

HEALTH & SAFETY SMART RESTART PLAN



Montpelier Public School

Montpelier School Board Approved
August 4, 2020- Updated November 24, 2020

Montpelier School Families,

It has been a challenge for our school, community, and beyond since March, but we hope you have found ways to cope and embrace this new normal. Thank you to the students, staff, parents, and community members who have helped us succeed in these difficult times. The 2019-2020 school year was challenging but we are proud of students and thankful the district was able to celebrate our seniors' accomplishments with a graduation exercise.

The challenge now is planning for what school will look like during the 2020-2021 school year. This is a daunting task as we all realize how the impact and response to COVID-19 has changed rapidly over the past four months. This plan will try to address these challenges, while providing a flexible framework to guide our response over the next school year.

For academic, social-emotional, and economic reasons, we are compelled to strive to return to an in-person model. Yet, we cannot disregard that the health and safety concerns associated with the virus remain. The district must consider all practical steps to keep our schools from contributing to virus spread in our community.

This plan presents many hours of critical thinking, research, modeling, and work by our educators, staff, and school board. This group reviewed input gathered from our employees and parents.

We realize that reviewing this plan may not address every question you have. We recognize some concepts and actions may be polarizing, and there are strong opinions about what the school should do or should not. But we must remain open to what is possible and consider all options so we can move forward.

Thank you for your time reviewing this plan. We encourage everyone to ask questions and communicate their concerns as we move forward. Together, our school can provide quality education to our children in a safe manner, if we work together to solve problems.

Respectfully,

Jerry Waagen
Superintendent

Tony Roorda
School Board President

Assumptions & Assurances

Montpelier School believes:

- Every student should have the opportunity to engage in learning, regardless of the spread of COVID-19 in our community.
- Schools have a vital role in providing safe environments for students, focusing on both social-emotional and physical health.
- By working together with educators, staff, health care professionals, parents, students, and community members we can solve most challenges.
- Our district will make decisions based on the most current guidance from local, state, and national health care officials.
- Our School Board will ensure our plan meets the needs of our students, educators, staff and community.

Our Planning Team

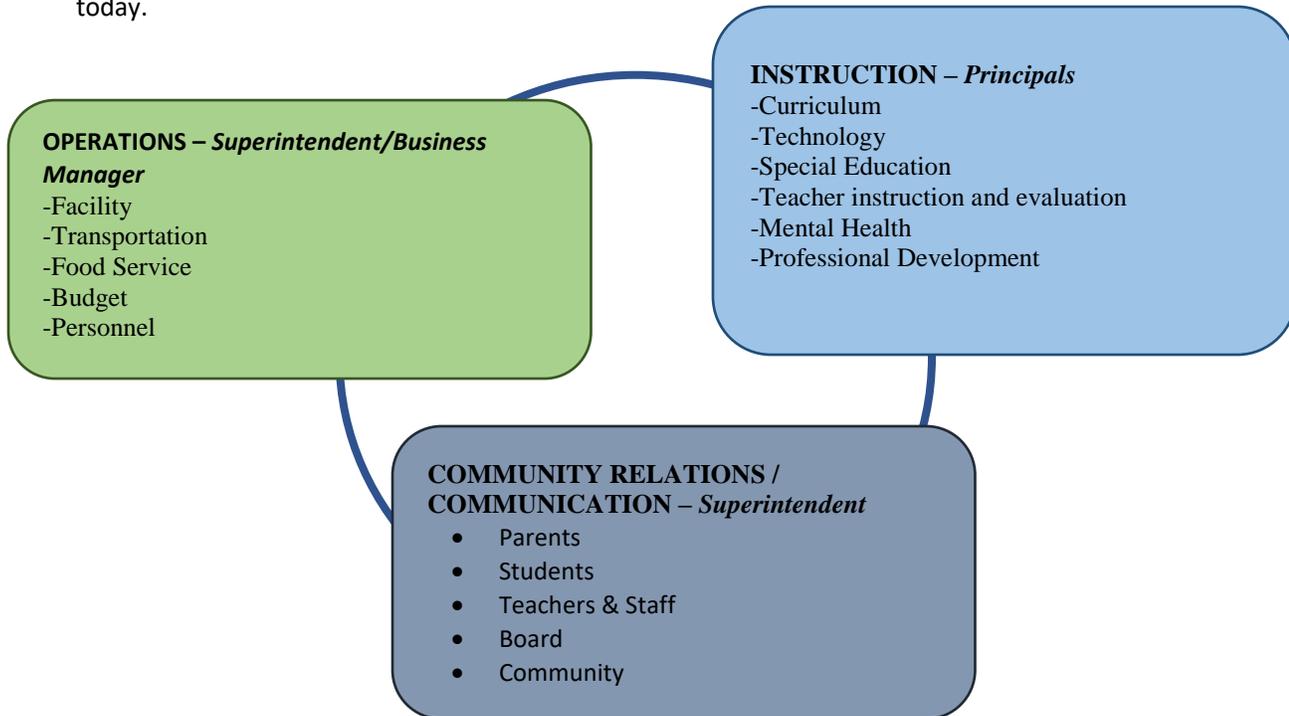
The Montpelier School's Return to Learning Plan was crafted and reviewed by a team consisting of the following

- Educators
- Custodial Staff
- Parents
- Food Service
- Central Valley Health
- Secretary
- School Board Member
- School Principals
- Bus Driver

Input was gathered by various means to allow for a wide range of input, while maintaining social distancing.

COVID-19 Response Team & Coordinator

This organizational structure was crafted to assist in the development and monitoring of the district return to learning plan. This structure identifies leaders and guiding team members that will serve as a voice in how the district responds to COVID-19 during the school year. This plan is designed to address the issues of reopening as well as provide a nimble and responsive process to address issues that may not be recognized today.



The three components have been identified as key operational teams that consist of multiple departments. Each operational team will work implement the return to learn plan and address challenges as they arise.

COVID-19 Building Level Coordinators

Each school building will have an identified COVID-19 Coordinator who will be responsible for the health and safety preparedness and response planning. Coordinators will make themselves available to the NDDoH 24 hours a day / 7 days a week to respond to phone calls from public health. This position will assist public health in identifying and notifying close contacts in the school setting. The coordinator will be report cases of COVID-19, found in the school setting, to health officials and the State Superintendent's office.



Superintendent Waagen will assume the role of building level coordinator at Montpelier School. If the coordinator is unable to be reached the secondary contact will be Principal Hannasch. The coordinator will communicate to stakeholders possible COVID-19 exposure and actions to be taken by the school.

Phases

The following phases will be used to define the community risk level associated with COVID-19. These phases align with the color-coded guidance in the ND Smart Restart Plan. Each level is reported to schools by the NDDoH after rigorous testing and assessment of cases in the community. [ND Smart Restart Plan](#)



Instructional Models

The instructional models used by the district will be guided, in part, by the risk level of COVID-19 in the community as defined within the phases above. This is a guide as instructional models could be altered based on other factors, such as occupancy levels, age of children, and abilities to move certain classes online.



Traditional Learning

Most instruction is delivered in-person with some building and group modifications. Teachers and students maintain a normal daily schedule. Safety precautions are implemented to enhance staff and student safety. Distance learning may be utilized if requested, recognizing that face to face learning is appropriate and beneficial to students.



Hybrid Learning

Students report to school on a modified schedule. Multiple hybrid models of instructional delivery may be appropriate to meet the educational needs through a variety of delivery models.



Distance Learning

All instruction is provided off-campus through the use of distance learning resources or suited to the unique needs of the student.

Health and Safety Guidance

The district strives to provide a healthy and safe environment for all who occupy our schools. The following guidelines are intended to provide a framework for the district's response to COVID-19.

Resources

ND Department of Public Instruction - <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/parentscommunity/nddpi-updates-and-guidance-covid-19>

ND Department of Health (NDDoH) - <https://www.health.nd.gov/diseases-conditions/coronavirus>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

Best Intentions

Despite taking every reasonable precaution, there is not a guarantee that our school will be without risk as it relates to COVID-19. The virus may be present on our buses, in our classrooms, and at our activities. In certain situations, social distancing is not possible in a school setting. Our actions, as outlined in this plan, will not prevent any student or staff member from being in contact with the virus.

Protect Yourself and Others

Wash your hands often 

- Wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Students are encouraged to wash their hands often throughout the day.

Avoid close contact 

- Keep social distance from others especially important for people who are at a higher risk of getting sick.
- Alternate or modified schedules, adjustments to use of common areas, use of outdoor spaces and other actions that increase physical separation may be considered.
- The sharing of instructional materials should be limited as much as possible.
- Seating on buses will be designed to provide adequate social distancing although this may not always be possible.
- Visitors to the school will be limited to lobby/office area. No guests will be allowed to eat meals with students until further notice.

Cover coughs and sneezes 

- Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw tissues away and wash hands or use hand sanitizer to prevent spread.



Clean and disinfect

- School staff should clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (i.e. door knobs, light switches, handrails) daily.
- Shared materials (not recommended) should be cleaned.
- Classrooms will be cleaned nightly by custodial staff.



Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others.

- Educators need to teach students how to properly wear a face covering so they are prepared to use them on school buses or other situations in close proximity with others.
 - Resources from NDDPI and MPS will be provided to teachers.
- Wearing of face coverings will be encouraged at all times.



COVID-19 PPE Guidance (*Minimum expectations*)

STAFF	PPE
All staff (other than what is outlined)	Encouraged to wear cloth face coverings Required to wear face coverings on school transportation (bus)
All Students	Encouraged to wear cloth face coverings when social distancing not possible. Availability- required to have a mask while at school Required to wear face coverings if using school transportation (bus)
Public facing staff (i.e. receptionists/clerical) unless plexiglass partition is in place.	Encouraged to wear face coverings.
Staff caring for / instructing a student in a small space – small group.	Building administrators in consultation with Central Valley Health and educators will determine if face coverings or face shield are required . This may be influenced by instructional and learning needs of the student and health considerations of all occupants in the room.



Monitor your health daily

- Be alert for symptoms. Watch for a fever, cough, or shortness of breath.
- Parents are asked to screen their children each day before sending them to school. Use the screening guidance provided (see appendix).
- Staff and students who are sick should stay home.
- Temperatures of symptomatic students or staff may be taken at the school office.
 - Symptomatic students will be isolated, and their guardians contacted.

Health & Safety Protocols

Student & Staff Health

Monitoring the health of students and staff will be an important component of a safe and healthy educational environment. Montpelier School will take the following measures to ensure all students and staff are healthy while they are at school.

Identifying Students & Staff at Higher Risk

- Back to School and enrollment processes will include questions asking families to identify if their child is at-risk, based on a health professionals' diagnosis. This information will be provided to the COVID-19 Coordinator who will contact the family and discuss instructional model options.
- The COVID-19 Coordinator will inquire of all employees if they are at-risk, based on a health professionals' diagnosis. **School employees are considered essential workers.** The superintendent and the employee will coordinate adjustments to the work schedule or workplace.
- When the NDDoH or Central Valley Health inform the district of a student or staff member that is COVID-19 positive that information will be passed on to the superintendent and business manager as allowable within district policy and law.

Isolation & Quarantine

- Definitions (see appendix for more information).
 - Isolation – For people who are already sick from the virus. A prevention strategy used to separate people who are sick with the virus from healthy people.
 - Quarantine – For people who are not sick but have been exposed to the virus. A prevention strategy used to monitor people who were exposed for a period of time.
- Montpelier School will follow isolation and quarantine guidelines and directives as set by NDDOH and Central Valley Health.

If a student or staff members becomes sick at school (or school event)

- Student
 - Direct / escort the child to the office.
 - Students will have their temperature taken. If fever is present they will be required to go home.
 - The child shall be provided a facial covering and isolated in the building sick room.

- Parent / guardian will be contacted to pick up their child.
- Staff
 - Inform your supervisor immediately and wear a face mask / shield until they can be replaced if supervising students at that time.
 - Leave the school building/grounds and consult with a health care professional.

Return to School

- When a student or staff member has been isolated or quarantined as directed by NDDoH or Central Valley Health the [decision tree](#) will be used by the NDDoH to determine when the individual may return to school.

COVID in the Schools – contracting and tracing process - November 24, 2020 (subject to change)

1. Upon notification of a positive case associated with the school, the NDDoH will work with the schools COVID-19 Coordinator to determine close contacts to the positive case. The Coordinator shall provide notification letters to close contacts.
2. Positive case: When a positive case is identified, NDDoH will be in contact with the positive case to determine close contact, isolation time and appropriate time for the individual to be released from isolation (this is a minimum of 10 days from symptom onset or test date if remain asymptomatic).
3. Close contacts: A close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of a positive case for 15 minutes or longer (cumulative) while they were infectious. ***However, if both individuals are wearing masks the non-infected individual will not need to be quarantined. This individual will need to self-monitor for symptoms and continue to wear face masks during school.*** The COVID-19 Coordinator will assist in determining close contacts within the school. Close contacts must quarantine for 14 days from the date of last exposure. NDDoH/Central Valley Health will assist to determine the release from quarantine date.

Facility Accommodations & Protocols- the school will continue to monitor and follow CDC and NDDoH guidelines.

Signs- Signs reminding people of proper safety protocol will placed throughout the building.

Bathrooms- Only two students will be allowed to use restroom facilities at a time. Proper handwashing will be monitored. A schedule will be created for elementary classes to minimize exposure of students in other classes.

Hallway passing- Students will move down the right side of hallways and will be encouraged to wear face coverings during passage. Students travelling in the high school will use the stairs on the right side (when facing from main floor) to go up and the other stairs to travel down. Students and staff are to respect and follow social distancing at all times when possible.

Classrooms- Classrooms will be set up to maximize social distancing while still be conducive to instruction. Hand sanitizer will be readily available in all classrooms.

Recess- The elementary staff will create a schedule and process to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 exposure.

Drinking fountains- students are not to use drinking fountains but may use water bottles that may be filled using the bottle filler at the drinking fountain.

Social, Emotional, and Behavioral

- Resources will be provided to staff, parents, and students to help them deal with trauma associated with COVID-19 events.
- Staff will report to administration students who may be experiencing trauma due to the circumstances related to COVID-19 so proper resources can be provided to the teacher and/or parent.
- Positive relationships with students and staff will be fostered throughout the school year.

Food Service

- Breakfast- elementary students will be provided breakfast in their classrooms. Exception will be for preschool who will eat in the lunchroom. High school students will practice social distancing in the lunchroom. High school students not eating breakfast are not to be in the lunchroom area.
- Lunch- Outdoor seating will be utilized weather permitting. When eating indoors grades PK-1 will eat in the lunchroom and remaining grades in their classrooms. High school students will eat in the lunchroom and at the additional tables on the gym floor.
- Seconds- When students dump their plate, they can get the seconds in a paper boat to be disposed of in the classroom.

Transportation

- All students are required to properly wear face coverings while on the bus. Students without face coverings will not be allowed on the bus. Drivers will wear face coverings as students enter and exit the bus.
- Bus drivers may ask to take temperature of students prior to allowing them to ride.
- Seating charts will be created to follow social distancing protocol as much as possible. Families will be kept together if possible.
- Buses will be cleaned/disinfected between routes.
- If students will be riding a bus that is not their regular route bus parents must call or provide a note by **3:00** of the same day.
- When multiple buses arrive at the same time students will be released from the bus closest to the main door first. Trailing buses will release their riders in the order they are parked.
- At end of the school day elementary students will be released using a schedule to minimize the number of students in the hallways and entering buses at a time. High school students will practice social distancing.

Guidance for Grade Level & School Building Level Closure

This is intended as guidance for COVID-19 Coordinators and school leaders on when to close classrooms, grades, and buildings.

- Close contact as defined as being within 6 feet of another individual for 15 minutes or greater.
- The COVID-19 Coordinator will be in contact with the Central Valley Health District to discuss the present phase of the community and seek advisement on district transitions between instructional models. Instructional models may be adjusted based on students' needs and current level of risk. The COVID-19 coordinator and the school board working together will determine the instructional model.
- The NDDoH may close a school or district at their discretion.
 - Montpelier Public School has created **guidelines** that correspond with each color-coded risk phase. To accommodate specific needs within the school district, the district may opt to, as appropriate, implement health and safety measures in a higher tier. This may include, up to, school closures. This will be done in consultation with the Central Valley Health District and the COVID-19 Coordinator. Any change to a different phase/instructional model would be immediately communicated to allow for appropriate implementation for families and at the district level.

Operational Guideline

Montpelier Public School believes that face-to-face instruction creates the best learning environment. Our school's health and safety plan focuses on this belief and strives to create opportunities for this type of interaction most of the time. Our number one concern is the safety of our students and staff. We will do our best to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment.

Families may choose to have their child(ren) attend school through distance learning, regardless of what instructional mode the school chooses to do. It is our obligation as a school district to educate all our children. However, we do hope that families will agree to send their child(ren) to school.

Elementary students: The distance learning program will be a mirror of the Face-to-Face classroom if possible. Your child will be responsible for logging into Google Classroom at assigned times throughout the day. This will allow your child(ren) to attend class in real time. Classroom materials/handouts will be distributed through the school's distance learning application or may be delivered by the bus drivers.

Students in grades 7-12: The distance learning will occur through the North Dakota Center for Distance Education (CDE). Each student will take 5 classes through the CDE including their 4 core classes and one elective class. Our educators will no longer have your students in their class. The principal will only have access to test passwords and weekly reports indicating the amount of assignments the students are behind or ahead in. If a student commits to distance learning, they are in this mode for the entire semester. If they come back to school at quarter time, they will still be enrolled through the CDE and our teachers and administration will provide support. If a student chooses to move to distance learning after the approved date, any work they have completed up to that date will be erased and their semester will begin that day. This may mean

that they are working into the summer to complete the required assignments. Any assignment that is not completed by the end of the semester will turn to a zero and the grade will be adjusted.

You (the parent) will be responsible for supervision at home, homework completion and attendance. The school will provide high quality instruction, course materials, technology and student follow-up.

The choice of having your child(ren) distance learn is a decision parents must make. This decision made will be made on a quarter to quarter (elementary) or on a semester basis (grades 7-12), meaning a student cannot go back and forth from face to face to distance learning or vice-versa within a quarter/semester. Parents and students must make this commitment within the first week of the quarter. If the parent and student would like to change to distance learning after the first week of a quarter, there must be an in person or virtual meeting with the parent, student, and administration explaining the reason for the request. Consistent instructional modes will provide students with a greater chance of academic success. Sickness, quarantine and short-term disability are excluded to this rule and, for these cases, distance learning will be utilized on a short-term basis. For more information, please contact Mr. Waagen, Superintendent, at (701) 489-3348 or jerry.waagen@k12.nd.us.

Operational Guidance-All learning modules will be considered for the different color phases.

Blue / Green	
Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure students and staff who are symptomatic stay at home. • Implement reasonable accommodations to reduce school-wide and community spread. • Possibly move to distance learning.
Districtwide Practices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social distancing where possible and reasonable. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Distancing on a school bus will be unachievable, we encourage parents to consider alternate transportation for their child. • Buildings routinely cleaned and disinfected according to CDC guidelines. Special focus on high touch/traffic areas. • Handwashing integrated throughout the day. • Hand sanitizer available throughout each building. • Support and train parents on use of technology tools and online curricular resources. This is available upon request and resources will be available to assist parents with technology.
Schools:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protective measures will be implemented in office spaces. • Some school events, assemblies and gatherings may be changed or cancelled. • Access to campus may be limited, with new protocols.

Classrooms:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students issued “technology” and trained on how to access online learning resources including Learning Management System (LMS) adopted by school. • Limited use of shared materials and supplies. • Desks arranged to allow for small groups and social distancing where possible and reasonable. • Staff and students working in close proximity will be advised to wear a face covering.
Common Areas:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students when moving around the building will move in grade level groups and reasonably try to limit exposure to other groups. • Schedules may be altered to reduce passing in common areas. • Lunch times and location may be altered to reduce the number of students in the cafeteria at any one time.
Extracurricular & Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance and directives from the NDHSAA and other governing boards will be used to guide these activities.
Communications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information about how to stop the spread of COVID-19.

<h1>Yellow/Orange</h1>	
Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure students and staff who are symptomatic stay at home. • Maximize social distancing where possible. • Support hybrid learning model that may include more distance learning days and fewer face to face days of instruction. Possibly go to full time distance learning for all students.
Districtwide Practices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on identified COVID cases of students and staff targeted closures may be implemented (class, grade, department, etc.). While other schools remain open and meeting students in person. • Social distancing where possible and reasonable. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Distancing on a school bus will be unachievable, we encourage parents to consider alternate transportation for their child. • Buildings routinely cleaned and disinfected according to CDC guidelines. Special focus on high touch/traffic areas. • Handwashing integrated throughout the day. • Hand sanitizer available throughout each building. • Support and train parents on use of technology tools and online curricular resources. • Implement technology support line. • Face coverings are required when social distancing is not possible.
Schools:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protective measures will be maintained in office spaces.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some school events, assemblies and gatherings may be changed or cancelled. • Access to campus may be additionally limited, with new protocols.
Classrooms:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may be attending school on a hybrid schedule. • Students will be expected to engage in learning opportunities online using district LMS system on days they are not in school. • Teachers are expected to make direct student/family contact regularly. • Limited use of shared materials and supplies when students are in school. • Desks arranged to allow for small groups and social distancing where possible and reasonable. • Staff and students working in close proximity will be advised to wear a face covering.
Common Areas:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students when moving around the building will move in grade level groups and reasonably try to limit exposure to other groups. • Schedules may be altered to reduce passing in common areas. Lunch times and location may be altered to reduce the number of students in the cafeteria at any one time.
Extracurricular & Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance and directives from the NDHSAA and other governing boards will be used to guide these activities.
Communications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information about how to stop the spread of COVID-19. • Share technology support resources for parents. • Clear communication about academic expectations and grading shared with students and families. • Share technology support resources for parents.
Red	
Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued education utilizing instructional model as determined by the COVID-19 coordinator and the school board.
Districtwide Practices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hybrid or online instruction will be used district wide in all courses at all grade levels. • Instruction will focus on essential learning targets. • Attendance and academic progress will be expected. • Grading policies will not be suspended. • Efforts will be made to support families without internet. • Local food distribution may be implemented by food service program.
Schools:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed to the general public except by special arrangement with the district office. • Small group meetings or instruction may be allowed, particularly for special needs students or academic interventions.

Classrooms:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will engage in learning <i>if</i> at the home.• Students will be expected to engage in learning opportunities online.• Teachers are expected to make direct student/family regularly.
Extracurricular & Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guidance and directives from the NDHSAA and other governing boards will be used to guide these activities.• Athletic and other extra/co-curricular activities likely suspended.
Communications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear communication about academic expectations and grading shared with students and families.• Share technology support resources for parents.



BEFORE SCHOOL!



Parents are asked to review this daily health checklist by answering these questions before sending their child to school.

(Parents do not need to send the questionnaire to school)

Has your child had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?

Yes ___ No ___

Does your child have a new or worsening shortness of breath?

Yes ___ No ___

Does your child have new or worsening cough?

Yes ___ No ___

Does your child have a fever of 100.3 or greater?

Yes ___ No ___

Does your child have chills?

Yes ___ No ___

Does your child have a sore throat?

Yes ___ No ___

Does your child have a new loss of taste or smell?

Yes ___ No ___



If **YES** to any of the questions **STOP!**

Do not send your child to school. Contact your healthcare provider. Contact your child's school to inform them of your child's absence.



If you are able to answer **NO** to all questions, go to school.

COVID-19: What's the Difference Between Physical Distancing, Quarantine and Isolation?

	PHYSICAL DISTANCING	QUARANTINE	ISOLATION
Who is it for?	People who haven't been exposed to the virus or are not aware of exposure to the virus.	People who don't currently have symptoms of the virus but were exposed to the virus.	People who are already sick from the virus.
What is it?	A precautionary measure used to help prevent the spread of the virus.	A prevention strategy used to monitor people who were exposed to the virus for a period of time to see if they become ill.	A prevention strategy used to separate people who are sick with the virus from healthy people.
Where does it take place?	Takes place outside the home in public places like grocery stores and work environments.	Takes place in a home setting.	Can take place in a home when medical attention is not required. Takes place in a hospital when medical care is required.
When do I use it?	At all times until further directed by the ND Department of Health.	If you have recently traveled internationally or have known exposure to the virus.	If you have tested positive or have symptoms and have not yet obtained a test.
How long is it for?	At all times until further directed by the ND Department of Health.	14 days after your last exposure. Once your quarantine period has ended, if you do not have symptoms, you may return to your normal routine.	A minimum of 10 days from the beginning of symptoms and 72 hours after your fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine and other symptoms have significantly improved.
What does this mean for my daily life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid large gatherings. • Stay 6-feet away from people. • If you are unable to stay 6-feet away from other people, wear a cloth face covering. • Call or video-chat with friends or loved ones, particularly those that are elderly or have underlying health conditions that places them at high-risk. • If possible, work from home. • Practice good hygiene and avoid shaking hands or touching your face. • If you become ill and need medical attention, call your health care provider. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay at home and avoid close contact with others. • Do not attend school, work or any other setting where you cannot maintain a 6-foot distance from other people. • Call or video-chat loved ones. • For food, medication and other necessities, obtain through friends or family, or use a contactless delivery service. • Practice standard hygiene and precautionary measures like not sharing household items, washing your hands, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces often. • Monitor your symptoms. If you become ill and need medical attention, call your health care provider. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not leave your home unless it is in an emergency. If you are in a home with others, stay in a "sick" room by yourself and, if possible, do not share a bathroom. • If you have a pet and live with others, do not touch your pet. • For food, medication and other necessities, obtain through friends or family, or use a contactless delivery service. Try to stock up for the duration of the isolation. • Practice standard hygiene and precautionary measures like not sharing household items, washing your hands, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces often. • If a caregiver cleans your room or bathroom, they should wear a mask and wait as long as possible after you've used the bathroom. • Contact your health care provider immediately if you experience severe symptoms.

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

SITUATION: There are COVID-19 cases in North Dakota, but not in your community

The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) does not recommend school closures if cases are not occurring in your community. Schools should follow [CDC guidance](#) regarding preparing for COVID-19. The guidance includes monitoring absenteeism, keeping sick children out, ensuring handwashing, environmental cleaning, communicating with parents, etc. Districts should consult with their local public health unit to determine if cases are occurring in their community.

SITUATION: There are COVID-19 cases in your community, but there are no cases in your school

The NDDoH does not recommend school closures if the ongoing spread is not identified in your school. Schools should follow [CDC guidance](#) regarding preparing for COVID-19. The guidance includes monitoring absenteeism, keeping sick children out, ensuring handwashing, environmental cleaning, communicating with parents, etc.

SITUATION: There is one case of COVID-19 in your school

If there is a COVID-19 case in your school, the NDDoH will notify the facility. If a school is made aware of a COVID-19 case before being contacted by the NDDoH, please report the case to the NDDoH at 1-800-472-2180 or 701-328-2378.

The confirmed case of COVID-19 must be excluded ([isolation period](#)) from school for ten days after onset of symptoms (if no symptoms, then exclusion is ten days after collection date of test) **and** be fever free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications) **and** have improvement of symptoms, whichever is longer. The NDDoH will provide guidance to the school and the case or case's parents/guardians.

Close contacts to a confirmed case of COVID-19 will be [quarantined](#) (must stay home) for 14 days from their last exposure to a case. A close contact is defined as someone who is within six feet of a confirmed case for 15 minutes or greater. It may also be someone who is directly coughed on or exposed to a case's secretions. Close contacts will be identified by the NDDoH during the investigation. In a school setting, close contacts to a case are often friends, teammates, classmates sitting next to, in front of, or behind the case, and potentially children in the same room as a case. This may mean that certain classrooms in a school have to be closed for 14 calendar days. If a case occurs in staff or children who are in multiple classrooms, then this may mean a higher number of close contacts have to be excluded from school for 14 calendar days.

SITUATION: There are two or more cases of COVID-19 in your school within 14 calendar days

Specific classrooms or grades may have to close if additional cases occur in a school. Public health (NDDoH or local public health) will provide guidance as to when a school should close. Schools may also make this determination based on the availability of staffing or level of absenteeism.

SITUATION: There is/are a close contact(s) in your school

Children or staff who are identified as close contacts to a confirmed case of COVID-19 must be excluded from the school ([quarantine](#)) until 14 calendar days after their last known exposure to the case. Close contacts will be identified by the NDDoH and informed to stay home. Even if a close contact tests negative during their 14-day quarantine period, the contact must complete the 14-day quarantine period. It can take up to 14 days to develop COVID-19.

If a parent or other household member tests positive, the child must stay out of school for the case's [isolation period](#) (10 calendar days from onset) plus the child's [quarantine period](#) (14 calendar days). Public health authorities will advise the parent as to how long the child will need to be removed from school.

If a parent is a contact to someone confirmed to be positive for COVID-19 (case), then the child may still attend school if the child did not have direct contact to a case.

SITUATION: Ill employees or children in your school

In addition to [general infectious disease exclusion criteria](#), schools should exclude ill employees or children who meet the following criteria:

Fever of 100.4° F **OR** two or more symptoms of fatigue, headache, muscle/body aches, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, congestion/runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain **OR** loss of taste and/or smell.

Employees and children need to be excluded until either (1) tested negative for COVID- 19 **OR** (2) diagnosed by a health care provider with another illness that does not require [exclusion](#) **OR** (3) for 10 days from onset **AND** fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications) **AND** symptoms are improving, whichever is longer.

ND K12 Smart Restart



WHO DETERMINES THE COLOR OF OUR COUNTY?

- The Governor in consultation with the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) will make the determination if and when a specific county may change colors.

HOW DO I KNOW THE COLOR OF MY COUNTY?

- The state has adjusted to a county color, communication will occur among the NDDoH, NDDPI, and the Governor's Office and Local Public Health will be informed. The NDDoH in coordination with Local Public Health will provide updated information to school districts if this occurs.

HOW DOES THE SCHOOL RESPOND TO CHANGE IN RISK LEVEL?

- The school will review the number of positive COVID cases within the school to determine what learning mode the school will utilize.

MAY OUR DISTRICT CHOOSE TO IMPLEMENT MORE STRINGENT HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS?

- Absolutely. School districts may choose to implement specific mitigation protocols that are more stringent than what is included in the current color risk level.

HOW DO WE HANDLE A POSITIVE TEST RESULT?

- Every school district **must follow** the protocol provided by the NDDoH in response to a positive test result with a staff or student. Click [here](#) to learn more. [HOW DO WE HANDLE A CLOSE CONTACT?](#)
- Every school district **must follow** the protocol provided by the NDDoH in response to a close contact. Click [here](#) to learn more.