

McKenzie County Public School District #1

Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

Introduction

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

This plan describes how McKenzie County Public School District (MCPSD#1) will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other district staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. Questions about this plan should be directed to Dr. Steven Holen at (701) 444-3626.

On July 14, 2020, North Dakota school districts were required to develop a health and safety plan and a distance learning plan for the 2020-2021 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. MCPSD#1's plans were created based on recommendations and guidelines from local and state health officials, a team of MCPSD#1 staff, and board members during several working sessions. Input and feedback from parents/guardians and staff members was gathered through online surveys during this time.

These plans required approval by the School Board prior to the start of the 20-21 school year and the MCPSD#1 Board of Education approved these plans at a Regular Board Meeting on August 10, 2020. A copy of these plans can be found by visiting the School Districts website. Specifically, by looking under the families section of the website and clicking on Restart Information & COVID Resources.

MCPSD#1 returned to in-person instruction on September 8th, 2020 and thanks to the successful implementation of mitigation strategies within MCPSD#1 and the community, remained in in-person instruction for the duration of the 20-21 school year. Our Health and Safety Plan and Distance Learning Plan were both consistently followed during the 20-21 school year leading to a major decline of cases by the spring of 2021. At the Special Board Meeting on May 5th, 2021, the school board acknowledged the disbandment of the Health & Safety Committee and that COVID-19 may need to be added to the infectious disease policy in the future. This change does not mean the district will completely return to pre-COVID-19 normalcy or that all mitigation strategies outlined in the plan will halt. It means the District may not continue some of the additional mitigation strategies that were specific to COVID-19 and significantly impacted MCPSD#1 operations or student experiences.

Maintaining Health and Safety Strategies

Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic, MCPSD#1 has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. Below are adopted policies or practices related to each of the following safety recommendations established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the current status of implementation at MDPSD#1:

- *Universal and correct wearing of masks*

All students, staff and visitors will continue to have the option to wear masks as a mitigation strategy for COVID-19.

- *Physical Distancing*
For the 2020-21 school year, desks in classrooms were reconfigured to allow for social distancing in all classrooms. Elementary students remained within their cohorts throughout the day. Looking ahead, MCPSD#1 will continue to monitor the transmission of COVID-19 in school facilities and work to reduce transmittable moments as needed.
- *Handwashing and respiratory etiquette*
Stations are available throughout school buildings that include hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, anti-bacterial hand soap, and adult and child disposable masks. Coughing and sneezing into a tissue or sleeve, proper disposal of used tissues and proper handwashing are stressed to students and staff. Posters and signage will continue to be used throughout all school buildings.
- *Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities*
HVAC systems have been set to increase outside air infiltration. Deep cleaning practices were put into place by following a sanitation plan that can be viewed under in the Restart Information & COVID Resources section of our website.
- *Contact tracing*
MCPSD#1 is opting to have the North Dakota Department of Health preform contact tracing and will assist with any needs within our school buildings should they arise.
- *Diagnostic and screening testing*
In coordination with Upper Missouri Public Health, COVID-19 testing continues to be available in the community and anyone displaying symptoms will be encouraged to test. Screening of students, staff and visitors may be conducted at each building should the need arise.
- *Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students if eligible*
In coordination the Upper Missouri Public Health, a vaccination clinic was offered to all staff in March 2021, allowing staff members the opportunity to be fully vaccinated prior to the end of the 2020-2021 school year. A vaccination clinic was then offered to all eligible students in May 2021.
- *Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities*
Students with disabilities who are unable to wear a mask do not have to do so. Students continue to have the option to wear masks as a mitigation strategy for COVID-19.

Continuity of Services

During the period of the ARP ESSER award, MCPSD#1 will review and revise our In-Person and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 20, 2024. The plan is posted on the District's website, www.watford-city.k12.nd.us. Specifically, it can be found under the Restart Information & COVID-19 Resources section of the website, <https://www.watford-city.k12.nd.us/domain/438>.

- MCPSD#1 offers Spanish translation services to all families and can be utilized by calling one of our offices at 701-444-3626.
- Upon request, an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA may be provided with the plan in an alternative format accessible by contacting our District Office at 701-444-3626 Option #5.

To provide FPS with your feedback on the plan, please visit <https://bit.ly/3x9dWfi>

Thank you in advance for your input.