

Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

March 11, 2024

Introduction:

Our goal is to keep schools open while addressing the conditions related to COVID-19. It is the district's responsibility to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for all students, and a safe and healthy work environment for staff. Our plan is aligned to guidelines provided by CDC (Center for Disease Control), Eastern Idaho Public Health, The Idaho State Board of Education, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, and the Governor. As conditions change, Mackay School District will follow the guidelines provided by these government entities. Local medical professionals, including staff from Lost Rivers Hospital, will also be consulted.

This plan will be updated with meaningful stakeholder input no less frequently than every 6 months for the duration of the ARP ESSER grant period ending September 2025. Stakeholders will be informed by email and school newsletters that the plan is available for review on the district's website. Stakeholders will be encouraged to provide input through email and phone calls. The reviewed and updated plan will be presented for Board approval no less frequently than every 6 months at a regularly scheduled Board meeting.

The decision-making hierarchy for operating our schools under COVID-19 conditions is as follows:

1. Local Board of Trustees
2. Eastern Idaho Public Health Department
3. Local Medical Professionals including Lost Rivers Hospital
4. State Board of Education
5. Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
6. Governor

STAY HEALTHY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Stay up to date with vaccinations to protect against serious illness, hospitalization, and death. This includes flu, COVID-19, and RSV if eligible. The District will work with EIPH and local providers to provide vaccinations.
- A return to normal activities, when for at least 24 hours, symptoms are improving overall, and if a fever was present, it has been gone without use of a fever-reducing medication. Once normal activities are resumed, people are encouraged to take additional prevention strategies for the next 5 days to curb disease spread, such as taking more steps for cleaner air, enhancing hygiene practices, wearing a well-fitting mask, keeping a distance from others, and/or getting tested for respiratory viruses.

Enhanced precautions are especially important to protect those most at risk for severe illness, including those over 65 and people with weakened immune systems.

- Buildings will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the school day when possible and routinely cleaned at the end of each school day and events.
- Handwashing will be encouraged.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in classrooms and throughout buildings.
- Inside doors will be propped open when appropriate.
- When outside temperatures permit, windows will remain open.

Classroom Safety Practices

- Students will be issued individual Chromebooks.
- Limited use of shared materials and supplies will be maintained.
- Hard copies of instructional materials will be minimized.

Academic Needs

Teachers are trained to provide remote instruction during possible Stay-At-Home Conditions. The District will provide homework club and after-school tutoring for students in both buildings. In-school intervention support will be provided to elementary students in reading and math. Summer school will be provided to eligible middle level and elementary school students. Credit recovery will be provided through Idaho Digital Learning Alliance.

Additional support will be provided to students with Individual Education Plans and 504 Plans during school closures.

Athletics and Activities

The District will monitor the status of COVID-19 and other respiratory virus conditions throughout the area on an ongoing basis. Guidelines and recommendations from state and local health officials and the Idaho High Schools Activities Association will be followed.

Mackay School District athletes and coaches will also follow District guidelines and local guidelines at away events. The following steps should be taken by athletes, participants, coaches, officials, and staff:

- Hand sanitizers will be available.
- Monitor athletes, participants, and staff for signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses prior to any workout, practice, game, event, etc. Any person with symptoms will not be allowed to participate and should contact his/her primary care provider or other appropriate health care official.
- Wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.
- No sharing of water bottles. Individual bottles must be clearly marked.

Transportation to and from Events:

- Activity buses will be cleaned and disinfected prior to loading and departure.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available.
- Windows will be opened as practical for ventilation.
- No person with symptoms of COVID-19 or other respiratory virus will be allowed to ride activity busses.
- Coaches'/Advisor's/Staff children may ride activity buses only with adult supervision other than the coach/advisor/staff member and with prior approval from the principal and/or athletic director.

School Bus Safety

- Hand sanitizer will be available on each bus.
- Thorough disinfecting of each bus will occur at the end of each route.

Social Emotional Needs

The District's part-time counselor (if available) will provide support to students. Staff will receive professional development to more effectively address the social emotional needs of students and others. Administration will provide support to students and staff.

Stay-at-Home Conditions

This model will be used in extreme conditions which could include a local or state stay-at-home order. If student absences equal or exceed 20% of district enrollment due to illness, schools will be closed and remote learning will be enacted for all students unless special circumstances apply. Individual Chromebooks will be provided to students, and teachers will utilize Google Classroom as the learning management system.

Special circumstances include students with Individual Education Plans and identified at-risk status. Buildings will be closed to the general public except by appointment. Athletics and other extracurricular activities will be suspended. Meals will be available through delivery or pickup if the closure is for more than 3 instructional days. The District wants to ensure face-to-face instruction as much as possible. The Superintendent is authorized to close school and move the District to Remote Learning for no more than 10 calendar days. The recommended closure time for remote learning will not exceed a total time of 10 consecutive calendar days unless Board approval is obtained.

How can parents/guardians support their students during COVID-19 and other respiratory virus conditions?

- Screen your child every morning before sending him/her to school. It is important that sick students and staff not be present at school.
- Report to the school within 30 minutes and take your children home if he/she is sick or has a fever, cough, congestion, runny nose, or any other symptoms.
- Follow guidance from your health provider.

EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS

- Employees will be required to meet the expectations of their job description.
- All employees are expected to report to work during all STAY-AT-HOME conditions unless one of the following types of leave is used: FLMA leave, sick leave, personal leave, or vacation leave. The exception is a stay-at-home order from Eastern Idaho Public Health or a State and/or local government agency.
- Employees are not expected or encouraged to work during leave. If necessary, a substitute will be provided to deliver lesson plans developed by the classroom teacher, paraprofessional, or other employee.
- Reasonable accommodations may be made to employees with disabilities so long as the accommodation does not place an undue hardship on the Mackay School District.