

June 4, 2020

Superintendents and Charter School Leaders:

Fall Planning: Update and Timeline

Since the beginning of Distance Learning in March, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has honed and modified the recommended guidance to better meet the academic, social-emotional, and mental health needs of our students. MDE also developed and released summer learning guidance that included a hybrid model option in addition to distance learning. As we consider options for the system and structure for the 2020-21 school year, we can use what we learned from the distance learning model and what we are learning in the hybrid model to ensure that our students continue to receive a high-quality education and our staff have what they need to support their students.

As we partner with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and determine what model of delivery will be the in the best interest of the health and safety of our students, we know that fall planning is already underway in your districts and schools, and guidance from MDE is needed.

We would like to share what is coming over the next few weeks from MDE to help better support you in your contingency planning. A full timeline is at the end of this section. Most immediately, during the week of June 15, 2020, we will be releasing to you guidelines to help shape your contingency planning, including planning for three different scenarios for the 2020-21 school year. School districts and charter schools should use forthcoming guidance to plan for all three scenarios:

- Return all students to school buildings following the most current CDC and MDH guidelines.
- Return students to school buildings implementing a hybrid model following the most current CDC and MDH guidelines.
- No students return to school buildings. Implement a distance learning model.

This situation is fluid and decisions will continue to be reviewed in the best interest of public health, and specifically the health and safety of our school communities. As the situation evolves, decisions may change. That is why we are urging all school districts and charter schools to prepare for each of the three scenarios.

In partnership with MDH and the Governor's Office we plan to announce a decision for which model of educational delivery will be in the best interest of the health and safety of our students, school staff, and school communities for the 2020-21 school year by the week of July 27, 2020.

As we are monitoring the public health situation and working on our decision for the fall, MDE will not be working in a silo. We will continue to gather feedback and input from students, families, educators, and school staff because we know we cannot do this alone. Starting next week, we will be working in partnership with the Minnesota/Wisconsin Comprehensive Center to conduct focus groups. If you are interested in participating in those focus groups, reach out to your member organizations for more information.

Current timeline:

- **Week of June 15**

- Release public health parameters of the three models for schools to consider while contingency planning for the 2020-21 school year.

- **Week of July 27**

- MDE and MDH share determination on educational delivery model will be in the best interest of the health and safety of our students, school staff, and school communities for the 2020-21 school year.