

WINONA AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 861

Preparedness Plan



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Introduction

Winona Area Public Schools is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all of our students, employees, and the public we serve. The following Preparedness Plan, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, was developed to provide guidance to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces and communities. We require full cooperation among our administration, employees, students and families, and members of the public. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our students, employees, and public we serve.

The Preparedness Plan is administered by the District Leadership Team. However, employee involvement is essential for implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan and administration and employees are responsible for complying with all aspects of this Plan. WAPS administration and employees have our full support in enforcing the provisions of this policy.

The Preparedness Plan follows industry guidance developed by the State of Minnesota, available at the Stay Safe Minnesota website (<https://staysafe.mn.gov>), which is based upon Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19, Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statues, rules and standards, and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders. It addresses:

- ensuring sick workers stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons
- hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- engineering and administrative controls for social distancing
- cleaning, disinfecting, and decontamination
- ventilation protocols
- building access to visitors
- communications and training practices

Health and Safety Guidance

Gloves and Handwashing

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that gloves need only be worn when cleaning, disinfecting, caring for sick persons, or providing first aid or other emergency treatment. Certain employee groups (i.e. School Nutrition Employees, Maintenance Employees, etc.) may have regulations for glove usage beyond COVID-19 pandemic reasons; protocols for those employees should continue to be followed. Wearing gloves for reasons beyond those listed above does not necessarily protect you from getting COVID-19 and may still lead to the spread of germs. The best way to protect yourself from germs is to regularly wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at our workplaces at all times. Employees are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout

the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their shift, anytime they leave and return to the building, prior to any mealtimes, and after using the restroom. Friendly reminders have been placed in restrooms and near sinks to encourage this practice. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) have been placed in various locations throughout the workplace for use when soap and water are not readily available. Employees should avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

Dispensers, both sanitizer and soap, will be checked daily to ensure an adequate supply is available. In the event of a sanitizer shortage, handwashing will be used in place of the use of hand sanitizer.

We will be limiting visitor access when possible, however, visitors who must come into our buildings will be asked to utilize available hand sanitizer upon entry into the building. Visitors will also be required to follow other health and safety guidelines as applicable or leave the premises.

Masks, Face Shields, and Respiratory Etiquette

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends wearing cloth face coverings over your mouth and nose in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

The use of masks, when utilized properly, can help to prevent your germs from infecting others. This is especially important because the virus can spread from person to person even when an infected person is not showing symptoms. Please note that wearing a mask may not necessarily protect you from others who may spread the virus. It is important to wash your hands often, cover your cough, and stay at least 6 feet away from others.

Employees will be expected to comply with the executive order related to face coverings. Employees will be provided with three (3) reusable masks and may be provided with a limited amount of disposable masks and a face shield to reduce the risk of exposure. Although not required, wearing a face shield is strongly recommended, as a face shield provides added protection beyond just a face covering alone. If preferred, employees may utilize their own reusable or disposable face covering. Homemade masks should be of good taste and must not have any derogatory or inappropriate designs or language. All mask options are reusable, depending on the circumstances of their use, surroundings, duration, etc. Cloth masks should be laundered on a regular basis. Blue 'surgical' type masks, although typically intended to be disposable, can be reused when worn intermittently or in short duration situations. A limited amount of disposable masks will be available at each location for emergency and temporary use.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. These masks are considered critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance. N-95 masks or other respirators

should not be utilized in the workplace by employees who have not met the fit testing requirements regulated by OSHA.

Employees and visitors are being instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose, and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on posters and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available to all employees and visitors.

Information on how to properly wear and disinfect face covering and face shields is listed below:

- [How to Safely Wear and Take Off a Cloth Face Covering](#)
- [How to Wash Cloth Face Coverings](#)
- [CDC Face Shield Cleaning Instructions](#)

Social Distancing

Employees should maintain six feet of social distancing with any person at all times, if possible. When social distancing is not able to be maintained (e.g. specialized services, behavior interventions, etc.), personal protective equipment, such as a face shield will be utilized to provide a barrier against transmission. Social distancing will be implemented in the workplace through the following engineering and administrative controls. The options listed below may be available for some employee groups and positions, however, they may not be available for others. Positions whose job necessitates that the work be completed in a district building, may be required to work on-site.

- Remote Work Availability
- Virtual Meeting Rooms
- Flexible, Split, and Staggered Shifts
- Modified Work Spaces
- Restructuring of Classrooms Spaces

Social distancing signage will be posted for employees and visitors to ensure social distancing is easy and visible. Temporary barriers may be placed in certain areas, as applicable, to direct traffic flow or reduce congestion. Working environments have been modified to accommodate appropriate spacing between individuals. When appropriate spacing is not available, temporary barriers may be placed to provide separation. Employees will have access to personal protective equipment including masks and face shields as necessary.

Group gatherings or face-to-face meetings should be limited to a small number of individuals and should allow space for proper social distancing. It is recommended that meetings be held virtually when possible. Employees avoid congregating break room spaces/lounges and will maintain social distancing protocols while using the spaces.

Winona Area Public Schools will be limiting all non-essential visitors, including parents/guardians. Student pick-up and drop-off should occur outside the building.

Employees should avoid traveling in district or personally owned vehicles together unless they are living in the same household.

Ventilation

Winona Area Public Schools has worked with several contractors to assess the current ventilation systems within our buildings to ensure these systems are in proper working order in preparation for the school year. Dampers have been expanded to introduce more outside air into the air circulation systems and filters will be inspected and replaced regularly. Classroom and office setting configurations will be modified to minimize air flow from blowing across people.

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfection

It is important to note the difference between the terms cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting. *Cleaning* removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection. *Sanitizing* lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by public health standards or requirements. Generally speaking, sanitizing uses agents that destroy 99.999% of bacteria in 30 seconds. *Disinfecting* kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill and/or destroy germs on surfaces or objects, rather than simply reduce them. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection. Generally speaking, disinfecting is 99.9999% effective (100,000 times more effective) against bacteria and viruses than sanitizing.

Regular housekeeping practices are currently being conducted by our maintenance department including routine cleaning and disinfecting of general areas in the work environment including restrooms, break rooms, lunch rooms, meeting rooms, door handles, elevator panels, railings, etc. Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfectant supplies have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications, and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product. Additional clearing supplies and tools have been purchased to assist in the cleaning, sanitation, and disinfection of surfaces. These additional resources include but are not limited to sanitation sprayers, floor scrubbers, alcohol based cleansers and wipes, and chlorine based cleansers and wipes, etc.

Employees should frequently clean and disinfect high-touch areas, such as phones, keyboards, touch screens, etc., and where appropriate equipment, tools, and machinery should also be disinfected. Employees should avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible, and if necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use.

Employees should wipe/disinfect their personal workspaces and electronics at least once each day. These areas can be cleaned using the provided disinfectant spray or alcohol-based wipes (as available).

Employees using district vehicles and equipment are expected to wipe/disinfect door handles (inside/outside, steering wheel, seat, gear shift, radio/climate control/other knobs, glove box entry, etc.).

In the event of a positive COVID-19 exposure while in the workplace, an assessment will be conducted to determine the additional cleaning and sanitizing procedures needed to properly disinfect the potentially contaminated areas. Potentially contaminated areas will be restricted while awaiting disinfection.

Building Access to Visitors

Winona Area Public Schools will be limiting access to district buildings for all non-essential visitors, including parents/guardians. Student pick-up and drop-off should occur outside the building. Parents/guardians and other visitors should make an appointment with appropriate parties before arriving at the building and will need to successfully complete the Health Self Screening Checklist prior to arriving at the building. Visitors will be required to wear a face covering and utilize the hand sanitizing stations upon entry into the building. Visitors access should be documented for tracing purposes including the times present and with whom they were in contact. Whenever possible, visitors should have access only to a limited number of people and should maintain social distancing protocols.

Daily Screening Procedures for Employees

Employees have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The MDH indicates that symptoms of COVID-19 can include fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, fatigue, congestion or runny nose, or loss of taste or smell. Other less common symptoms include gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess employees' health status prior to entering the workplace and the reporting procedures for when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

- 1. Assess Health Status Prior to Reporting to Work:** Employees should use the [Health Self Screening Checklist](#) **EACH DAY** to assess their health status prior to reporting to work. This checklist should be completed prior to taking any fever reducing drug.

- a. Employees exhibiting any of the symptoms of COVID-19 are to stay home from work. The employee will log their absence in Absence Management and then will contact the COVID-19 Coordinator (507.494.0867) for further follow-up. Employees are encouraged to contact their medical provider to determine the need for testing.
2. **Leave Work Immediately if Symptoms Appear Throughout the Work Day:** Employees who have the onset of COVID-19 related symptoms throughout the work day should immediately notify their supervisor and Human Resources and leave the premises immediately. If the employee is not able to leave immediately, they should self-isolate in an unoccupied area of the building or isolation space until they are able to do so. Employees are encouraged to contact their medical provider to determine the need for testing.

Guidelines for Employees Exhibiting Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19

The following guidelines may be implemented **when an employee becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms**. Depending on the exact circumstances of an employee's illness, modifications may be implemented on a case by case basis.

1. If the employee **has not been tested** for COVID-19, they may be asked to stay home from work for 10 days from the onset of symptoms and may return to work once they are fever-free (without the use of fever reducing drugs) and symptom-free for 24 hours. Employees are encouraged to contact their medical provider to determine the need for testing.
2. If the employee **tests negative** for COVID-19, they may be asked to stay home from work until they are fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing drugs) for 24 hours and any other symptoms improve significantly.
3. If the employee **tests positive** for COVID-19, they will be asked to stay home from work and self-isolate under the guidance of the Minnesota Department of Health for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms. The employee may return to work if it has been 10 days from the onset of symptoms, if their symptoms have subsided, and they have been fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing drugs) for 24 hours.

Guidelines for Employees Who Have Potentially Been Exposed to COVID-19

The following guidelines may be implemented **when an employee has potentially come into contact with someone who has or could have COVID-19**. Depending on the employee's circumstance, modifications may be implemented on a case by case basis. For the purposes of this section, the Minnesota Department of Health defines "close contact" as being less than 6 feet from someone for 15 minutes or more, typically sharing living arrangements with and/or having a close relationship with.

1. If an employee has **had "close contact" with a known positive COVID-19 case** and/or has been notified by the Minnesota Department of Health to quarantine, the employee will be asked to stay home from work for at least 14 days from the last contact with the positive case. If the employee exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 within that 14 day period, the employee should continue to stay home from work and follow the guidelines listed above.

2. If the employee has ***had “close contact” with a suspected positive COVID-19 case awaiting test results***, the employee may be asked to stay home from work and monitor their own health status until the results return. If the results of the “close contact” return a positive result, the employee will be asked to continue to stay home from work and follow the above guidelines. If the results of the “close contact” return a negative result and the employee is feeling well, the employee may return to work.
3. If the employee has ***had “close contact” with a suspected positive COVID-19 case who is not being tested***, the employee may be asked to stay home from work and monitor their own health status for 14 days from the last contact with the suspected positive case.
4. ***If the employee has had contact or “close contact” with someone who has had contact or “close contact” with a known or suspected positive COVID-19 case***, the employee may continue to report to work but the employee must practice social distancing, good hygiene, and continue to monitor their health status often.
5. If the employee has ***had contact (but not “close contact”) with a known or suspected positive COVID-19 case***, the employee may continue to report to work but the employee must practice social distancing, good hygiene, and continue to monitor their health status often. Effective Jan. 4, 2021, WAPS implemented plans to approve shortened quarantines that occur as a result of a potential close contact exposure within our buildings.
 - a. Employees may be considered for a 10 day quarantine if they meet all of the requirements; they had a one-time exposure to a case of COVID-19 that is not a household contact, they do not have any symptoms, they have not had a positive test for COVID-19, and no one in the household has COVID-19. After 10 days, the employee must still watch for symptoms through day 14, continue to wear a mask, and stay at least 6 feet away from other people.
 - b. Employees may be considered for a 7 day quarantine if they meet all of the requirements; They are tested for COVID-19 at least five full days after they had close contact with a positive case of COVID-19, and the PCR test is negative, They do not have any symptoms, they have not had a positive test for COVID-19, and no one in the household has COVID-19. After 7 days, employees must still watch for symptoms through day 14, continue to wear a mask, and stay at least 6 feet away from other people.

Policies and Procedures for Employee Leave Reasons Related to COVID-19

Winona Area Public Schools has several policies in place that promote workers staying at home when they or a member of their family are sick. Some of these policies are regular and outlined in master agreements and personnel policies, and some are temporary in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please note: Employees may be required to provide medical documentation for use of paid or unpaid leave. Medical documentation requested may need to outline specific accommodations as it relates to the leave reason and restrictions of the employee.

Reason (as listed above)	Options
Ill or Showing Symptoms of COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request the use of medical leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. ● Request the use of personal leave/vacation leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. ● Request the use of unpaid FMLA. (Paid leave options should be utilized prior to taking unpaid FMLA.) (See forms below). ● Request accommodations to report to work virtually, if possible.
Close contact with individuals who have been diagnosed or are awaiting diagnosis of COVID-19.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request the use of medical leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. ● Request the use of personal leave/vacation leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. ● Request the use of unpaid FMLA. (Paid leave options should be utilized prior to taking unpaid FMLA.) (See forms below). ● Request accommodations to report to work virtually, if possible.
Living with family members who are ill or showing symptoms of COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request the use of family medical leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. ● Request the use of personal leave/vacation leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. ● Request the use of unpaid FMLA. (Paid leave options should be utilized prior to taking unpaid FMLA.) (See forms below). ● Request accommodations to report to work virtually, if possible.
High-Risk (Immuno-compromised or in a MDH designated high-risk category)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report to work, maintain social distancing and proper hygiene and use PPE if appropriate. ● Request the use of medical leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. ● Request the use of personal leave/vacation leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy. ● Request the use of unpaid FMLA. (Paid leave options should be utilized prior to taking unpaid FMLA.) (See forms below). ● Request accommodations to report to work virtually, if possible.

Living with High-Risk Person/Family Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report to work, maintain social distancing and proper hygiene and use PPE if appropriate. ● Request accommodations to report to work virtually, if possible.
Other Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Report to work, maintain social distancing and proper hygiene and use PPE if appropriate. ● Request the use of personal leave/vacation leave according to your master agreement or personnel policy.

Family and Medical Leave Act:

- [FMLA Request Form-For Employee](#)
- [FMLA Request Form-For Family Member](#)

Notification Procedures for Potential Exposure

The following policies and procedures are being implemented for informing employees if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at their workplace.

1. Following the notification of a positive COVID-19 case within the district, the COVID-19 Coordinator will collect information regarding the circumstances of the positive case including but not limited to: proximity and duration of contact with others, physical space and social distancing considerations, and any hygiene related concerns.
2. Depending on the level of exposure, employees will be contacted in the following ways:
 - a. If a true “close contact” exposure is suspected, employees will be notified by phone of the exposure and will be asked to stay home from work for at least 14 days from the date of “close contact” exposure. The employee will also likely be contacted by the Minnesota Department of Health or a County Health representative for further follow up.
 - b. If no “close contact” is suspected, employees will receive a notification by email notifying the employee of the positive test result along with the steps that have and will be taken by the district to mitigate the risk of transmission as well as steps employees can take to safeguard their own health. This notification may be district-wide, specific to a building, or specific to individuals who may have potentially been in contact or close proximity to the positive case.

Data Privacy and the Prohibition of Sharing Private Data

Winona Area Public Schools is subject to and complies with the laws and regulations associated with the privacy of medical information. To ensure compliance with these laws and regulations, administrators, supervisors, and other employees are prohibited from revealing the name or any other private information about the individual who has reported COVID-19 symptoms or who has been tested for COVID-19, regardless of the result, with anyone besides those who absolutely need to know (i.e. Human Resources). Only the individual may share information about themselves, if they so choose. Administrators, supervisors, and other employees are prohibited from sharing any private information, under any circumstance, regardless of whether the information is widely known.

Bi-Monthly Screening Program for School Staff

As COVID-19 continues to spread, Minnesota is continually expanding testing options and working to remove barriers so every Minnesotan can access testing. Experts agree that testing is a critical part of the process to identify, contain and stop the spread of the virus. Minnesota continues to prioritize in-person learning while protecting the health and safety of our students, staff and families, so state leaders are working to ensure that school staff are prioritized for COVID-19 testing.

All school staff are encouraged to be tested regularly, regardless of symptoms. In addition to this onsite program, testing resources (community sites and at-home ordering) are available at mn.gov/covid19. Tests in the screening program are free and insurance will not be billed; the state will cover the costs. Screening testing is offered to educators and staff working in-person. This includes bus drivers, child care and early learning program staff (early childhood family education [ECFE], early childhood special education [ECSE], prekindergarten, school readiness and school-age care), community education staff, educators, nutrition staff, paraprofessionals, school and district administration/office staff, school nurses, support staff such as social workers and guidance counselors.

Testing is optional for staff and will be held every other Wednesday. Individual test results are provided to the employee, and it is the employee's duty to communicate positive test results to the COVID-19 Coordinator (507.494.0867). The duration of this testing program depends on continued funding.

Communications and Training

This Preparedness Plan will be communicated via email to all employees, provided to employees and other individuals who do not have access to email, posted on the staff portal, and posted in all

buildings for reference. Additional communication related to any changes in the plan will be provided via email and posted on the staff portal and in buildings.

Regular communication will be provided to parents/guardians and other known visitors regarding our health and safety protocols. Information posters and guidance will be placed conspicuously in buildings for reference and to serve as a reminder for all individuals on-site. Employees, students, and other visitors to the building will also be advised not to enter the workplace if they are experiencing symptoms or have contracted COVID-19.

The District Leadership Team will continually monitor the effectiveness of the Preparedness Plan by soliciting feedback and concerns directly from individuals or in survey format as well as by personal observation. Modifications to the plan will be made as necessary and communicated using the above protocols.

The District Wide COVID-19 Coordinator serves as the point of contact for all COVID-19 employee related matters in the district. The Incident Command Team and Regional Support Team is responsible for coordinating with local health authorities regarding positive COVID-19 cases. Each building will also have a COVID-19 Building Program Coordinator to communicate concerns, challenges, and lessons learned related to COVID-19 preventive activities as needed with staff, students and their families, school and district leadership, and local health officials.

While these are guidelines in place for employees while at work, it is also important that employees continue to follow recommended guidelines and continued enhanced sanitary practices while away from work as well, for the safety of themselves and their co-workers.

COVID-19 Contacts and Locations

COVID-19 Building Coordinators

<i>District Wide COVID-19 Coordinator:</i>	Jacqueline Henderson
<i>Goodview Building Coordinator:</i>	Emily Cassellius, Building Principal
<i>Early Childhood Building Coordinator:</i>	Ann Riebel, Director of Community Education
<i>Jefferson Elementary Building Coordinator:</i>	Maggie Maine, Building Principal
<i>W-K Elementary Building Coordinator:</i>	Dawn Lueck, Building Principal
<i>WALC Building Coordinator:</i>	Emily Cassellius, Building Principal
<i>WMS Building Coordinator:</i>	Mark Winter, Building Principal
<i>WSHS Building Coordinator:</i>	Mark Anderson, Building Principal
<i>Activities Related Coordinator:</i>	Casey Indra, Director of Activities and Transportation

Incident Command Team

Dr. Annette Freiheit, Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Denzer, Board Chair
Emily Solheid, Director of Human Resources
Ann Riebel, Director of Community Education
Michael McArdle, Director of Building and Grounds
John Casper, Communications Coordinator
Mitzi Girtler, Student Health Coordinator
Jacqueline Henderson, District Wide COVID-19 Coordinator

COVID-19 Isolation Rooms

Goodview Elementary/Early Childhood:	Main Office Conference Room
Jefferson Elementary:	Room 141
W-K Elementary/Early Childhood:	Room 141
Winona Area Learning Center:	Main Office Conference Room
Winona Middle School:	Office Space A120-4
Winona Senior High School:	Office Space 123L