroom. • Signage, STRESS handwashing!	• Consider more frequent cleaning and supplies available for janitorial staff. • Hand Sanitizer before and after entering the restroom. • Signage, STRESS handwashing!	• Deep clean as needed. • Signage, STRESS handwashing!
Restrooms During Non-School Hours	• Signage, stress handwashing and hand sanitizer.	• Signage, stress handwashing and hand sanitizer. • Have janitors cleaning regularly.	• Signage, stress handwashing and hand sanitizer. • Deep clean after events.



CUSTODIAL/HEALTH *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down

FACILITIES CLEANING *continued...* ↘	District/School may consider:	District/School may consider:	District/School may consider:
Cleaning During the Day - Water Fountains, Door Knobs, Handles, High Touch Surfaces	• Recommend everyone have their own water bottle. • Have wipes/spray available to use on door knobs and handles when used.	• Consider shutting down water fountains with everyone having their own water bottle. • Clean water fountains frequently. • Clean door knobs, handles when used.	• Consider shutting down water fountains with everyone having their own water bottle. Allowing only staff to refill. • Clean door knobs, handles when used.
Locker Rooms/Weight Room	• Daily cleaning and supplies available for janitorial staff. • Hand Sanitizer before and after entering the bathroom. • Signage, STRESS handwashing! • Educate students on social distancing in the locker rooms and proper sanitation. Clothes go home daily.	• Supervised locker rooms by school staff to enforce social distancing, hand washing, and hand sanitizing. • Continue to educate students on these guidelines. • Clothes go home daily.	
Playgrounds	• Have cleaning supplies available.	• Consider cleaning playground equipment after each recess. • No sharing of toys or equipment. • Consider social distancing.	• Consider shutting down playground equipment.
Signage **Bertrand Sample Signage** **CDC COVID-19 Print Resources**	• Signage hung throughout all buildings on (social distancing, temperature checks, washing hands, hand sanitizer, and symptoms of COVID-19).	• Signage hung throughout all building on (social distancing, temperature checks, washing hands, hand sanitizer, and symptoms of COVID-19).	• Signage hung throughout all building on (social distancing, temperature checks, washing hands, hand sanitizer, and symptoms of COVID-19). • Update signage as needed or as updates occur.



CUSTODIAL/HEALTH *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down

PREVENTATIVE MATERIALS INVENTORY ↘	District/School may consider:	District/School may consider:	District/School may consider:
Chemicals Used by Maintenance	• Organize MSD and Inventory sheets.	• Re-Evaluate effectiveness of cleaning.	• Increase inventory and cleaning process.
Chemicals Used by Staff/Students	• Organize MSD and Inventory sheets.	• Re-Evaluate effectiveness of cleaning.	• Increase inventory and cleaning process.
Temperature Scanners	• Use current on-hand devices. • Follow normal protocol.	• Utilize screening questions to determine number of temperature checks.	• Use screening questions and Increase number of devices to conduct numerous temperature checks
Foggers/Misters	• Use normal maintenance procedures.	• Consider increasing the frequency of fogging in high touch areas.	• Increase the frequency of fogging in high touch areas.
Hand Sanitizer and Mask Acquisitions (Facial Coverings)	• Few changes to necessary inventory. May consider a need to increase inventory	• Consider increasing inventory to make sanitizer and masks available to students, staff, and guests as per request.	• Increase inventory to ensure enough sanitizer and masks for everyone on school grounds.
Cleaning Equipment Needed Regularly/Daily	• Use normal maintenance procedures.	• Consider increasing the frequency of cleaning in high touch areas.	• Increase the frequency of cleaning in high touch areas.
Storage of Equipment/ Access	• Normal supply and access.	• Consider increasing the availability in various areas in the building.	• Increase storage capacity and ease of availability to students and staff.
Storage of Chemicals/MSD Sheets/Shelf Life	• Normal supply and access. • Use First in First Out supply guidelines under all conditions	• When ordering increased supplies check life to ensure supplies do not lose effectiveness.	• Increase inventory and checking life of supplies more frequently to ensure supplies do not lose effectiveness.



CUSTODIAL/HEALTH *continued...*

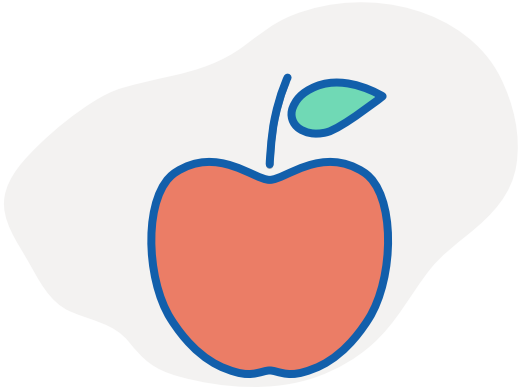
	LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down
PREVENTATIVE MATERIALS INVENTORY *continued...*	**District/School may consider:**	**District/School may consider:**	**District/School may consider:**
Inventory & Supply Needs	• Normal supply.	• Increase supplies as necessary for cleaning and personal protection.	• Consider substantial increases in inventory to ensure supplies are available according to need.
HVAC/Filters	• Use existing inventory and maintenance procedures.	• Increase inventory and consider replacing filters more often.	• Increase inventory and consider replacing filters weekly.
SUPPORTS/TRAINING/ CURRICULUM	**District/School may consider:**	**District/School may consider:**	**District/School may consider:**
Social/Emotional Learning Supports & Resources - Students	• Counselor develops videos/ resources for the first day for all students. General messaging promoting well-being and self-efficacy. • See **NE SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2020** handouts and videos for resources. • See also **National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement** resources.	• Counselor develops videos/ resources that focus on: Wellness reminders for all • Differentiated messaging for students identified as needing greater supports	• Counselor works with students in small groups and/or individually address well-being needs on a weekly basis for an identified caseload. Work may need to be done remotely.
Social/Emotional Learning Supports & Resources - Staff → **EHA Wellness Resources**	• Counselor develops videos/ resources for the first day or all staff, focusing on use of EHA wellness resources for member districts.	• Counselor and Admin continue to message EHA resources while also messaging any free EAP resources available to staff.	• Counselor and Admin may convene small groups and/or individually to address well-being needs on a weekly basis for key staff seeking more intensive collegial support.
Crisis/Safety Pandemic Response Team	• Convene Pandemic Response Team quarterly or monthly.	• Convene Pandemic Response Team weekly.	• Convene Pandemic Response Team weekly and provide a daily email update from team coordinator.



CUSTODIAL/HEALTH *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down

SUPPORTS/TRAINING/ CURRICULUM *continued...* ↘	District/School may consider:	District/School may consider:	District/School may consider:
Training Staff - Building Protocols - Arrival, Passing Periods, Breakfast/Lunch, Dismissal	• Pre-return to school training/ orientation.	• Pre-return to school training/ orientation.	
Training Substitute Staff (Teachers, Paras, Janitors, etc.)	• Pre-return to school training/ orientation required before start of school; mandatory to get on the approved substitute teacher list.	• Review and reinforce classroom cleaning and social distancing for substitute teachers; if a substitute has not been on site for >3 weeks, consider repeating basic "Clean Classrooms" checkoff before entering classroom.	
Training Process, Pre-teach, Teach, Re-teach	• Monthly review in a checklist format w/ required self-report (can be done as a google form. See also standard one-pager on **office cleaning procedures** 🗋 for cleaning and disinfecting.	• Biweekly review in a checklist format which serves as basic criteria to be adhered to for custodians, paraprofessionals, teachers.	• Weekly review • Daily classroom opening and closing procedures/checklist for teachers & custodians
Social/Emotional Supports & Resources - Parents	• Survey families on concerns prior to school year • CASEL / Committee for Children guidance on **Efforts To Promote Social and Emotional Learning During the Pandemic** 🗋 resource is applicable to all levels.	• Survey families and/or individual families monthly? (underlying conditions) • Monthly communication sent home	• Weekly communication sent home • Survey



FOOD SERVICE

LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down

SERVING MEALS ↘

District/School may consider:

- Districts will consult with NDE Food Service personnel for guidance.
  - ◊ Shawn.Vondracek@nebraska.gov → **https://www.education.ne.gov/ns/forms-resources/summer-food-service-program/**
- Schools will serve in cafeterias, with no student self-service items.

District/School may consider:

- Schools will serve in cafeterias,with no student self-service items.
- School districts will determine the differences between "Offer vs Serve" in regards to the wording in the current DHM or other health department guidelines. When needed schools will take steps to transition between Phase III and Phase IV guidelines in regards to food service.

District/School may consider:

- Packaged meals will be distributed. The method would be at the district's discretion.
- NDE will provide "guidance" (based on "best practices") on safely reopening, but (3) it will ultimately be a local decision on how schools reopen this fall.

Schools will attempt to limit student interactions by practicing social distancing and the following if applicable.

- Serve lunch in classrooms or other available spaces ie. gym.
- Expand lunch periods so fewer students are in a space at one time.
- Consider outside seating if possible.
- Consider open campus for high school students
- Eliminate student use of keypad for point of sale, instead assign one staff member or use remote scanning of ID card.

In regards to the distribution of food schools may consider the following practices:

- No use of salad bar, or self-serve fruit and vegetable bar; instead provide individually wrapped items.
- Use foam or disposable trays.
- No self-serving by students. Food items will be indivdually packaged or placed on trays by food service personnel. Students may pick up prepackaged items, but a space will be maintained between items to prevent students from touching the food of others.
- Food service staff will comply with NDE safety requirements and recommendations such as face shields, gloves, disinfecting, etc.

NDE will provide "guidance" (based on "best practices") on safely reopening, but it will ultimately be a local decision on how schools reopen this fall.



INSTRUCTION/CLASS SIZE

LOW/NO SPREAD Building open as usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down
Professional Development (PD) on delivery of effective formative, interim and summative assessments both on-line and in the classroom; online/virtual delivery of instruction; social emotional supports for students & staff; Reach out to ESU for professional learning supports and supplemental mental health supports	• Consider limiting travel to in-state conferences only and to areas with low virus spread. • Utilize internal district expertise for professional development. *Consider holding virtual conferences, workshops, and meetings.	• Ensure all faculty and staff have remote access and device capability. • Limit school district mass gatherings of staff for PD/ motivational speakers for 2020-2021. • Schools should consider measures such as providing early retirement incentives and creating new roles for teachers and principals who are forced to remain at home due to their risk.
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION	**https://docs.google.com/document/d/1jgmkdyXPJ9eThz-QJLBwoRi-IrFdgvP2TPHAcxsbhUQ/edit**	
ASSESMENT AND RESPONDING TO STUDENT NEEDS ↘	**General Considerations:**	**General Considerations:**	**General Considerations:**
	1. Keep students in grade level content and "spot" remediate unfinished learning, 2. Focus on **essential content-Math & ELA** 3. Ensure that all students have access to **HQIM** in core programming. **Plan of Actions:** • **Summer Critical Actions**	• Whether we enter the 2020-21 school year in green or yellow teachers may want to consider engaging in the same assessment protocols recommended in green. Refer to the green column. • **Key Factors if Administering NWEA MAP Growth Remotely** • PD on delivery of effective formative, interim and summative assessments both on-line and in the classroom.	• Assuming that the move to red occurs sometime after the on-site start of the 2020-21 school year, additional considerations could include: • **Key Factors if Administering NWEA MAP Growth Remotely** • PD on delivery of effective formative, interim and summative assessments both on-line and in the classroom.



INSTRUCTION/CLASS SIZE *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
Building open as usual	Modified use of buildings	School buildings shut down

ASSESMENT AND RESPONDING TO STUDENT NEEDS

continued... ↘

How Do We Know What They Know?

- **Pre Assessment Strategies Examples**
- For ELA:
  - ◊ IRLA
  - ◊ IXL
  - ◊ Acadiance
  - ◊ MAP Accelerator
- For Math:
  - ◊ Zearn
  - ◊ IXL
  - ◊ MAP Accelerator

What Do We Do if They Don't Know?

- Addressing Student Needs
  1. How can use all staff (music, PE, Art, SS) and creatively schedule to remediate unfinished (pre-requisite) learning.
  2. For ELA gaps consider building background knowledge of students. Ex. preparing to read on grade level complex text on WWII, provide video, interview w/vet, access news reels, prior to reading complex text
  3. Scaffolding student learning resource
  4. Online re-teach
- For ELA:
  - ◊ EdReady
- For Math:
  - ◊ Zearn
  - ◊ Kahn Academy
- Use Learning Management System (LMS) to deliver online re-teach lessons
- Flipped classroom



INSTRUCTION/CLASS SIZE *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD Building open as usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down
GRADING PRACTICES ↘	K-8: Standard Grading; 9-12: Standard Grading	K-8: Completion Grading; 9-12: Standard Grading	K-8: Pass/Fail; 9-12: Completion Grading
Technology	https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/central/pdf/RELCentral_Remote-Learning-QC-Handout.pdf		
	• Get technology for students by grade level. • Plan for the future and not being in school. • Use technology when possible • Teachers trained and prepared for online learning. • Have technology in students hands when they leave school. • Teachers fully utilize technology. • School has a Learning Management System to teach -Schoology, Canvas, etc. • Training on Google Chat, Zoom, GoToMeeting, etc. • Check on Student network availability - have backup plan for students lacking internet access such as procuring hotspots or providing flash drive content updated weekly, etc. • Synchronous vs Asynchronous learning--Have a blend and always record (asynchronous). • Synchronous vs Asynchronous learning--Have a blend and always record (asynchronous) • Parent Professional Development is important--Parent knowledge of technology use. • District expectations for teaching - discuss-set expectations	• Teachers trained and prepared for online learning. • Have technology in students hands when leave school. • Teachers fully utilize technology. • School has a Learning Management System to teach -Schoology, Canvas, etc. • Implement Google Chat, Zoom, GoToMeeting, etc. • Synchronous vs Asynchronous learning--Have a blend and always record (asynchronous).	• Implement teacher expectations for teaching and learning, fully operational. • Communicate District expectations for teachers and students, follow through, etc.



INSTRUCTION/CLASS SIZE *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
Building open as usual	Modified use of buildings	School buildings shut down

GRADING PRACTICES *continued...* ↘

Rule 10/62

- Teach students how to use technology before alternate learning environment.
- **Student Enrollment, Attendance & Instructional Hours Considerations:** Assess and update student enrollment and attendance policies.
- **ATTENDANCE related:** Assess and update student enrollment and attendance policies. [reference NE 79-209 which states: (2) All school boards shall have a written policy on attendance developed and annually reviewed in collaboration with the county attorney of the county in which the principal office of the school district is located. The policy shall include a provision indicating how the school district will handle cases in which excessive absences are due to illness. The policy shall also state the circumstances and number of absences or the hourly equivalent upon which the school shall render all services to address barriers to attendance.]
- **Rule 62 Declaratory Order** authorized by Stated Board at June 17 meeting.
- **Rule 62 Petition** has a fairly comprehensive list.

CLASS SIZE ↘

Schools by June 30 should indicate any concerns related to Rule waivers that may be needed for 2020-2021; See
→ **https://www.education.ne.gov/rule-10-eoy-waiver/**

Social Distancing to the extent possible in all contexts with class with classrooms operating at regular capacity.	Social Distancing with restrictions with potential reductions to classroom operating capacity.	Not in school /Working with local Health Department.



PERSONNEL

LOW/NO SPREAD Building Open as Usual	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD Modified use of buildings	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD School buildings shut down
PERSONNEL ↘	**District/School may consider:**	**District/School may consider:**	**District/School may consider:**
	• Possibly survey the entire staff to gain insight into any ADA, FMLA or any concerns and issues staff may have concerning COVID-19. • Suggest doing this survey early (June or early July), as it may take some weeks to work through issues with individual staff members. • A sample staff survey can be viewed here. • Every school should have the interactive process within board policy. If you do not, or have tough issues to deal with, involve your attorney early in the process. • **A simple checklist for ADA and FMLA issues can be viewed here** • **A simple flowchart for ADA and FMLA issues can be viewed here** • **Additional information on ADA can be viewed here** • **Additional information on FMLA can be viewed here** • **Additional information on FFCRA can be viewed here**	• Check in again with staff and address any legal or emotional concerns and issues. Follow similar process as outlined in low spread column.	• Check in again with staff and address any legal or emotional concerns and issues. Follow similar process as outlined in low spread column.



PERSONNEL *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
Building Open as Usual	Modified use of buildings	School buildings shut down

PERSONNEL *continued...* ↘

Start dialogue with your staff about the following:
(as level of spread increases, revisiting many of these topics is advised)

- The difference between a health condition and fear of returning to work (the checklist and processes above will help with this).
- Reminder that, due to COVID-19, duties may be assigned in which nobody is thinking about. For example, extra lunch room duty, extra cleaning, etc.
- Discuss with staff about extra duty pay if the sports season is partially or fully cancelled (education association/ negotiations issue).
- Discuss how the negotiated agreement may apply to teaching and learning in a remote setting. Are there any anticipated issues, concerns, etc?
- Discuss with teachers about preparations and expectations to teach BOTH face-to-face and online.
- Discuss with teachers about the possible need to downsize the district (possibly RIF) because of COVID-19 in future years.
- Discuss with staff about the need and availability of mental health services for employees.
- Schedule time during the fall inservice for training of staff in safety protocol procedures with COVID-19 and document training.
- Review teacher certification endorsements for all teachers, as districts may need to be creative or change assignments to meet student/district/staff needs.
- Discuss with teachers about the possibility of reassignment. They are assured a position, but not a specific assignment.

Convey to staff the expectations moving forward in regard to teaching:

- Discuss staff expectations and how this may be measured under alternative learning environments, i.e. will teacher evaluation look different under remote learning, wearing a mask, etc.
- Guidelines for working from home in a remote learning environment and expectations regarding hours, duties, etc.
- Use of personal/sick/bereavement leave under remote learning environment.
- Reasonable expectations of supervision in remote learning environments.



SPED/504

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
Building Open as Usual	Modified use of buildings	School buildings shut down

SPED/504 ↘

The nature of this document is to provide suggestions, guidance, and considerations for a wide-variety of scenarios that school districts may encounter when planning for school opening in the fall in relation to SPED/504 Planning. It is imperative that each school district take into account the health status of the local community, the resources that are available to each school, and to remain flexible in meeting the educational, social, emotional, and health needs of each child. These practices and considerations are intended to be relevant for all stages of school operations.

Best Practice for all Districts to follow in regards to students with Disabilities

Revisit IEP and determine if goals can be accomplished under current operating conditions.

- If **YES**, carry out services to support goals.
- If **NO**, bring together the IEP team to determine how services can be modified to reflect current operating systems. Schools may want to consider remote learning, teletherapy, small on-site learning, sending staff to student homes, or having one-to-one service delivery.

Schools should ask the following question to Parents and IEP Team Members when reviewing all IEP's and 504 Plans prior to school starting: "Have the student's needs changed based on lack of in-person instruction?" Include a written response to this question as a Covid Impact Statement in the Plan.

- If **NO**, carry out services to support goals. Document parent response to this.
- If **YES**, bring together the IEP team to determine how services can be modified to reflect current operating systems. Document parent concerns and response. Schools may want to consider remote learning, teletherapy, small on-site learning, sending staff to student homes, or having one-to-one service delivery.
- Suggestion is to include a COVID Impact Statement that details the answer to this question in the Notes of IEP or 504 Plan.

Considerations for School Districts

- If there is a directive or mandate that in-person education is "banned" then that will trump the IEP. If the DHM or guidance is just a recommendation to cease in-person education, then schools can use best judgement about how to best serve the students.
- Schools should follow the guidelines put forth by the local Health Departments, such as social distancing and use of PPE devices. Therapists and service providers may encounter situations where work with PPE devices or social distancing is not possible. This should be addressed to determine the best way to still deliver services, but these barriers should not be an automatic reason to stop services.
- If there is a local outbreak, schools will need to make a decision on what services will look like if schools will move to a modified schedule or if schools need to close. If services can still be delivered to identified students in a small group or a one-to-one environment, continuation of services should still be a consideration. This is a local decision that will need to be addressed and determined. Considerations in this scenario are staffing, availability of rooms and spaces, number of students to be served, services to be provided, parental willingness to implement the plan, etc.
- Compensatory and recoupment of lost learning. If you have concerns or need guidance on this, please refer to Launch Nebraska Document.



SPED/504 *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
Building Open as Usual	Modified use of buildings	School buildings shut down

Considerations for School Districts *continued...*

- When making decisions regarding student services, school districts may want to consider putting all student services type considerations into one target area to ensure that no consideration area(s) get overlooked. This would include academic services, behavior services, OT services, PT services, SLP services, OHI services, and 504 Plans.
- Launch Nebraska Health Document currently recommends homogeneous grouping for small schools and sets static group sizes at 20 students. Students can leave the homogenous grouping for services and/or the SPED teacher/therapists are able to come into the homogeneous classroom. See Best Practice statement at top of document and be very mindful of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) when grouping students. DO NOT just put all students that qualify for SPED services in a group for easier access. LRE is still required and expected.
- When budgeting, school administrators may want to consider that funding may need to be adjusted if it is necessary to provide a new level of services to students. This may be due to personnel, equipment, contracted services, etc.
- *If needing to make changes to IEP/504 Plans to address changes in instructional delivery (i.e. in-person to remote learning), a PWN should address this change until the IEP/504 plan is due for review/renewal. Districts do not have to hold an IEP/504 meeting for all students prior to the start of the school year. See Best Practice Section at top of document.*



TRANSPORTATION

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
Building open as usual	Modified use of buildings	School buildings shut down

TRANSPORTATION ↘

Alternatives for Districts to Consider for COVID-19 Safe Transportation if there is a Risk

Note: NDE guidance indicates that school busing operations proceed normally when there is Low/No Spread. Therefore these considerations may be applicable to only Minimal/Moderate Spread depending on the desire of the district:

- Bus drivers and monitors wear masks at all times while transporting students.
- Employ bus monitors on each bus to ensure that passengers are adhering to health and safety expectations and to conduct temperature screenings.
- Take the temperature of all students prior to entry on the bus in the morning and then again before afternoon routes and activity trips.
- Develop a protocol with parents such as: if students have temperature above 100.4 they may not ride the bus either morning or afternoon routes, or before activity trips (e.g. when the student has a fever during the school day, the parent/guardian must arrange transportation back home for their child).
- All students and staff apply hand sanitizer as they enter the vehicle.
- When doubling up is necessary, sit students together who are from the same household.
- Develop seating arrangements based on the order students get on and off the bus (e.g. for AM routes, the first student on, sits at the back of the bus, the last student on, sits at the front of the bus).
- Disembarking should happen from front to back to minimize exposure.
- Drivers stay home if they have a fever or other COVID-19 related symptoms.
- Sanitize all surfaces after every route or trip.

No transportation would be provided.



TRANSPORTATION *continued...*

LOW/NO SPREAD	MINIMAL/MODERATE SPREAD	SUBSTANTIAL SPREAD
Building open as usual	Modified use of buildings	School buildings shut down

TRANSPORTATION *continued...* ↘

Bus routes and activity trips operate at full student capacity, with reasonable health measures implemented to prevent the spread of COVID-19, if deemed feasible by the district.

Bus routes and activity trips operate at reduced student capacity, with reasonable health measures implemented to prevent the spread of COVID-19, if deemed feasible by the district.

- Consider offering parents the option to bring their child(ren) to and from school rather than ride the bus.
- Consider whether passengers will wear masks, if feasible.
- Consider using multiple buses for activity trips to better space students for large activity groups, if feasible.
- If all certified drivers become suddenly unavailable due to COVID-19 related circumstances, consider utilizing clause 001.02A (iv) in NDE Rule 91 allowing for "...the operation of small vehicles in emergency situations when approved by the school administrator or person designated by the local governing school board."
- Consider increasing the number of bus routes for heavily populated routes, if feasible.

Committee Roster

Considerations *for* Developing Re-Opening Plans *for* Nebraska Schools | NRCSA

STEERING COMMITTEE

Jack Moles, *NRCSA, Chair*
John Skretta*, ESU 6, Co-Chair*

Curtis Cogswell	McCool Junction
Corey Dahl	ESU 8
Jeff Edwards	Northwest
Vern Fisher	Gibbon
Alan Garey	Medicine Valley
Drew Harris	ESU 9
Tim Heckenlively	Falls City
Brent Hollinger	Cross County
Stephanie Kaczor	Riverside
Mark Lenihan	Wayne
Lori Liggett	Gordon-Rushville
Ginger Meyer	Chadron
Brenda McNiff	ESU 5
Heather Nebesniak	Ord
Deb Paulman	ESU 16
Larianne Polk	ESU 7
Brian Rottinghaus	Pawneee City
Shawn Scott	Adams Central
Amy Shane	O'Neill
Joe Sherwood	Morrill
Melissa Wheelock	ESU 10
Jim Widdifield	Minden

ACTIVITIES

Alan Garey	Medicine Valley
Jeff Edwards	Northwest
Jon Davis	Alma
Chad Denker	David City
Vern Fisher	Gibbon
Bryon Hanson	Callaway
Jeff Jensen	Central City
Beth Johnson	Conestoga
Rich Lemburg	Clarkson
Mike Meyerle	Diller-Odell
Kevin Reiman	Weeping Water
Mike Williams	Arcadia
Dana Wiseman	Sutton
Holly Herzberg	Hampton
Paul Sheffield	Exeter-Milligan

CALENDAR/LOGISTICS

Brent Hollinger	Cross County
Jim Widdifield	Minden
Gregg Cruikshank	Homer
Tim DeWaard	Centennial
Wade Finley	Litchfield
Robert Hanzlik	Stuart
Nicole Hardwick	Boone Central
Drew Harris	ESU 9
Tim Heckenlively	Falls City
Derrick Joel	Raymond Central
Bryce Jorgensen	Southern Valley
Danny McMurtry	Maxwell
Randy Page	Thayer Central
Paul Pistulka	West Holt
Brian Tonniges	High Plains
Caroline Winchester	Chadron
Kevin Wingard	Milford

Committee Roster *continued...*

Considerations *for* Developing Re-Opening Plans *for* Nebraska Schools | NRCSA

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Stephanie Kaczor	Riverside
Mike Apple	Ogallala
Brad Best	Heartland
Jason Brown	Maywood
Tim Cody	Minatare
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Howard Gaffney	Stapleton
Dale Hafer	Ainsworth
Christopher Look	Crofton
Phillip Picquet	Perkins County
Daryl Schrunk	Dorchester
Barry Schaeffer	Arthur County
Robby Thompson	Creighton
Melissa Wheelock	ESU 10
Ron Wymore	Cozad

FOOD SERVICE

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Curtis Cogswell	McCool Junction
Candy Condradt	Franklin
Sherri Edmundson	HTRS
Justin Frederick	St. Edward
Darrin Hahne	Elkhorn Valley
Stan Hendricks	Doniphan-Trumbull
Brian Hof	Red Cloud
Marty Kobza	Superior
Dave Kraus	Friend
Chris Kuncl	Mullen
Jake Luhr	Battle Creek
Rick Masters	Kenesaw
Daryl Schrunk	Dorchester

INSTRUCTION/CLASS SIZE

Vern Fisher	Gibbon
Deb Paulman	ESU 16
Chad Boyer	Wisner-Pilger
Sadie Coffey	Shickley
Josh Cumpston	Silver Lake
Jeff Edwards	Northwest
Brett Gies	Sioux County
George Griffith	Arapahoe
Kolin Haecker	Bruning-Davenport
Tim Heckenlively	Falls City
Beth Johnson	Conestoga
Rich Lemburg	Clarkson
Patrick Ningen	Creek Valley
Shawn Scott	Adams Central
John Weidner	Twin River

Committee Roster *continued...*

Considerations *for* Developing Re-Opening Plans *for* Nebraska Schools | NRCSA

PERSONNEL

Shawn Scott	Adams Central
Ginger Meyer	Scribner-Snyder
Chad Boyer	Wisner-Pilger
Gordon Goodman	Ansley
George Griffith	Arapahoe
Nichole Hall	ESU 6
Andy Havelka	Freeman
Justin Hayes	Santee
Logan Lightfoot	Anselmo-Merna
Darrin Max	Burwell
Travis Miller	Bayard
Nick Mumm	Giltner
Heather Nebesniak	Ord
Deb Paulman	ESU 16
Harlan Ptomey	Cedar Bluffs
Justin Knight	Perry Law

SPED/504

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Amy Shane	O'Neill
Mark Bejot	Maywood
Jeremy Christiansen	Laurel-Concord-Coleridge
Sadie Coffey	Shickley
Ray Collins	Wilber-Clatonia
Del Dack	Paxton
Jane Davis	Hershey
Dan Endorf	North Bend
Andrew Farber	Louisville
Dan Hoesing	Schuyler
Charles Isom	Hemingford
Brenda McNiff	ESU 5
Larianne Polk	ESU 7
Chris Prososki	Southern
Jon Rother	Johnson County Central
Angela Simpson	Loup City
Karen Haase	KSB School Law

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Joe Sherwood	Morrill
Terry Bauer	Silver Lake
Lindsey Beaudette	Emerson-Hubbard
Brad Best	Heartland
Evelyn Brown	Banner County
Jon Davis	Alma
Andy Havelka	Freeman
Ryan Knippelmeyer	Elmwood-Murdock
Dale Martin	Nebr Unified #1
Jeff Messersmith	Wynot
Mike Meyerle	Diller-Odell
Julie Otero	South Central Unified
Harlan Ptomey	Cedar Bluffs
Matt Quiring	Heartland
Greg Sjuts	Humphrey

ESU6 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNIT

Layout design by Elisa Taylor, *Graphic Designer, ESU 6.*

PAPILLION LA VISTA
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Return to School Plan



2020-21 School Year



All PLCS students will return to school in August and receive direct instruction from their classroom teacher.

Do you have questions about the return to school plan?

Join us on Facebook Live on Tuesday, July 28, 2020 at 6 p.m.

Short presentation of the plan and then a Q & A to answer your questions.

Facebook LIVE – EZ as 1, 2, 3…

1. Join us at http://bit.ly/PLCSFacebook
2. Click on the LIVE video at 6:00 p.m.
3. Submit your questions as we go…and they will be answered LIVE

You do not need to have a Facebook account to watch the video, but you do need a Facebook account if you want to comment.

facebook LIVE

Goals

Protect the physical & mental health of students and staff.

Provide students with quality education face to face.

Keep as many students in school for as long as possible.

Health Precautions

1. Daily home screening of students and staff - stay home if sick
2. Masks required for students and staff - with accommodations where necessary
3. Social distancing -Signage throughout the school
4. Limit large groups & capacity of large spaces (cafeteria)
5. Routine hand washing and sanitizing
6. Enhanced cleaning throughout the day
7. Minimize student movement
8. Limit outside visitors

Multiple Plans Being Prepared

The information in this document includes the details of our 100% Return to School Plan. It is important for parents to know that we are also developing a plan for other options. We have a plan if we have to limit the number of students in school or if we have to close school and do remote learning for the a whole school or a portion of the school. We know the year ahead has many unknowns. We will be prepared to continue to provide an excellent education for all students no matter what the situation may be.

Plan for Students Not Attending School

Note: Information in this document pertains to students that are planning to attend school in person. If your child has a medically diagnosed condition or extenuating family circumstances and won't be attending school in person, the information in this document DOES NOT pertain to you. Families whose students are not attending due to a medically diagnosed condition will receive separate communication by July 31. Families without a medically diagnosed condition will need to follow the information in this plan.

Special Thanks to Action Teams and Focus Groups

We want to extend a special thank you to the numerous principals, teachers, parents and employees that helped develop this plan or provided us with input once the plan was developed. Many of these individuals have worked numerous hours to help make this return to school safe and successful for all students and staff. We also want to thank the Sarpy/Cass Health Department for their help and support with the development of the plan.

Protect the Physical & Mental Health of Students and Staff

What is PLCS doing to keep students and staff healthy & safe?

- Requiring masks for all students and staff.
- Implementing social distancing where feasible.
- Implementing personal protective equipment (PPE) like face shields and acrylic barriers.
- Cleaning of desks between student use.
- Cleaning of high touch areas frequently throughout day.
- Extensive cleaning and disinfecting every night.
- All supplies & equipment cleaned between uses - limit sharing of supplies.
- Limiting visitors to schools during school day and use of school facilities by outside groups.

What will families do to keep everyone safe?

- Wear Masks! Masks are required for all staff and students.
    - Built in mask breaks at all levels.
- Complete daily screening at home via the app or link provided.
- Stay home if sick or showing any symptoms - Don't take a chance!
- Practice good hygiene (hand washing, cough etiquette, etc.) at all times.
- Social distance where feasible.

New guidelines to keep students and staff healthy & safe in school

- Essential visitors to school by appointment only.
    - No outside speakers or volunteers in classrooms.
- Hand sanitizer used before entering and exiting classroom & lunchroom.
- Hand washing times built into the schedule.
- Parents must remain in cars during drop off and pick up or meet child off school property while social distancing.
- No outside food deliveries or any deliveries.
- Virtual school assemblies only.
- Field trips & guest speakers brought to the classroom virtually.
- Transportation vehicles will have increased cleaning between uses. All students and drivers will wear masks.
- All large group parent gatherings such as open house and family nights will be remote.
- Two health offices in all schools, one for sick kids and one for routine business like distribution of medications.
- Drinking fountains will be closed - students encouraged to bring water bottles.
- Currently all middle school and high school athletics and activities are scheduled to proceed.

Provide Students With Quality Education Face to Face

Return to Educational Routine

Elementary Plan

Details specific to your school will be shared by your principal.

Staggered start times (7:45-8:15) and dismissal times (2:30-3:00) to minimize large groups of students.

Students report directly to classroom - no walking club.

Students will primarily remain with their classroom group throughout day.

All instruction occurs in the classroom.

Specials held in the classroom. (PE may be outside when possible)

Reteach key curriculum concepts from prior year.

Prioritize reading, math and social emotional learning.

First Half-Day of School

August 11th

NO SCHOOL for 8th grade or 10-12 grade
K-6 Early Release 11:40 a.m. -12:10 p.m. (staggered)
7th grade Early Release 11:00 a.m.
9th grade PLSHS Release 12:00 p.m.
9th grade PLHS Release 1:00 p.m.

First Full Day of School

August 12th

K-12th grade
**Reminder: All middle school and high school students have late start on Wednesdays.*

Lunch delivered to the classroom.



One morning and one afternoon recess with time for hand washing.

Outdoor Ed will continue, but no overnight stay.

Built in mask breaks.

Limited after school clubs.

Provide Students With Quality Education Face to Face

Return to Educational Routine

Middle School Plan

Details specific to your school will be shared by your principal.



Students report directly to designated area by team.



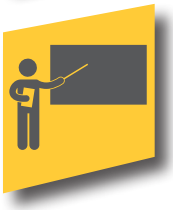
Staggered dismissal times and exit doors.



Students remain with their team throughout the day, teams will not mix.



To keep students moving in hallways, no hallway lockers will be used - backpacks can be carried at all times.



Reteach key curriculum concepts from prior year.



Classroom labs will use social distancing and small groups of students.



Limited number of students allowed into PE locker room area at one time. PE lockers will be used.



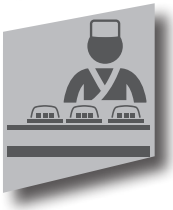
Expanded lunchtime and seating to social distance and limit large gatherings.



Lunch will have no self serve buffet lines.



Limited number of students in lunch line.



All food service staff will wear masks & gloves.



Built in mask breaks.



Limited after school clubs.

Provide Students With Quality Education Face to Face

Return to Educational Routine

High School Plan

Details specific to your school will be shared by your principal.



Students who arrive prior to 7:35 a.m. report to designated area and social distance.



After 7:35 a.m. students report directly to 1st hour classroom.



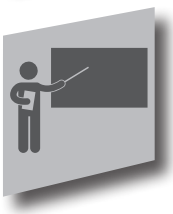
To keep students moving in hallways, no hallway lockers will be used - backpacks can be carried at all times.



Students will need to keep moving in hallways with no congregation of large groups.



Classroom labs will use social distancing and small groups of students.



Reteach key curriculum concepts from prior year.



Limited number of students allowed into PE locker room area at one time. PE lockers will be used.



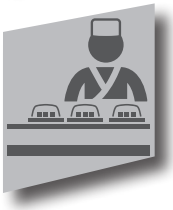
Expanded lunchtime and seating to social distance and limit large gatherings.



Limited number of students in lunch line.



Lunch will have no self serve buffet lines.



All food service staff will wear masks & gloves.



Staggered dismissal times by grade level - exit different doors.



Built in mask breaks

Keep Students In School

Masks required for all students & staff



Mask Guidelines

PLCS is requiring masks for anyone over the age of 2 entering a school or school property. Each school is planning designated mask breaks for students throughout the day. Mask breaks will be built into the day at all levels. Masks will not be required by students when exercising during PE, at recess or during lunch. Accommodations will be made for students with a medical condition that prohibit them from wearing a mask.

- Students and staff can wear their own masks or a reusable mask will be provided.
- Masks must follow the district dress code.

Why Masks?

As we focus on keeping students and staff safe and in school as long as possible, masks are a critical factor. In the event that a student at school tests positive for COVID-19, wearing masks is a key factor in determining what other students and staff need to be quarantined or removed from school and activities. Masks will help keep students and staff safe and keep students in school!

I wear my mask in public for three reasons.

1. **Humility:** I don't know if I have COVID as it is clear that people can spread the disease before they have the symptoms.
2. **Kindness:** I don't know if the person I am near has a child battling cancer, or cares for their elderly mom. While I might be fine, they might not.
3. **Community:** I want my community to thrive, business to stay open, employees to stay healthy and students to stay in school. Keeping a lid on COVID helps us all.

The following groups support PLCS requiring masks:

- Papillion La Vista Education Association
- Sarpy/Cass Health Department

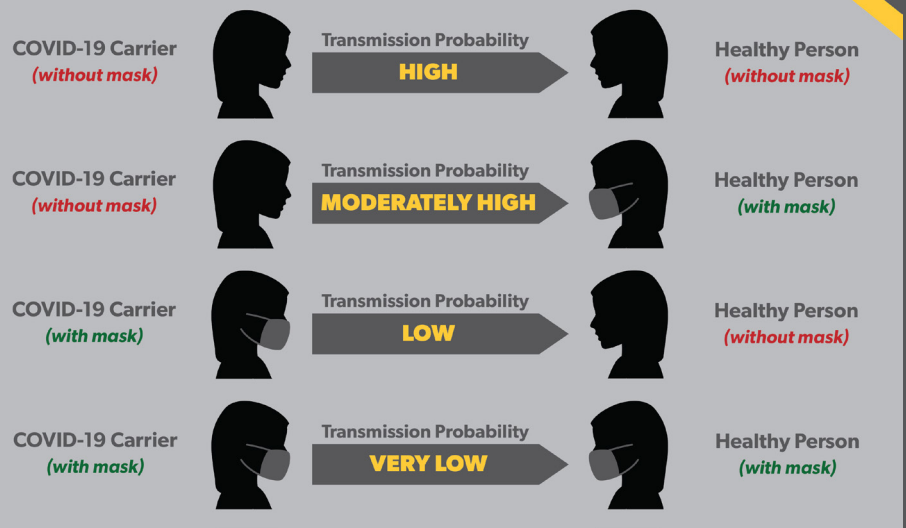
The following State Medical Associations support students wearing masks in School:

- Nebraska Academy of Family Physicians
- Nebraska Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Nebraska Medical Association
- Nebraska Nurses Association

The following National groups support students wearing masks in school:

- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- U.S. Department of Education
- National Association of School Nurses

PAPILLION LA VISTA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



How to Help Your Child *Adapt* to Wearing a Mask

10 Quick Tips for Parents

Explain Why

Use easy-to-understand language and positive phrasing.

For example, "Many people are sick right now. Wearing a mask will protect you from germs."

Practice Makes Perfect

Shape the behavior by breaking it down into smaller steps. Then practice & reinforce each step.

1. Holding the mask.
2. Putting it against his/her face.
3. Securing the elastic.
4. Keeping the mask on for a period of time.

Talk About the Science

Talk with your child about how masks work to help prevent the spread of germs.

Explain the Upside

Talk with your child about the importance of masks and if we all wear masks then schools can have activities and sporting events.

Let's Pretend

Integrate masks into your favorite pretend play schemes.

Encourage your child to dress up as a doctor, nurse or veterinarian.

Stuffed Animals & Dolls Need Masks Too

Put a mask on your child's favorite stuffed animal or doll as a reminder that we are all in this together!

Take a Picture

Ask family members or friends to take pictures of themselves wearing masks.

You can even arrange a virtual get together so everyone can show off their masks.

Start with Familiar Clothing

Choose clothing and fabric that your child already wears and turn it into a mask.

Some ideas include a scarf or a bandanna.

Give Positive Reinforcement

Recognize your child when they are wearing their mask with positive reinforcement.

Model mask wearing for your child.

Get Creative

Allow your child to decorate their mask using crayons or markers.

If you are planning to make a DIY cloth mask, allow him/her to pick the fabric color or pattern.

Keep Students In School

Complete Daily Screening



Daily Screening Guidelines

- All staff and families will need to complete a daily screening prior to arriving at school each day.
- It is **VERY** critical that if showing any symptom - stay home.
- Today, we ask **ALL** students and staff to stay home if you have even the slightest symptom of COVID-19.

Make Screening Part of Your Morning Routine!

PLCS partners with Children's Hospital & Medical Center to help families conduct daily screening for COVID-19

Through a partnership with Children's Hospital, all PLCS families will have access to a screening app that can be completed daily on your phone or any device. The app will be located in the PLCS district app, a link will be on the PLCS website and a QR code will be available. This screening tool will walk families through a series of questions and give you action steps that need to be taken based on your answers. Daily screening is critical in keeping all students and staff healthy and in school.

Coming Soon to the PLCS App!

Children's HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER

Download the District App Today!

The PLCS app is available for **FREE** on iPhone and Android devices.

To download the app:

1. Open the app store for your phone.
2. Search for Papillion La Vista.
3. Once you find the PLCS app, click on it.
4. Click install. The app should begin downloading.

Available in the:

Available on the iPhone App Store

ANDROID APP ON Google play

Scan this QR code to download the PLCS app.

Blackberry and Windows Phone users can access the app via a mobile site.
Simply go to your mobile browser and enter:
https://paplv.parentlink.net/m

Do NOT Risk the Health of Others! Stay HOME if you have symptoms!

Staff Questions & Answers

Below is a short Q & A of questions asked during the focus groups. We will post this on the website and continue to add questions and answers to the document. If you have a question, please send to **Communications@PLCSchools.org**.

Q: What do staff do if they have sick children?
A: Sick children for reasons other than COVID-19 still qualify for sick leave, just as in the past. If a staff member believes that their absence is COVID-19 related, you will want to consult with HR about FFCRA.

Q: How does FFCRA work?
A: Every situation is unique and HR will work with individual employees and answer your questions and help you through the process. In short, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act provides Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) to employees for a variety of reasons for leave centering around COVID-19. This may include: orders of quarantine, pursuing testing, or caring for a family member who is sick. Staff members who believe they may need leave due to COVID-19 should contact Taylor Whitacre in HR at 402-537-6268.

Emergency FMLA is also provided through FFCRA and specifically details with childcare around COVID-19. Taylor is also the primary contact for E-FMLA.

Q: What is the protocol for staff not feeling well?
A: Staff will be expected to fill out the screening questions on the app every day. If you are not feeling well, you should stay home and monitor for symptoms. The app also will help to direct you to next steps.

Q: Are there new guidelines for curriculum?
A: The toolbox committees have been meeting to make appropriate curriculum adjustments where needed. The most important part of the curriculum during this time will be consistency across the district in what is taught and the pacing. If school needs to go remote, we need to be able to be efficient with staff and therefore the consistency of the curriculum is critical. We will need to be able to combine resources across the school district to best meet the needs of our students remotely.

Q: Can elementary teachers departmentalize?
A: Elementary teachers need to work with their building principals to determine if departmentalization is possible and appropriate with the schedule.

Q: Can students choose not to come to school because they are worried?
A: No. The only students that can choose to learn from home are students with a medically diagnosed condition or extenuating circumstances in their family. All other enrolled students will need to attend school as outlined in the return to school plan.

Q: What if a student does not come to school because of a medically diagnosed condition of themself or a family member?
A: Students that are not attending school on campus due to a medically diagnosed condition will be offered a remote program. We are currently working on collecting the names of those students and developing the details of the remote program.

Staff Questions & Answers

Q: Will teachers need to teach the remote program along with their regular teaching schedule?
A: One of the reasons that we want to keep curriculum consistent across the district is to create efficiency and balance in teacher workload. We are still working on this as we process staff and student medical needs and extenuating circumstances. We are being very cognizant of teacher workload.

Q: How will we handle classwork if a student in my class becomes sick or is quarantined out of school?
A: If a student from your class becomes quarantined or is out sick due to COVID-19, they will be treated like any sick student in the past. You will need to get the absent student his or her work and help them as needed. If the student is out for an extended period of time, additional support may be provided by the district.

Q: How will positive cases of COVID-19 be handled?
A: Each case will be handled on an individual basis. Your building principal will work directly with the Central Office to develop a plan. The Health Department has been and will continue to be a critical partner in determining what needs to happen. They advise and we follow their direction. While we will always protect the privacy of students and staff, if you have had direct exposure to a positive COVID-19 case you will be notified.

Q: What Personal Protective Equipment will be provided?
A: PLCS has made a huge order of PPE. That order includes items like masks, clear masks, face shields, gowns, gloves, acrylic shields, hand sanitizer, cleaner, signage, and much more. Human Resources has also processed the PPE requests that were made in the staff survey. HR will speak to principals to be sure those items are in place for you. As school begins, if you have questions about specific items you may need, please contact your school principal.

Q: Will we have the all staff event at Werner Park?
A: We will have a big virtual celebration at the beginning of the year for all staff but we will not be bringing everyone together at Werner Park. Get your popcorn ready for the virtual version of this celebration.

Q: Under this return to school plan, what time do staff have to report to work and what time are they done?
A: Each principal will be communicating their expectations. Due to staggered start and dismissal times and the need to report directly to the classroom, start and end times for the day may look different. Please check with your principal for details.

Q: Will the staff lounge be open?
A: Yes and no. The lounge will not be closed but it can not be used as a gathering place for all staff, particularly at lunch time. Staff need to be very careful because you are so critical. You need to be sure you are practicing social distancing particularly at lunch when not wearing masks. Principals will share additional details for your specific school.

Q: Will we have substitutes for teachers, paras, food services, and custodians, etc…?
A: No matter the category, our subs are so incredible and are lucky to have them as a part of PLCS. There will be a meeting planned with subs to inform them of the plans. We also have some special things planned for subs throughout this year as well. We are still hiring staff including subs! If you know of someone who wants to apply to PLCS please direct them to: https://papillionlavista.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx.

Q: If we have to go out 50% students, what will I do with my own children?
A: We are working on some partnerships and hope to be able to help staff who have school age children. More to come later.