

Mesabi East Covid-19 Preparedness Plan

2020-2021 School Year

Covid Preparedness Plan Table of Contents

Introduction

Purpose

Daily Health and Safety Precautions

Scenario 1

Scenario 2

Scenario 3

Introduction

As Mesabi East Schools prepare to start the 2020-2021 school year during the COVID-19 Pandemic, our top priority is the safety and well-being of all students and staff. Changes in the way the workplace looks along with protocols and guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control have been implemented.

This Covid-19 Preparedness Plan included input from staff members in all roles of the Mesabi East School community and their input was critical to the task force recommendations and protocols. We intentionally included members of all the district's staff units, from operational to instructional, including significant representation from classroom teachers and other school building staff.

This plan addresses safety, mask use, cleaning, eating, transportation, maintenance and all aspects of the school day.

The cooperation of all staff in maintaining a safe environment is essential in the fight to decrease the spread of COVID-19. Guidance is regularly updated by the Minnesota Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control, and this plan will be updated to reflect these changes in guidance and recommendations.

Purpose

Identify and construct the three possible learning scenarios for the Fall of 2020.

Daily Health and Safety Precautions

VISITOR AND EMPLOYEE HEALTH SCREENING CHECKLIST



CONDUCT HEALTH SCREENING EACH TIME EMPLOYEES OR VISITORS ENTER THE FACILITY.

You may also opt to conduct temperature screening if it can be done with proper social distancing, protection, and hygiene protocols. However, temperature screening is not required.

If a worker or visitor answers "Yes" to any of the screening questions, they should be advised to go home, stay away from other people, and contact their health care provider.

Have you had any of the following symptoms since your last day at work or the last time you were here that you cannot attribute to another health condition?

Please answer "Yes" or "No" to each question. Do you have:

- Fever or feeling feverish?
- Chills?
- A new cough?
- Shortness of breath?
- A new sore throat?
- New muscle aches?
- New headache?
- New loss of smell or taste?



Masks and Face Coverings

IN PERSON LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS

In this scenario, the district will create as much space between students and teachers as is feasible during the day, but will not be held strictly to enforcing 6 feet of social distance during primary instructional time in the classroom. Activities and extracurricular programming will continue to follow the [Guidance for Social Distancing in Youth Sports](#). This scenario may be implemented assuming state COVID-19 metrics stabilize and/or improve.

- **Safety**

- The District and each building has a designated COVID-19 program coordinator who will communicate concerns, challenges, and lessons learned related to COVID-19 preventive activities as needed with staff, students/families, school and district leadership, and local health officials.
- These will be listed on the District website.
 - Shelly Whiting/Elementary
 - Michelle Metzger/High School
- Each building will have updated crisis plans (fire, lockdown, tornado drills, etc.) which follows fire marshal and CDC guidelines.
- Each school will allow additional hand-washing time for students
- All classrooms will have hand sanitizer available.
- Each school will provide students lessons regarding hand washing hygiene, proper mask wearing, other preventative measures.
- Distance learning will be available to students who may be medically vulnerable or unwilling to return to in-person or hybrid learning.

- **Masks**

- All individuals, staff, and students (kindergarten age and older) are required to wear a mask at school, including playgrounds, and on transportation.
- School supply lists now include masks. A limited supply of masks will be available if students forget their own.
- Exceptions to mask use will be determined on an individual basis, based on medical, developmental, or behavioral health needs. Documentation may be required.
- For breakfast and lunch, masks may be removed for eating and drinking once students are seated.
- For indoor/outdoor physical education, masks will not be required as long as social distancing is maintained (six feet in most situations).
- Preschool students riding on Mesabi East transportation will be encouraged to wear masks.
- All masks will need to comply with the Mesabi East dress code.
- [How to wear a cloth mask supporting document](#)
- [Why you should wear a cloth mask supporting document](#)
- [How to safely wear a mask supporting](#)

- **Cleaning**
 - There will be frequent cleaning of high-touch areas (e.g., desks, door handles, water fountains, computer keyboards, cafeteria tables, locker door handles, handle rails, etc.).
 - We will increase the frequency of restroom cleaning.
 - Buses and vans will receive additional, frequent cleaning.
 - Playgrounds will receive additional, frequent cleaning.
 - The school district will follow guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding safe and effective chemicals.
 - Returned library books in addition to lost & found items will be isolated in an area not accessible to students for a quarantine period of 72 hours.
 - The district will follow the [Minnesota Department of Health's Covid-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance](#)

- **Transportation**
 - Routing and pick-up load from rear to front of bus.
 - Students may have assigned seats as they load the first day and remain in that seat for the remainder of the pandemic.
 - Family members may be seated together.
 - The number of routes in town may change

- **Arrival & Departure**
 - Students and staff will be encouraged to use the [Minnesota Department of Health \(MDH\) screening tool at home prior to arrival.](#)
 - Individuals with symptoms or exposure should stay home from school and contact their health care provider.
 - Buildings will identify specific entrance and exit procedures to encourage social distances.
 - Signage will identify traffic flow and social distancing requirements.

- **Classrooms**
 - The high school will function with all students 5 days per week capacity.
 - Elementary class sizes will be reduced. Students will continue to attend daily.
 - We will create at least six-foot spacing between students.
 - Classes will avoid mixing with other student groups.
 - Wherever possible, students will avoid sharing learning materials.
 - We are currently awaiting further guidance on playing wind instruments and choral singing in classrooms.

- **Shared Items**
 - Shared items such as PE equipment, library books, and other learning materials will be sanitized in between use or quarantined for 24-72 hours depending on the equipment.
 - Hand washing will be required before and after use of shared equipment.
 - Building staff will discourage congregating at lockers during passing time.
 - Lockers will not be shared among students.
- **Hallways & Passing Time**
 - We will limit the number of students attending school each day and stagger passing time.
 - Restrooms--the number of students utilizing restrooms at once will be limited.
 - Building staff will discourage congregating at lockers during passing time.
 - Lockers will not be shared among students.
- **Learning**
 - Learning will be in-person following the school district calendar.
 - Staff will address instructional needs for students with IEP's, 504's and health plans on an individual basis.
 - Field trips will not occur until further notice.
 - The district will provide professional development for all teachers on effective online learning and instruction for equity throughout the school year. Distance learning will be available to students who may be medically vulnerable or unwilling to return to in-person or hybrid learning.
- **Mental Health & Emotional Wellness**
 - Counselors, social workers, and other mental health providers (Mesabi East Care Team) will provide support to address students' mental and emotional wellness.
 - The district provides access to care team members via the district website.
 - The care team will clearly identify and communicate which staff are available to support students, staff and families and the types of support they can provide. Services will be available, both, in-person and virtual.
 - The Care Team will continue to provide communication with families about the availability of local mental health services and resources.
- **Social Emotional Learning & Relationships**
 - Staff will build time into the schedule to allow students to connect socially with one another.
 - Staff will provide students with instruction and support around successful practices such as time management, organization, mindset, and self-regulation.
 - Students will be provided with instruction and resources for self-advocacy.
 - Social workers and counselors will continue to partner with teachers as-needed.
 - Classroom teachers will develop an initial relationship with students and families to provide a sense of belonging and support through various activities.

- **Attendance**
 - will be taken on a daily basis.
 - Families will be notified via St. Louis County Public Health of a confirmed case in close contact with their child.
- **Meal Service**
 - Meals will be served to all students
 - Grab and Go meals will be provided on distance learning days.
 - We will work with families on documented special dietary needs.
 - Meals pre K to 6 will be delivered to each classroom.
 - Tables and milk machines will be needed in the elementary hallway.
 - Breakfast will be served from tables at the entry points into the school. Students will eat in their classroom.
 - High School Students will eat in designated areas.
 - Meals will be fee-based unless students qualify for free meals. If the USDA waives this requirement, we will adjust our process.
 - We will implement a no-contact payment process.
- **Personal Items**
 - Students should bring personal water bottles to refill in order to avoid drinking from a fountain.
 - Students will not be allowed to share food or drinks.
 - Birthday treats are not allowed.
 - Students are discouraged from bringing extra personal items to school.
- **Technology**
 - Schools will prioritize device distribution (iPads) based on family needs.
 - Resources and training will be made available to families to familiarize themselves with technology.
 - The following learning management systems will be utilized:
 - Elementary (grades Pre-K to 4)
 - See-Saw
 - PowerSchool
 - Middle school/high school (grades 5-12)
 - Schoology
 - PowerSchool
 - Communication to families will be delivered through the Mesabi East instant alert system (PowerSchool, email, phone, text messaging).
 - Devices including keyboards, printers, and other high touch services will be cleaned in between users.
-

- **Screening & Exclusion**
 - We will follow [Minnesota Department of Health exclusion guidance](#)
 - As well as the [Minnesota Department of Health Close Contact Guidance](#)
 - Students and employees will need to complete a self-screening questionnaire each day prior to reporting to school. The screening checklist will also be posted at all building entry points and on district transportation.
 - The school will have a designated, isolated space for suspected cases of COVID-19.
 - Following the [Minnesota Department of Health Decision Tree](#)

- **Nurse**
 - The school nurse will provide for daily student health needs, following assessment protocol during the 20/21 school year .
 - The health office will have designated space for symptomatic individuals, as feasible the health office will maintain separation between ill students and well students.
 - The school nurse will follow MDH guidance with regards to COVID19 and other [infectious diseases](#) and reporting to MDH as required.
 - [Decision Tree for People with COVID19 Symptoms](#)
 - [What to do while you are waiting for results](#)

- **Family Connections**
 - The district will ask families to update their contact information (phone, email, address) in PowerSchool.
 - Family engagement meetings and events can be held online or via phone whenever possible.

- **Special Facilities**
 - School pools will be closed for programming during the school day.
 - Locker rooms will not be in use during the school day.
 - Playgrounds will be disinfected before school each day and open for recess on a limited basis with social distancing guidelines in place.
 - Outdoor fields will be used as much as possible for physical education and recess while following social distancing guidelines.
 - Auditoriums will be allowed for use in accordance with social distancing guidelines.

- **Other Activities**
 - School facilities will not be available to rent at this time.
 - Youth sports and/or activities are required to follow Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) guidelines on COVID-19 preparedness in youth sports.

- **Visitors**
 - Building will restrict non-essential visitors and volunteers.
 - Parents will be asked to make appointments for in-person meetings or participate in meetings online.
 - Parents will be encouraged to use the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) screening tool when bringing their children back to school after appointments (dentist, orthodontist, doctor, etc.).

- **School Age Child Care (SACC)**
 - Child care will be available on in-person learning days in the elementary school.
 - Child care for the children of Tier 1 critical workers will be available on distance learning days.
 - Registration will occur through community education.
 - The number of spaces available will be limited by staffing and social distancing guidelines.
 - Programming will follow the same CDC guidelines as the school day.

HYBRID LEARNING WITH STRICT SOCIAL DISTANCING

In this scenario, the district will limit the overall number of people in school facilities and on transportation vehicles to 50% maximum occupancy. Sufficient social distancing with at least 6 feet between people must occur at all times. If distancing cannot be achieved in a space or on a transportation vehicle, the number of occupants must be reduced. This scenario may be implemented if COVID-19 metrics worsen at the local, regional, or statewide level.

Hybrid learning is used to describe classes in which some traditional face-to-face instruction has been replaced by distance learning activities. A hybrid class is designed to integrate face-to-face and distance learning activities so that they reinforce, complement, and elaborate on one another instead of treating the online component as an add-on or duplicate of what is taught in the classroom.

- **Safety**
 - The District and each building has a designated COVID-19 program coordinator who will communicate concerns, challenges, and lessons learned related to COVID-19 preventive activities as needed with staff, students/families, school and district leadership, and local health officials.
 - These will be listed on the District website.
 - Shelly Whiting/Elementary
 - Michelle Metzger/High School
 - Each building will have updated crisis plans (fire, lockdown, tornado drills, etc.) which follows fire marshal and CDC guidelines.
 - Each school will allow additional hand-washing time for students
 - All classrooms will have hand sanitizer available.
 - Each school will provide students lessons regarding hand washing hygiene, proper mask wearing, other preventative measures.
 - Distance learning will be available to students who may be medically vulnerable or unwilling to return to in-person or hybrid learning.

- **Masks**

- All individuals, staff, and students (kindergarten age and older) are required to wear a mask at school, including playgrounds, and on transportation.
- School supply lists now include masks. A limited supply of masks will be available if students forget their own.
- Exceptions to mask use will be determined on an individual basis, based on medical, developmental, or behavioral health needs. Documentation may be required.
- For breakfast and lunch, masks may be removed for eating and drinking once students are seated.
- For indoor/outdoor physical education, masks will not be required as long as social distancing is maintained (six feet in most situations).
- Preschool students riding on Mesabi East transportation will be encouraged to wear masks.
- All masks will need to comply with the Mesabi East dress code.
- [How to wear a cloth mask supporting document](#)
- [Why you should wear a cloth mask supporting document:](#)
- [How to safely wear a mask supporting](#)

- **Cleaning**

- There will be frequent cleaning of high-touch areas (e.g., desks, door handles, water fountains, computer keyboards, cafeteria tables, locker door handles, handle rails, etc.).
- We will increase the frequency of restroom cleaning.
- Buses and vans will receive additional, frequent cleaning.
- Playgrounds will receive additional, frequent cleaning.
- The school district will follow guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding safe and effective chemicals.
- Returned library books in addition to lost & found items will be isolated in an area not accessible to students for a quarantine period of 72 hours.
- The district will follow the [Minnesota Department of Health's Covid-19 Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance](#)

- **Transportation**

- Routing and pick-up load from rear to front of bus.
- Students will have assigned seats as they load the first day and remain in that seat for the remainder of the pandemic.
- Family members would be seated together.
- The number of routes in town might change
- Possible staggering of pick up times due to the 50% capacity and 6 foot social distancing

- **Arrival & Departure**

- Students and staff will be encouraged to use the [Minnesota Department of Health \(MDH\) screening tool at home prior to arrival.](#)
- Individuals with symptoms or exposure should stay home from school and contact their health care provider.
- Buildings will identify specific entrance and exit procedures to encourage social distances.
- Signage will identify traffic flow and social distancing requirements.

-

- **Classrooms**
 - The high school will function at 50% capacity each day.
 - Elementary class sizes will be reduced. Students will continue to attend daily.
 - We will create at least six-foot spacing between students.
 - Classes will avoid mixing with other student groups.
 - Wherever possible, students will avoid sharing learning materials.
 - We are currently awaiting further guidance on playing wind instruments and choral singing in classrooms.
- **Shared Items**
 - Shared items such as PE equipment, library books, and other learning materials will be sanitized in between use or quarantined for 24-72 hours depending on the equipment.
 - Hand washing will be required before and after use of shared equipment.
 - Building staff will discourage congregating at lockers during passing time.
 - Lockers will not be shared among students.
- **Hallways & Passing Time**
 - We will limit the number of students attending school each day and stagger passing time.
 - Restrooms—the number of students utilizing restrooms at once will be limited.
 - Building staff will discourage congregating at lockers during passing time.
 - Lockers will not be shared among students.
- **Learning**
 - Teachers will provide daily direct instruction, including a possible mix of live learning and recorded lessons.
 - Staff will address instructional needs for students with IEP's, 504's, and health plans on an individual basis.
 - Specialists in various areas of expertise will support students in their distance learning.
 - Staff will focus on building positive relationships with students and families.
 - The Mesabi East Student Handbook applies to all students during distance and in-person learning, on transportation, and during other district activities.
 - Field trips will not occur until further notice.
- **Mental Health & Emotional Wellness**
 - Counselors, social workers, and other mental health providers (Mesabi East Care Team) will provide support to address students' mental and emotional wellness.
 - The district provides access to care team members via the district website.
 - The care team will clearly identify and communicate which staff are available to support students, staff and families and the types of support they can provide. Services will be available in a virtual format .
 - The Care Team will continue to provide communication with families about the availability of local mental health services and resources.

- **Social Emotional Learning & Awareness**
 - Staff will build time into the schedule to allow students to connect socially with one another.
 - Staff will provide students with instruction and support around successful practices such as time management, organization, mindset, and self-regulation.
 - Students will be provided with instruction and resources for self-advocacy.
 - Social workers and counselors will continue to partner with teachers as-needed.
 - Classroom teachers will develop an initial relationship with students and families to provide a sense of belonging and support through various activities.
- **Attendance**
 - Attendance will be taken on a daily basis.
- **Meal Service**
 - Grab and Go meals will be provided on distance learning days.
 - We will work with families on documented special dietary needs.
 - Meals will be fee-based unless students qualify for free meals. If the USDA waives this requirement, we will adjust our process.
 - We will implement a no-contact payment process.
- **Technology**
 - Schools will prioritize device distribution (iPads) based on family needs.
 - Resources and training will be made available to families to familiarize themselves with technology.
 - The following learning management systems will be utilized:
 - Elementary (grades Pre-K to 4)
 - See-Saw
 - PowerSchool
 - Middle school/high school (grades 5-12)
 - Schoology
 - PowerSchool
 - Communication to families will be delivered through the Mesabi East instant alert system (PowerSchool, email, phone, text messaging).
- **Screening & Exclusion**
 - We will follow [Minnesota Department of Health exclusion guidance](#)
 - As well as the [Minnesota Department of Health Close Contact Guidance](#)
 - Students and employees will need to complete a self-screening questionnaire each day prior to reporting to school. The screening checklist will also be posted at all building entry points and on district transportation.
 - The school will have a designated, isolated space for suspected cases of COVID-19.
 - Following the [Minnesota Department of Health Decision Tree](#)

Nurse

- The school nurse will provide for daily student health needs, following assessment protocol during the 20/21 school year .
- The health office will have designated space for symptomatic individuals, as feasible the health office will maintain separation between ill students and well students.
- The school nurse will follow MDH guidance with regards to COVID19 and other [infectious diseases](#) and reporting to MDH as required.
 - [Decision Tree for People with COVID19 Symptoms](#)
 - [What to do while you are waiting for results](#)

● **Family Connections**

- The district will ask families to update their contact information (phone, email, address) in PowerSchool.
- Family engagement meetings and events can be held online or via phone whenever possible.

● **Special Facilities**

- School pools will be closed for programming during the school day.
- Locker rooms will not be in use during the school day.
- Playgrounds will be disinfected before school each day and open for recess on a limited basis with social distancing guidelines in place.
- Outdoor fields will be used as much as possible for physical education and recess while following social distancing guidelines.
- Auditoriums will be allowed for use in accordance with social distancing guidelines.

● **Other Activities**

- School facilities will not be available to rent at this time.
- Youth sports and/or activities are required to follow Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) guidelines on COVID-19 preparedness in youth sports.

● **Visitors**

- Building will restrict non-essential visitors and volunteers.
- Parents will be asked to make appointments for in-person meetings or participate in meetings online.
- Parents will be encouraged to use the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) screening tool when bringing their children back to school after appointments (dentist, orthodontist, doctor, etc.).

● **School Age Child Care (SACC)**

- Registration will occur through community education.
- The number of spaces available will be limited by staffing and social distancing guidelines.
- Programming will follow the same CDC guidelines as the school day.

DISTANCE LEARNING ONLY

This scenario may be implemented if local, regional, or statewide COVID-19 metrics worsen significantly enough to require the suspension of in-person learning.

Students engaged in distance learning have access to appropriate educational materials and receive daily interaction with their licensed teacher(s). It is important to note that distance learning does not always mean e-learning or online learning.

In the distance learning only scenario, the following areas will not be a consideration: masks, transportation, arrival & departure, classroom, shared items, hallways & passing time, personal items, screening & exclusion, and visitors.

- **Safety**

- The District and each building has a designated COVID-19 program coordinator who will communicate concerns, challenges, and lessons learned related to COVID-19 preventive activities as needed with staff, students/families, school and district leadership, and local health officials.
- These will be listed on the District website.
 - Shelly Whiting/Elementary
 - Michelle Metzger/High School
- Each building will have updated crisis plans (fire, lockdown, tornado drills, etc.) which follows fire marshal and CDC guidelines.

- **Cleaning**

- There will be frequent cleaning of high-touch areas (e.g., desks, door handles, water fountains, computer keyboards, cafeteria tables, locker door handles, handle rails, etc.).
- We will increase the frequency of restroom cleaning.
- The school district will follow guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding safe and effective chemicals.

- **Learning**

- Teachers will provide daily direct instruction, including a possible mix of live learning and recorded lessons.
- Staff will address instructional needs for students with IEP's, 504's, and health plans on an individual basis.
- Specialists in various areas of expertise will support students in their distance learning.
- Staff will focus on building positive relationships with students and families.
- The Mesabi East Student Handbook applies to all students during distance and in-person learning, on transportation, and during other district activities.
- Field trips will not occur until further notice.
- The district will provide professional development for all teachers on effective online learning and instruction for equity throughout the school year.

- **Mental Health & Emotional Wellness**
 - Counselors, social workers, and other mental health providers (Mesabi East Care Team) will provide support to address students' mental and emotional wellness.
 - The district provides access to care team members via the district website.
 - The care team will clearly identify and communicate which staff are available to support students, staff and families and the types of support they can provide. Services will be available in a virtual format .
 - The Care Team will continue to provide communication with families about the availability of local mental health services and resources.
- **Social Emotional Learning & Awareness**
 - Staff will build time into the schedule to allow students to connect socially with one another.
 - Staff will provide students with instruction and support around successful practices such as time management, organization, mindset, and self-regulation.
 - Students will be provided with instruction and resources for self-advocacy.
 - Social workers and counselors will continue to partner with teachers as-needed.
 - Classroom teachers will develop an initial relationship with students and families to provide a sense of belonging and support through various activities.
- **Attendance**
 - Attendance will be taken on a daily basis.
- **Meal Service**
 - Grab and Go meals will be provided on distance learning days.
 - We will work with families on documented special dietary needs.
 - Meals will be fee-based unless students qualify for free meals. If the USDA waives this requirement, we will adjust our process.
 - We will implement a no-contact payment process.
- **Technology**
 - Schools will prioritize device distribution (iPads) based on family needs.
 - Resources and training will be made available to families to familiarize themselves with technology.
 - The following learning management systems will be utilized:
 - Elementary (grades Pre-K to 4)
 - See-Saw
 - PowerSchool
 - Middle school/high school (grades 5-12)
 - Schoology
 - PowerSchool
 - Communication to families will be delivered through the Mesabi East instant alert system (PowerSchool, email, phone, text messaging).
- **Nurse**
 - The school nurse will provide for daily student health needs virtually.

- **Family Connections**
 - The district will ask families to update their contact information (phone, email, address) in PowerSchool.
 - Family engagement meetings and events can be held online or via phone whenever possible.
- **Other Activities**
 - School facilities will not be available to rent at this time.
 - Youth sports and/or activities are required to follow Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) guidelines on COVID-19 preparedness in youth sports.
- **Visitors**
 - Building will restrict non-essential visitors and volunteers.
 - Parents will be asked to make appointments for in-person meetings or participate in meetings online.
 - Parents will be encouraged to use the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) screening tool when bringing their children back to school after appointments (dentist, orthodontist, doctor, etc.).
- **School Age Child Care (SACC)**
 - Child care for the children of Tier 1 critical workers will be available on distance learning days.
 - Registration will occur through community education.
 - The number of spaces available will be limited by staffing and social distancing guidelines.
 - Programming will follow the same CDC guidelines as the school day.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [2020-2021 Planning Guide for Schools: Health Considerations for Navigating COVID-19 \(PDF\)](#) *Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) - 7/22/2020*
- [MDE 2020-21 Planning Guidance for Minnesota Public Schools](#) *Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) - 7/22/2020*
- [COVID-19 Prevention Guidance for Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs \(PDF\)](#) *Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) - 7/22/2020*
- [Decision Tree for People with COVID-19 Symptoms in Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs \(PDF\)](#) *Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) - 6/2/2020*
- [Quarantine If You Might Be Sick](#) - *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - 7/16/2020*