



MINNEOTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2023-2024 – RETURN-TO-LEARN PLAN

Minneota Public Schools continues to be committed to the ongoing safety of all students and staff. The updated 2023-2024 Safe Return-to-Learn Plan has been based off, and updated from, previous plans. This most recent plan is in compliance with the Minnesota Department of Education's condition of the receipt of ESSER III funds that districts develop and maintain such a plan for the two-year span of ESSER III funding.

Previous years' plans were created using the requirements and recommendations set forth by the Federal government, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Public Health. The 2023-2024 Plan continues to follow guidance from multiple organizations. The Minneota Public Schools' updated Return-to-Learn Plan is detailed in this document.

On August 22, 2023, Minneota Public Schools began the 2023-2024 school year in-person, using pre-pandemic school operations and programming. Just as we started the school year, we will continue to operate with:

- All students in school five days/week.
- Facemasks are not mandatory in school buildings or on school transportation.
- Normal start and end times are in place.
- Students attend school during the days and hours in the adopted academic calendar.
- Students have meals [breakfast and lunch] in the cafeteria.
- Students transition from class to class, following a normal schedule.
- Special area classes (*music, art, PE, etc.*) are held in their classrooms.
- The 2023-2024 calendar posted on the district's website will be followed.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND STAFF

Minneota Public Schools will utilize the SchoolMessenger communication system, email, phone calls, social media, and our website to keep families informed of COVID related matters and changes.

MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Minneota Public Schools:

- Will provide appropriate supplies in our schools/buildings to support healthy behaviors such as soap, paper towels, tissues, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant wipes.
- Discourages sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.
- Will work to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible.
- Encourages students to avoid sharing high touch items such as electronic devices.
- Asks students not to share food or beverages.

TESTING

- The district will continue to provide at-home tests for families as needed as long as they are available.
 - The district encourages people to test at a testing site or healthcare provider if they have symptoms or have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19.
 - Anyone who tests positive should follow CDC recommendations.
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- There are many variables to this based on vaccination status. Please contact your healthcare provider, Sara Gorecki, or Robyn Minnehan if you have questions.

SELF-SCREENING

- Self-screening is strongly recommended for all students and staff.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 include:
 - ⇒ New onset cough or shortness of breath
 - ⇒ Fever (100.4° or higher)
 - ⇒ Feeling feverish
 - ⇒ Chills
 - ⇒ Muscle pain
 - ⇒ Sore throat
 - ⇒ Headache
 - ⇒ Loss of sense of smell or taste
 - ⇒ Diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea
- Answer the following questions each morning before sending your child to school:
 - 1) *Did my child recently test positive for COVID-19?*
 - 2) *Does my child have any of the COVID-19 symptoms listed above, even if they have completed their vaccination series, received a booster shot or shots, and/or previously had COVID-19?*

If the answer to either of those questions is YES:

- 1) Do not send your child to school, even if they are fully vaccinated.
 - 2) Report your child's absence to the school.
 - 3) Contact your child's healthcare provider.
- The district is required to report any COVID-19 cases to the MDH.

EXCLUSION GUIDANCE

- Students or staff who test positive for COVID-19 will need to isolate for 5 days and can return to school and work if they have been fever-free without fever-reducing medication(s) for 24 hours and have no or improved symptoms. Masks are recommended for an additional 5 days after the isolation period when they return.
- Unvaccinated students and staff are no longer required to quarantine for 5 days if a member of their household has COVID-19. If a household member tests positive for COVID-19, all students and staff from that household are strongly encouraged to wear a mask at school and work until the person's symptoms are gone.
- If the student or staff member develops symptoms and/or tests positive for COVID-19, they should contact the school office to receive information about next steps, and they should not go to work or school.
- People who test positive for COVID-19 should stay at home until all three of the following items are true:
 - 1) They feel better and consult a healthcare provider or district nurse;
 - 2) It has been 5 days since they first felt sick or tested positive; and,
 - 3) They have had no fever for at least 24 hours, without using medicine that lowers the fever.

* *Students will continue to engage in learning with their teacher(s) via Google or other platforms.*

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

The following mitigation strategies will remain in place during the 2023-2024 school year.

- Increased HVAC ventilation capacity;
- Routine hand washing and hand washing etiquette will be strongly encouraged;



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- School District routine cleaning and disinfecting will continue as a best practice.

Sanitizing the building has always been a priority at Minneota Public Schools. The administration and custodial staff are committed to implementing regimens that will keep the surfaces and materials used throughout the day clean and free of viruses.

1. Hallways: The hallways will be scrubbed daily.
2. Drinking Fountains: Drinking fountains will be cleaned and sanitized frequently.
3. Classroom
 - Hand sanitizers will be placed outside of HS rooms for student and staff use as they enter and exit.
 - Desks and chairs will be sanitized twice a day by the students- right before lunch and at the end of the day.
 - If area rugs are used for instruction with small group, Lysol will be sprayed to disinfect the area in between each use.
4. Weight Room: Students will wipe down all equipment (using anti-bacterial wipes) after use
5. Restrooms
 - The following will be wiped down daily by the custodial staff
 - ✓ Sinks
 - ✓ Door handles and locks
 - ✓ Flushers
 - ✓ Toilet seats
6. Hand Hygiene
 - Minneota Public Schools has routines for handwashing and respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes) to keep them from getting and spreading infectious illnesses including COVID-19 into the daily school schedule for all students and staff.
 - We will reinforce handwashing with soap and water and/or the safe use of hand sanitizer frequently.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FROM THE CDC

- Minneota Public Schools will follow CDC guidance when appropriate. People with symptoms of infectious diseases, including COVID-19, influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and gastrointestinal infections should stay home and get tested for COVID-19.
- People who are at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 who test positive should consult with a healthcare provider right away for possible treatment, even if their symptoms are mild. Staying home when sick can lower the risk of spreading infectious diseases, including the virus that causes COVID-19, to other people.
- For more information on staying home when sick with COVID-19, including recommendations for mask use for people experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, see [Quarantine and Isolation](#).

COVID PROGRAM COORDINATORS

Our COVID-19 Program Coordinators are Sara Gorecki and Robyn Minnehan, who are our school nurses. They will serve as a point of contact for each school and communicate concerns, challenges, and lessons learned related to COVID-19 to our administration. In turn, our district will share information and updates with students, families, staff, leadership, the School Board, and local health officials.



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FIELD TRIPS

Students will continue with scheduled field trips throughout the 2023-2024 school year.

CHILD NUTRITION – MEALS

- Meals will be available at school.
- Students may also bring their lunches as in the past.
- We are once again able to provide free meals (breakfast and lunch) for all students this school year.

HEALTH CARE PLANS

The School Nurse(s) will review and make appropriate adjustments for any students who currently have a health care plan. Please contact the nursing staff if your child is a high-risk student to start a plan if there has not been one in place previously.

TRANSPORTATION

- Students and staff will not be required to wear masks on school transportation.
- Regular transportation routes will be used.
- Seating charts may be implemented.

ACTIVITIES

Minneota Public Schools continues to follow the guidance outlined by Lyon County Public Health, the Minneota Department of Education (MDE), and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) in conjunction with the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL).

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies and procedures will continue to be provided. To learn more about accommodations, parents/guardians should contact his/her child's case manager.

COUNSELING/MENTAL HEALTH

1. Pre-K - 6th grade

Students and parents contact Trent Johnson, Elementary Principal, trent.johnson@minneotaschools.org. If you are unable to reach Mr. Johnson, please leave a message with Shannon Sorensen, Elementary Administrative Assistant at shannon.sorensen@minneotaschools.org or 507-872-6122 ext. 1142.

2. 7th - 12th grade

Students and parents can contact Angela Lauer, School Counselor, angela.lauer@minneotaschools.org. If unable to reach Ms. Lauer, please leave a message with Allyson Breyfogle, Secondary Administrative Assistant, at allyson.breyfogle@minneotaschools.org or 507-872-6175 ext. 1100.

3. 24 Hour Mental health Crisis information

Western Mental Health Mobile Crisis 1-800-658-2429

Crisis Text Line 741741
National Suicide Hotline 1-800-273-8255



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COORDINATION WITH STATE / LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

Minneota Public Schools will continue to collaborate with state and local public health officials. We will continue to actively monitor our local COVID data to determine strategies necessary to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

Visitors and volunteers who are ill should not enter the Minneota Public Schools' buildings. Visitors and volunteers will follow regular protocols when checking in at each school building during the day.

SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Minneota Public Schools is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for students, staff and community members. We believe it is important that we all remember to respect the decisions and actions of others in our community while we seek the common goal of a safe and healthy environment.

The operational plan identifies practices and protocols to help ensure a safe and health learning environment and to help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19.

For additional information about COVID-19, here is the link for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

Minneota Public Schools welcomes input from our families. Please contact Superintendent Scott Monson with any questions or concerns you may have – scott.monson@minneotaschools.org or (507) 872-6532.