

Dear Warroad School Families,

It's hard to believe that Christmas is almost here! I think the Holiday break will be welcomed by everyone after these weeks of Distance Learning. We all realize that Distance Learning has been a challenging time for students and families. We are so thankful for the parents and students that have picked up books, packets, supplies and returned completed work. It has been a "team" effort and we thank you for your assistance. The COVID-19 pandemic, along with distance learning, has created emotional challenges for so many. Please take care of yourself and your families. Reach out for help if it is needed. During the Holiday break, take time to enjoy your family, create some fun, relax, and celebrate as **SAFELY** as possible!

Since COVID began, I have been compiling and analyzing all the data that I can get access to---this has been especially true during the last month. We all know that we saw the COVID numbers rise dramatically in Roseau County. Cases continued post-Thanksgiving celebrations, but did not continue for as long as we anticipated. Roseau County reported NO new cases today! The same was true for the Warroad School numbers. We have had 32 staff members in the district test positive for COVID-19. However, as of today, we have only four staff members that are out due to COVID-related reasons. Our Distance Learning has been a success in regards to decreasing COVID transmission within the school community. Staffing was one of the many reasons distance learning was necessary.

Due to these statistics, I feel confident in returning to "in-person" learning earlier than January 18th. I am sure that all of you are aware that Governor Walz has encouraged all Elementary Schools in the State, to return to In-Person or Hybrid Learning by January 18th. The MN Department of Education has also updated the Safe Learning Plan (the latest updates were made today, December 21<sup>st</sup>) to include steps to return to In-Person Learning.

Both the MN Department of Health and the MN Department of Education encourage that schools implement a "rolling start" in which students will gradually be brought back to school. We will return to school using the Hybrid Model which we were in prior to distance learning. **Our return to school schedule will be as follows:**

- \*January 4, 2021: Early Learning Center
- \*January 7, 2021: Grades K-4
- \*January 11, 2021: Grade 5-8
- \*January 14, 2021: Grades 9-12

This is our plan, but it may need to be adjusted if the COVID numbers in our county rise significantly or if we see a rise in COVID numbers within our school community. If that happens, you will be notified as soon as possible from the District Office.

**New or continued COVID-related mitigation strategies that are in the updated Safe Learning Plan:**

1. Staff will be offered COVID-19 testing every other week in hopes to identify any asymptomatic positive cases.
2. Staff will be wearing both face masks and face shields together. There will be some instances when this is not possible for best teaching practices.
3. Small group and individual instruction will be allowed with a clear barrier between the educator and student(s). This was being done before distance learning.
4. Students will be required to wear a face covering when engaging in indoor physical activity (during indoor recess, indoor physical education class or when exercising in a gym). The kids were doing this prior to distance learning.
5. Students in grades K-6 will continue to eat lunch in their classrooms.
6. All students will be able to leave their classrooms for student support programs such as Special Education, Adsis, Title, and counseling.
7. Students in grades K-6 will be able to leave their classrooms for physical education and art-related classes.

### **Transportation/Meals:**

1. Regular busing routes will begin January 7<sup>th</sup> for ELC - Grade 4.
2. Meal delivery will continue through January 8<sup>th</sup>.
3. 9-12 grade students who would like school meals from January 11<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup> will need to call the school by 9 a.m. each day. Meals can be picked up in the High School office.

If you travel outside of MN over the holidays, it is strongly recommended that you follow the MDH travel guidelines and **quarantine for 14 days** after you return home. If you are travelling outside of MN, please contact me at 242-2583.

And finally, if your child has close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 or if anyone in your household tests positive for COVID-19, **please contact me at 242-2583**. This is especially important as we attempt to return all students to school. Yes, I will be taking calls over the holiday break! COVID doesn't disappear for holidays! Feel free to call if you have any questions or concerns.

I hope each of you have the best Holiday Break possible during COVID! Please keep in mind the guidelines to limit gatherings to not more than 2 households and not more than 10 people.

**Happy Holidays! Stay Safe and Stay Well!**

Deb Landin, School Nurse  
COVID Coordinator

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Deborah Landin, RN, PHN, LSN  
Warroad District Licensed School Nurse  
2020 MN School Nurse of the Year  
Office: 218-386-6044  
Cell: 218-242-2583  
Fax: 218-386-6113  
[deb\\_landin@warroad.k12.mn.us](mailto:deb_landin@warroad.k12.mn.us)