

Return-to-learn Action Plan

A Plan for Reopening All Wright County Schools Including Belmond-Klemme CSD

DATED as of: Thursday, August 6, 2020

The following is a joint statement by Wright County Public Health, Iowa Specialty Hospitals and Clinics, and the three Wright County public schools: Belmond-Klemme, Clarion-Goldfield-Dows, and Eagle Grove.

Personal Health

At the Belmond-Klemme Community School District, the health and safety of our students and staff is paramount. Therefore, Belmond-Klemme is taking a variety of actions to preserve the health of students, faculty, staff, and visitors. These efforts will be done in collaboration with Iowa Specialty Hospitals and Clinics, Wright County Public Health, neighboring county school districts, and state public health partners.

Testing

Students, faculty, and staff can get tested for COVID-19 at Iowa Specialty Hospital (ISH) and limited quantities of testing are available within the school through Wright County Public Health, if they are experiencing symptoms as indicated by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or have been in contact with someone who has a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19.

Concerned families should contact the school nurse, Wright County Public Health or closest ISH clinic to discuss symptoms and determine if they qualify.

For those who do not meet the testing guidelines for school or ISH testing, other testing options are available through Test Iowa.

The school is working with its partners on a strategy and procedure for broader testing of students this fall and more information will be shared when it is available.

Contact Tracing

Belmond-Klemme, working with Wright County Public Health and other community experts, will put in place contact tracing to help identify and resolve possible exposure. Contact tracing, as described by the CDC, involves the identification, monitoring, and support of people who have been exposed to an individual infected with COVID-19. Contact tracing helps reduce the spread of disease by separating people who have been exposed to the disease from people who have not.

Managing Students Who Test Positive

Belmond-Klemme will also manage positive cases within school, including working with local health partners to access quarantine spaces, monitoring students' health, and facilitating access to healthcare services in and out of school.

BUILDING STRATEGIES

Face Coverings

All students, faculty, staff, and visitors are **required** to wear face coverings anywhere inside our buildings, including classrooms and offices, and anywhere physical distancing is not possible.

Top quality face shields have been ordered for every staff member. The shield is not required but will be an option. Staff have the option to choose to wear either a mask or a face shield or both. Face shields will be very important to our young students, our special education students, and our English language learners.

We ask everyone to please show you care by wearing face coverings on buses and in stores, restaurants, and anywhere people gather. Face coverings should cover your mouth and nose.

Physical Distancing within Classrooms

- A. Students will be seated up to six-feet apart when space allows. If at all possible, students will be seated at least three-feet apart.
- B. Students and student desks will all be facing the same direction in the classroom.
- C. Teachers shall have assigned seats for all students. A seating chart will record all assigned seating. The seating shall be the same every day to facilitate contact tracing, if the need arises.
- D. Physical education classes and music classes will be convened outside whenever possible. Physical education classes will consist of non-contact activities.
- E. Classroom doors should be left open when possible rather than having students frequently touch the door handles.

Classroom-specific Strategies

Pre-kindergarten

The school will provide face shields for all pre-kindergarten students. Admittedly, face coverings for children in the Pre-K setting may be difficult to implement. Pre-kindergarten teachers are encouraged to utilize outdoor spaces when possible and limit unnecessary visitors into the building. Reducing classmate interactions/play may not provide enough COVID-19 risk reduction to justify potential harms.

K - 3 Classrooms

The school will provide face shields for all classes kindergarten through grade three. These will be the principal face coverings for K-3 students. Desks shall be placed three to six feet apart when feasible and all faced in the same direction.

The school will self-contain classes to minimize crossover among children and adults within the school. Teachers are encouraged to utilize outdoor spaces when possible. Reducing classmate interactions/play may not provide enough COVID-19 risk reduction to justify potential harms.

4 - 6 Classrooms

The school will provide face masks for all classes grades four through six. Face shields are available for any teacher who decides face shields are a better option for his or her students. Desks shall be placed three to six feet apart when feasible and all faced in the same direction.

The school will self-contain classes to minimize crossover among children and adults within the school. Teachers are encouraged to utilize outdoor spaces when possible. Reducing classmate interactions/play may not provide enough COVID-19 risk reduction to justify potential harms.

7 - 12 Classrooms The school will provide face masks for all students in grades seven through twelve. A face shield is available for any student upon request. Desks shall be placed three to six feet apart when feasible and all faced in the same direction.

The school will self-contain classes to minimize crossover among children and adults within the school. Teachers should rotate classes instead of students when feasible.

Teachers are encouraged to utilize outdoor spaces when possible.

Classroom doors should be left open when possible rather than having students frequently touch the door handles.

Special Education Attempts to meet physical distancing guidelines should meet the needs of the individual child and may require creative solutions, often on a case-by-case basis.

Physical Distancing among Adults

Adults and adult staff within schools should attempt to maintain a distance of 6 feet from other persons as much as possible, particularly around other adult staff.

Meetings and curriculum planning should take place virtually if possible. Faculty and staff are discouraged from congregating in shared spaces, such as staff lounge areas and staff lunch room.

Hand Washing

Teachers shall teach and reinforce washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds following CDC guidance on when and how to wash hands. If soap and water are not readily available, teachers should teach and reinforce use of a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol (if applicable or age appropriate) using CDC guidance.

Guidance from the CDC is available on the following web page:

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

Hand sanitizer will be available in dispensers in every classroom.

Screening for Symptoms

Parents are asked to screen their school children daily before they come to school, including temperature checks. Students who are exhibiting symptoms or are ill must be kept at home and not enter the school buses or come to school. Any student or staff member with a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection must not be present in school.

All faculty and staff are asked to report to the office upon entering school for temperature checks and symptom screening.

Belmond-Klemme has temperature screening devices mounted in the entry areas of all school buildings. The entry points of buildings will be monitored, and the school will attempt to identify symptomatic persons to exclude them from entering the school buildings.

The school district recognizes that one symptom is not necessarily indicative of communicable disease, and some individuals may be ill and have no symptoms.

Monitoring Student Health at School

Students will be monitored continuously for symptoms of infection.

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Any student or staff member with a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection must not be present in school.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The school district recognizes that one symptom is not necessarily indicative of communicable disease, and some individuals may be ill and have no symptoms.

If a student exhibits symptoms or is believed to be positive for the virus while within the school building, the student must report to the nurse’s office for further diagnosis. Parents or guardians will be contacted. The student will then be isolated to the extent prudent and possible until the student can be removed from the school and taken home.

Any student or staff member who exhibits symptoms or is believed to be positive for the virus should be tested or evaluated by a doctor.

The school will monitor student and employee absences to determine how the school needs to respond to changes in the absence rate.

If the school finds a student to be positive for the COVID-19 virus, any students or staff will be considered exposed who have been within six feet of the infected individual for more than 15 minutes. This rule will pertain to all individuals regardless if face coverings were properly in place. This rule may be subject to change as we learn more about the virus.

Anyone exposed to the virus should quarantine and must remain out of school for a minimum of 14 days. The person should also be tested, but a negative test result does not shorten the 14-day quarantine.

Student Lockers

Students are asked not to use their lockers except for storing their jackets or coats first thing in the morning and reclaiming them at the end of the school day. This will reduce the need for hallway use across multiple areas of the building.

Instead, students are asked to bring all their books and supplies in their bookbags and carry their bags throughout the school day.

Movement in Hallways and between Classes

The school will strive to limit the number of students in the hallways at any one time. The changing of classes will be staggered by cohort group to reduce numbers. Whenever possible, students will remain within their classrooms and the teachers will change classrooms.

Dismissal Time

At the end of each school day, we will stagger dismissal times to avoid crowding in our hallways.

Playgrounds and Recess

Enforcing physical distancing in an outside playground is difficult and may not be the most effective method of risk mitigation. Outdoor transmission of virus is known to be much lower than indoor transmission.

Whenever possible, students will take their recess breaks in cohort groups of limited size. Recess times will be adjusted to create cohort groups with limited size.

Masks will be required if students are in close proximity of one another such as on playground equipment like the monkey bars. Students may remove their masks on the playground as long as they are maintaining the physical distance of at least six feet from their peers.

Additional mask breaks may be scheduled during the school day. Whenever possible, such breaks shall occur outside.

Transportation

- A. Parents are asked to transport their children whenever possible during this pandemic to alleviate overcrowding on the school buses.
- B. Parents are asked to screen their school children daily before they come to school, including temperature checks. Students who are exhibiting symptoms or are ill must be kept at home and not enter the school buses or come to school. Any student or staff member with a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater or symptoms of possible COVID-19 virus infection should not be present in school.
- C. Students are encouraged to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before they enter the bus. Buses will also have a sanitizer dispenser at the entrance of the bus for children to use as they board.
- D. All students on school buses shall have assigned seating. The seating shall be the same every day. Seats will be assigned by cohort (same students sit together each day). The students must remain in their assigned seats throughout the trip.
- E. Buses will have tape marks that show students where to sit.
- F. A six-foot distance cannot be maintained between students on our school buses. Therefore, face coverings must be worn at all times by all riders on all buses. Drivers must also wear face coverings.
- G. Students unwilling to comply with these transportation rules cannot be provided bus service.

- H. Drivers should be a minimum of six feet from students; the seat immediately behind the driver must be left vacant.
- I. The school will attempt to minimize the number of people on any bus at one time to the extent possible.
- J. Adults who do not need to be on the bus must not be on the bus.
- K. Windows will be open if weather allows to maximize ventilation and air flow.

The district has a new electrostatic disinfecting machine. All buses will be disinfected daily.

School Lunches

School meals play an important part in addressing food security for children and adolescents. Within the Belmond-Klemme community, more than half of our students were on free or reduced-price lunches prior to the pandemic. In many communities, there are more students eligible for free and reduced meals than prior to the pandemic.

Our tentative plan is to serve students individually plated meals or in boxed lunches in their classrooms instead of in a communal cafeteria, while ensuring the safety of children with food allergies. We will likely utilize disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes).

- All students will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after eating.
- Students cohorted in their classrooms shall remain in their classroom throughout the day. Most students may remain within their classrooms for lunch as well.
- The number of lunch periods will be increased. We will create additional, separate lunch periods to minimize the number of students in the cafeteria at one time.
- We will utilize additional spaces for lunch times and break times, when feasible.
- We will utilize outdoor lunch spaces when possible.

Office/ Reception Area

Plexiglass is installed in reception areas above the reception desk as the environment does not accommodate physical distancing.

Visitors to School

Parents are discouraged from entering the school building. Visitors will be required to follow district rules on health and safety as well as social distancing and other public health guidelines. This specifically pertains to the wearing of PPE. Visitors must comply with the district's requirement of face masks in order to enter any school facility.

Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting

Belmond-Klemme increased its cleaning and maintenance staff for this school year. Dedicated cleaning and disinfecting will continue to be provided in all facilities, including classrooms, restrooms, dining areas, and other locations where people congregate.

The main mode of COVID-19 spread is from person to person, primarily via droplet transmission. Cleaning will be performed, followed by disinfection when appropriate. Normal cleaning with soap and water decreases the viral load and optimizes the efficacy of disinfectants.

In general, elimination of high-touch surfaces is preferable to frequent cleaning. When elimination is not possible, surfaces that are used frequently, such as drinking fountains, door handles, sinks and faucet handles, etc, will be cleaned and disinfected at least daily and as often as possible. Bathrooms, in

particular, will receive frequent cleaning and disinfection. Shared equipment including computer equipment, keyboards, art supplies, and play or gym equipment will also be disinfected frequently.

Hand washing should be promoted before and after touching shared equipment. Computer keyboard covers can be used to facilitate cleaning between users. Routine cleaning practices should be used for indoor areas that have not been used for seven or more days or outdoor equipment. Surfaces that are not high touch, such as bookcases, cabinets, wall boards, or drapes should be cleaned following standard protocol. The same applies to floors or carpeted areas.

Outdoor playgrounds/natural play areas only need routine maintenance, and hand hygiene should be emphasized before and after use of these spaces. Outdoor play equipment with high-touch surfaces, such as railings, handles, etc, should be cleaned and disinfected regularly if used continuously.

Children should not be present when disinfectants are in use and should not participate in disinfecting activities. Most of these products are not safe for use by children, whose “hand-to-mouth” behaviors and frequent touching of their face and eyes put them at higher risk for toxic exposures.

UV light kills viruses and bacteria and is used in some controlled settings as a germicide. UV light-emitting devices should not be used in the school setting, because they are not safe for children and adults and can cause skin and eye damage.

Increased Air Flow

The ventilation systems in both the elementary and secondary buildings have been optimized over the summer to increase ventilation and combat the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

In addition to leaving classroom doors open to reduce high-touch surfaces and increase air flow, teachers are encouraged to open classroom windows as much as possible whenever possible.

Guidelines for Music Classes

1. Masks should be worn by all students and staff prior to entering the performing arts room. Masks should continue to be worn until all students are seated and ready for instruction (example, long rests, sectional work, moving around the room, etc.)
2. No talking should occur in the room without a mask being properly worn.
3. When possible a mask with a small slit for mouthpiece access should be worn while playing.
4. In instrument groups where a mask cannot physically be worn the mask should be worn over the chin and replaced during periods where the student is not playing. No talking without a mask.
5. Social distancing should occur as suggested by the CDC. Currently that distance is a 6x6 foot space around each student with the student sitting in the center. This may reduce the number of students that can fit in a performing arts classroom. Straight lines should be used as curved setups can affect the aerosol movement in a room.
6. Students should sit all facing the same direction, back to front to minimize potential exposure.
7. Trombones should have an additional three feet of distancing making their space 9x6. The player should be seated three feet in front of the back line, leaving an additional six feet in front of them due to the extended nature of the instrument and slide that can be in extended position.
8. Bell covers are highly recommended as “masks” for the instruments. Bell covers can be made of multi-layered high denier nylon material and provide a barrier for aerosols.
9. Outdoor rehearsals are considered best practice; indoor rehearsals using CDC guidelines plus bell covers may be considered.

10. Spit valves should not be emptied on the floor. Recommend using a puppy pad (or similar) to catch the contents of the spit valve and discard.
 11. Storage areas should be managed to limit the number of students at a time in the room. Anyone who enters the room should bring a 70% alcohol wipe to wipe all surfaces before and after touching. The wipe should be discarded properly upon leaving the storage area.
 12. Teachers should consider using a portable amplifier to keep their voices at a low conversational volume. Students should also ask questions in a low conversational volume with a mask.
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Communication Plan

Our communication plan is designed to reach out to our stakeholder groups. The plan will be accessible to the community via our webpage and will list all resources, timelines, and communication needed for stakeholders.

Preparation for Possible Contingencies

Conditions in the world under a global pandemic from COVID-19 can change rapidly. If conditions change for our school we may move to an alternative form of instructional delivery as described below.

There are five potential scenarios for classes throughout the coming school year. They are described in the box below:

Health Condition:

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| HealthCon 5: | This is our normal state of readiness. |
| HealthCon 4: | All students attend. We take the precautions we take during an influenza outbreak with social distancing maximized with the use masks. |
| HealthCon 3: | We operate with a hybrid model with some students attending and others remaining home and participating through remote learning. |
| HealthCon 2: | Students remain home; teachers come to school daily. Classes continue through remote learning. |
| HealthCon 1: | All classes are cancelled. School is made up at a later date. |