

# **DRAFT**

Proposed Transition Plan to Return to School

February 16, 2021

*Subject to Change*

## **Key Criteria for Decision-Making**

- Compliance with State and Federal law, including Executive Orders issued by the Governor
- Local COVID rates and trends as well as other relevant information
- Staff availability
- Substitute availability
- Staff Vaccination Rates (if high enough, other factors are adjusted)

## **Continued Use of Online-Only Option**

Regardless of the learning model, the district will provide the current Online-Only Options (RWHS Online-Only and Edgenuity-Only) for students for the remainder of this school year.

## **Recommended Learning Model**

The goal is to bring students in grades 5-12 back into the building as much as possible...preferably for four or five days per week while we comply with state guidelines and provide a safe learning and working environment.

Instead of 5 days of In-Person Learning, the 4+1 Option is recommended for grades 5-12. In this model, all students learn remotely on Wednesdays and learn in-person on other days. This allows for a stronger focus on Online-Only Option students and provides more preparation time for teachers who are teaching in-person and online-only students simultaneously. During a consultation with the State on February 11<sup>th</sup>, the Minnesota Department of Education reported that strict social distancing is not required during the four days of In-Person Learning.

## Proposed Timeline

| Date  | Elementary Schools  | Red Wing High School   |
|---|---|--|
| April 5 <sup>th</sup><br>(Beginning of 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter) | Students in grades 5 & 6<br>begin the 4+1 Learning Model. | Students in grades 7, 8 & 12<br>begin the 4+1 Learning Model.  |
| April 19 <sup>th</sup>  |   | Students in grades 9, 10 & 11<br>begin the 4+1 Learning Model. |

April 5th is preferred over an earlier date because it is the beginning of 4th quarter, classes can be balanced more easily, staff member concerns can be addressed, more staff members will have the chance to be vaccinated, and the gym is available at RWHS for lunch.

There are two weeks between starting dates at RWHS because of state requirements.

## State-Issued Resources

### Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

2020-2021 Planning Guide for Schools

Updated: January 15, 2021

### Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)

Safe Learning Plan for the 2020-21 School Year

Updated: January 28, 2021

### Governor's Executive Orders

Executive Order 20-82

Executive Order 20-94

Executive Order 20-95

## Requirements and Considerations

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | <b>Social Distancing</b>  |
|    | <p>MDE and MDH provide guidance about social distancing to minimize exposure. At least 6 feet of social distancing is required during Hybrid Learning and at least 3 feet strongly recommended during In-Person Learning (MDH, pages 4-8).</p> <p>The district successfully implemented 6 feet of social distancing since the beginning of the school year by reducing class sizes, discontinuing large gatherings, and implementing other strategies. During In-Person Learning for grades K-4, students follow 6 foot guidelines.</p> <p>If students in grades 5-12 are in the 4+1 Learning Model, the district will implement the 3-foot guideline. However, we intend to have adults at least 6 feet from students when possible. If requested, the district will add a clear barrier when educators cannot be 6 feet from students when possible.</p> <p>The district limits visitors, volunteers, and activities from district facilities as appropriate (MDH, page 5).</p> |
| 2. | <b>Face Coverings, Other Personal Protective Equipment, and Clear Barriers</b>  |
|    | <p>The School District approved the latest version of MSBA’s Face Coverings Policy., which is consistent with State requirements (MDH, pages 8-12). Building and department administrators handle possible violations of the policy. In particular, as required by MDE (page 11), the school district requires the use of face coverings when students engage in indoor physical activity (for example, during indoor recess, indoor physical education class, or when exercising in a gym). Building administrators report that adherence is strong.</p> <p>Other Personal Protective Equipment is available to minimize exposure. Staff members may contact their building leader to access resources.</p>  |
| 3. | <b>COVID Response Team and Building-Level Coordinators</b>  |
|    | <p>The COVID Response Team addresses COVID-related issues. Team members include Shanda Jorgenson (Health and Safety Consultant), Joni Gorman (Licensed School Nurse), and Dawn Wettern (Director of Community Education and Recreation). In addition, each building has a lead building-level coordinator.</p>  |
| 4. | <b>Handling Suspected or Confirmed COVID Cases</b>  |
|    | <p>Building nurses and he COVID Response Team follow-up on any suspected or confirmed COVID cases by completing contact tracing and implementing quarantine expectations (MDH, pages 18-19).</p>  |

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| 5.  | Human Resources  |
|     | <p>Concerns continue about staff and substitute availability. This plan is contingent upon having enough staff members and substitutes to provide a safe and learning environment. In grades K-6, some classes may need to learn remotely for a period of time if there are not enough substitutes available when needed.</p> <p>The district currently has 7 permanent substitutes with another position posted. An additional 2-4 permanent substitutes might be needed to adequately provide staff coverage for teachers and support personnel.</p> <p>As per Executive Order 20-82, the school district must allow staff members to work from home to the extent possible if they are medically at-risk or have members who are at-risk. Amy French and Cherie Johnson address requests for accommodations of employees.</p> |
| 6.  | Staff COVID Testing  |
|     | <p>Staff members are encouraged to participate in free COVID testing offered in each school building every other Wednesday as required (MDE, pages 18-19).</p>   |
| 7.  | Staff Vaccinations   |
|     | <p>The district works with Goodhue County Health and Human Services to offer vaccinations to school employees. Employees were prioritized as per State guidelines. Availability has increased over the past few weeks.</p>   |
| 8.  | Protecting Vulnerable Populations  |
|     | <p>Requests for alternative learning and work arrangements are handled on a case-by-case basis. Plans for students with Individual Healthcare Plans, Individualized Education Plans, and 504 Plans have been reviewed. Distance learning is available to any enrolled student (MDH, page 13).</p>  |
| 9.  | Hygiene Practices  |
|     | <p>Appropriate supplies are available to support healthy hygiene behaviors. Principals and teachers develop and oversee routines of hand hygiene into the daily schedule (MDH, page 14)</p>  |
| 10. | Buildings and Grounds Practices & Cleaning and Materials Handling  |
|     | <p>Strong processes are in place to appropriately clean and handle materials, including textbook and technology devices. High touch surfaces are cleaned and disinfected regularly. The Buildings and Grounds Director, Health and Safety Consultant, and principals review for compliance (MDH, pages 14-16).</p>   |

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| 11. | Teaching and Learning   |
|     | <p>Elementary building leaders oversee the delivery of special lessons, including physical education, art, music, and student support programs (MDE, page 11).</p> <p>Building leaders provide an additional 2.5 hours/week of additional preparation time for teachers working with students learning remotely, if required as per Executive Orders 20-94 and 20-95.</p>   |
| 12. | Transportation  |
|     | <p>First Student (bus company) and CESO (transportation routers) confirmed that MDH guidelines will be met even if all students are physically present (MDH, pages 20-21).</p>  |
| 13. | Food Services   |
|     | <p>As required by MDE, all food service workers must follow the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Requirements for Restaurants and Bars (page 11). Brent Lexvold, the Nutrition Services Director, implemented practices in accordance with these requirements.</p> <p>For early learning and elementary schools only, student meal times should be held in the classroom if six feet of physical distancing between cohorts of students cannot be accommodated in the cafeteria. Distancing between students in the cafeteria should follow the same guidelines as in classrooms. If meals are in classrooms, schools may have meals delivered to the classroom or have students bring food from the cafeteria back to their classrooms to eat (MDE, page 11). Currently, elementary principals prefer that students eat in their classroom, but may consider changes as the year progresses. High school students eat in the cafeteria.</p> <p>There are space and staffing considerations in 4+1 Learning. Elementary service will remain essentially the same with students eating in their classrooms. At the high school, some or all students will eat in the gymnasium because of its availability during lunch. Each building leader will work with the Nutrition Services Director and/or Head Cook to resolve operational issues.</p> |
| 14. | Implementing a Rolling Start  |
|     | <p>The MDE and MDH require rolling starts when students are brought back in the building (MDE, pages 10-11). No more than three grades can be introduced back into a building in a two-week time period. As a result, the plan brings back three grades in the high school and then the other grades two weeks later.</p>   |

## Consultations

Prior to implementation of the Return to School Plan, the following groups will be invited to provide feedback.

- COVID Response Team
- District Directors
- Building Administrative Team
- District Advisory Council
- Prairie Island Indian Community Tribal Council
- Native American Parent Committee
- Goodhue County Health and Human Services
- Special Education Department
- Food Service
- Buildings and Grounds
- Human Resources
- Bus Company and Transportation Routers
- Regional Support Team for High School Transition
- Minnesota Department of Health
- Minnesota Department of Education

Building and department leaders are responsible for consulting with their employees to obtain additional feedback about the plan.

### Recommendations

I move to approve the following:

- Implementing the Transition Plan to Return to School as presented and
- Hiring up to 2-4 additional permanent substitutes through the end of the 2020-21 school year (for a maximum total of 12).