



Sioux Valley Schools



COVID Mitigation Plan for 2023-2024 School Year “Safe Return to In-Person Instruction”

Board Approved: June 12, 2023

[Please note that this plan will be adjusted and updated on an “as needed” basis.]

Purpose of Report: To provide the Sioux Valley School Board and patrons of the district with an update of our COVID Mitigation Plan for the start of the 2023-2024 school year.

Priority Areas: Students Outcomes, School Climate and Culture, District Staff, Parent Input, and Community Engagement.

Priority Statement: We are committed to keeping our students and staff safe and healthy and providing them with the best possible teaching and learning experiences. The rationale behind this plan is to balance the need to create a safe and effective learning environment that slows the spread of COVID in our school and communities with the need to keep our students healthy -- physically, socially, and emotionally.

Administrative Team that Updated the Plan:

Laura Schuster, Superintendent
Heather Hiltunen, Elementary Principal & Special Education Director
Tyler Bolstad, Middle School & High School Principal
Moe Ruesink, Dean of Students & Activities Director

The district will work with state and local health officials to coordinate efforts to keep students safe and healthy, given the ongoing presence of COVID in our communities and state.

For questions regarding the district’s COVID Mitigation Plan, please contact Superintendent Laura Schuster at Laura.Schuster@k12.sd.us or 605-627-5657.

Public Awareness & Input Regarding the Plan: The board of education and the public were given an overview and review of the updated plan at the June 12, 2023, regular school board meeting. The board approved the plan at the June 12, 2023 meeting. The plan will be reviewed semi-annually or “as-needed” to discuss any changes that may need to be made.

School Calendar: We will be following the 2023-2024 school calendar that was approved by the board of education on May 8, 2023. The school calendar can be found on the district's website at www.svs.k12.us.

Accessibility: Sioux Valley School District 5-5 does not discriminate in its educational programs on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, or family/marital status. For special accommodations regarding COVID or any other health & safety policies, please contact the Special Education Director at 605-627-5657. Sioux Valley Schools, 200 Hansina Ave, Volga SD 57071.

The approved COVID Mitigation Plan will be translated to Spanish and posted on the district's website prior to the start of the 2023-2024 school year.

Physical Distancing: The district encourages physical distancing whenever possible and when facilities allow for it if there are known cases of COVID in the district.

Respiratory & Handwashing Etiquette: Signs showing proper respiratory & handwashing etiquette are displayed throughout the school buildings.

Continuity of Services: It is the district's intent to provide in-person instruction, if and whenever possible, in order to meet the academic, physical, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students. If the district needs to transition to virtual learning, we will use available technologies, and to the best of our abilities, assure that these needs are still being met.

COVID Vaccination: The school district recommends that all staff and students get vaccinated, but the district does not mandate it.

MITIGATION PHASES:

This plan maintains the three mitigation phases that were in the original plan; however, the information in the phases has been adjusted. The phases are explained in the following chart.

COVID MITIGATION PHASES

No Known Cases in Building GREEN	Isolated/Limited/Controlled Cases in Building YELLOW	Substantial/Widespread Cases in Building RED
In addition to items in GREEN... Expect staff and families to self-screen for COVID symptoms at home. Possible symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a fever of 100.4° F or higher • headache • uncontrollable cough • sore throat, congestion, runny nose • shortness of breath • difficulty breathing • nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain • chills, body aches • a lack of taste and smell 	In addition to items in GREEN... Continued awareness of personal health and COVID symptoms, handwashing, sanitizing practices, "optional" masks and physical distancing guidelines.	In addition to items in YELLOW... Understand the level of COVID spread within the school and the potential for school closure.
If sick, staff/students should stay home.	Disinfect affected areas. Once an area is appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.	Assess relevant facts to determine appropriate steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of potential exposure within building • Number of cases in surrounding community • Grade level(s) impacted • Ability to staff building
District staff and families will teach, practice, and reinforce healthy hygiene practices.	Recommend that individual(s) testing positive do not return until they are symptom-free.	Possible transition to VIRTUAL learning. Possible closure for necessary timeframe with intent to reopen when deemed safe.
Normal routine and procedures followed.	Normal routine and procedures followed.	Collaborate with SD Department of Health (DOH) and the SD Department of Education (DOE) for further guidance.

If there are no known confirmed positive COVID cases of students or staff, all three building levels will be in the GREEN phase.

If there are confirmed positive cases at any building level, the building levels may be at different phases.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:

This plan is specific to the Sioux Valley School District and one that will meet the needs of our district. The plan is divided into three categories: Standard Procedures, Instruction, and Communication.

STANDARD PROCEDURES	INSTRUCTION	COMMUNICATION
Building Maintenance	Assemblies/Pep Rallies	Board
Bussing	Attendance	District Patrons/Community
Cafeteria/Meals	Before & After School Program (BASE)	Parents
Common Space Usage	Delivery Methods	Staff
COVID Close Contact	Extra-Curricular Activities	Students
COVID Confirmed Positive Case	Field Trips (Students)	
COVID Potential Exposure	Homework Assistance	
Enter/Exit the Building	Mental Health	
Facility Use by Outside Organizations	On-line Learning Platforms	
Hand Washing/Sanitization	Staff Development	
Masks	Student Support Services	
Parents/Visitors	Technology	
Passing Times/Transitions		
Pick Up/Drop Off		
Pre-Screening - Employees		
Pre-Screening – Students		
Recess		
Response to Sick Students		
Surface Cleaning		
Travel – Employees		
Water Fountains		

STANDARD PROCEDURES:

To ensure the health and safety of our students and staff, Sioux Valley Schools will continue practicing the following procedures.

COVID STANDARD PROCEDURES

	No Known Cases in Building GREEN	Isolated/Limited/ Controlled Cases in Building YELLOW	Substantial/ Widespread Cases in Building RED
Building Maintenance	Proper ventilation and regular filter changes, etc.		
Bussing Parents have the option to transport their own children. All students riding the bus will be picked up and dropped off in the bus loading zone on 4 th street, south of the PAC.		Students and drivers have the OPTION to wear masks.	Bus routes will not be in place during school closure.
Cafeteria/Meals	Extra tables set up with less students at each table. Tables will be cleaned and sanitized between lunches.	In addition to items in GREEN... All lunch personnel & lunchroom supervisors have the OPTION to wear masks.	Pending an approved waiver, sack breakfasts and lunches will be made available for pickup if school is closed.
Common Space Usage (Hallways, commons, restrooms, cafeteria, playground, etc.)	Utilization of common spaces scheduled to ensure proper cleaning.	In addition to items in GREEN... Increased level of cleaning in all common spaces and classrooms.	
COVID – Close Contact	Parents will be responsible for monitoring their child's symptoms if the child has been in close contact with someone that has tested positive for COVID.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
COVID – Confirmed Positive Case	Families will be responsible for reporting to the school district if their child (student) has a confirmed positive case of COVID.	Same as GREEN	School may be closed for a period of time and remote learning will occur.

	The student should remain at home until he/she is symptom-free.		The superintendent will make the school closure announcement and will follow up with necessary information to all JK-12 families via School Messenger, phone calls, or email.
COVID – Potential Exposure	Staff or students need to closely monitor their symptoms if they have been exposed to someone that has tested positive for COVID.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
Entering/Exiting the Building (Students and Staff)	Students and staff are encouraged to use hand sanitizer when they enter/exit the building.	In addition to item in GREEN... Physical distancing practices will be encouraged <u>if</u> there are known cases of COVID at school.	Physical distancing will be in place for staff. Students or visitors may <u>not</u> be allowed in the building.
Facility Use by Outside Organizations	With administrative approval.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
Hand Washing and Sanitizing	Handwashing will be encouraged.	Same as GREEN	If school is shut down, staff will follow established protocols and work from their assigned areas.
Masks Guidelines could change based upon DOH/DOE recommendations. All masks should be school appropriate and cover nose and mouth.	Masks are OPTIONAL.	Masks are OPTIONAL.	Masks are OPTIONAL.
Parents/Visitors	Parents/visitors will be allowed to enter the school buildings	Same as GREEN	Parents/visitors may be limited depending on COVID spread in the school buildings.
Passing Times and Transitions	Normal passing times and procedures will be followed.	Same as GREEN	N/A
Pick Up/Drop Off All students riding the bus will be picked up and dropped off in the bus	Parents can come to the respective office to pick up their child.	Same as GREEN	Students, parents, or visitors may <u>not</u> be allowed on site.

loading zone (on 4 th street, south of the PAC). Pick up and drop off only in designated areas: JK-5: Elementary doors 6-12: Commons or District office doors.			
Pre-Screening for Employees	All employees should self-screen at home for temperature, runny nose, cough, loss of taste and other symptoms.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
Pre-Screening for Students	Parents will be responsible for screening children at home for temperature, runny nose, cough, loss of taste and smell and other symptoms. Students should NOT attend school if symptomatic and should call medical professional.	Same as GREEN	N/A
Recess	Assigned times and specific areas for grade levels.	Same as GREEN	N/A
Response to Sick Students in the School Building (Not a confirmed COVID-19 case but displaying symptoms.) I-C-E Method Followed: 1. Isolate 2. Contact Parent(s) 3. Exit out of Building	Sick students will be moved from the classroom, assigned to a designated area, and then sent home. The school recommends contacting your primary physician. Students must be symptom free without medication for one full day before returning to school.	Same as GREEN	N/A
Surface Cleaning	Major touch points cleaned daily by building maintenance.	Same as GREEN	If school is shut down, a deep clean will be conducted by janitorial staff.
Travel (Employees)	With administrative approval.	With administrative approval.	With administrative approval.
Water Fountains	Students may provide their own refillable water bottles if they	Same as GREEN	N/A

Drinking fountains will be available throughout the building.	are not comfortable drinking directly from the fountain.		
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INSTRUCTION:

Flex Learning is defined as modified or remote learning and used when students are unable to attend school due to sickness, COVID symptoms, isolation, high-risk health condition, or is immune-compromised, Sioux Valley Schools is responsible for providing curriculum and instruction. Administration will work with parent(s) to determine what delivery of instruction is most appropriate.

The school board made a motion on 04/12/21 to discontinue remote learning by request for the 2021-2022 school year and beyond. Students enrolled at Sioux Valley Schools must attend class in-person. Virtual learning is still an option if the entire building level or school is closed.

Board approved grading guidelines, homework procedures, and classroom rigor will be maintained regardless of the mitigation phase or delivery method of instruction used.

COVID INSTRUCTION

	No Known Cases in Building GREEN	Isolated/Limited/ Controlled Cases in Building YELLOW	Substantial/ Widespread Cases in Building RED
Assemblies or Pep Rallies	With administrative approval.	Same as GREEN	N/A
Attendance	COVID-related absences will be treated as "ABSENT EXCUSED" with proper documentation.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
BASE Program Enrollment is open to all JK-5th grade students.	BASE will be open each day school is in session. (7:15 am and after school until 6:00 pm).	Same as GREEN	BASE may be closed.
Delivery Methods With the three delivery methods listed, a student will remain fully enrolled in Sioux Valley Schools.	Traditional Delivery Teachers and students maintain a normal daily schedule, with possible modifications to classroom space and practices. Parent(s) must notify the respective office if they intend to keep their child(ren) at home.	Modified Delivery Online learning platforms may be utilized more frequently in response to an increased number of cases. All MS/HS students will follow their daily class schedule and attendance will be taken.	Virtual Delivery Instruction is provided to students at home via online or learning packets. ELEM Special teachers will provide learning opportunities for all JK-5 students. MS/HS will continue to follow their daily class schedule.

Extra-curricular Activities Refer to the SDHSAA website for their guidelines. (sdhsaa.com)	SDHSAA Guidelines will be followed for all extra-curricular activities.	In addition to items in GREEN... There is a possibility that activities may be postponed or cancelled.	There is a possibility that activities may be postponed or cancelled.
Field Trips (Students)	With administrative approval.	Same as GREEN	N/A
Homework Assistance	Teacher assistants will be available to work with JK-12 students on Wednesday afternoons.	Same as GREEN	If school is closed, teachers/TA's may be available virtually between 8:00 am - 4:00 pm (Monday-Friday).
Mental Health	School counselors will be available to work with students during school hours. Counseling is available for staff through the school district's health insurance carrier for those that utilize the district's insurance.	Same as GREEN	School counselors may be available virtually between 8:00 am - 4:00 pm (Monday-Friday) to work with students.
On-Line Learning Platforms	Google Classroom & SVE Google Hub Screencastify, Loom, Seesaw, OneDrive, Kami, LanSchool, IXL	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
Staff Development	Regular and ongoing staff development will be provided.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
Student Support Services	Special education, ELL, Title I, and Section 504 services will remain in place. Meetings will be scheduled as needed.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
Technology All students will be assigned a device. JK-2: iPads 3-8: Chromebooks 9-12: Laptops	Devices for grades JK-5 students will remain at school. Students in grades 6-12 should take devices home daily.	Same as GREEN	All JK-12 grades students may have school issued devices that can be used at home.

COMMUNICATION:

It will be especially important to keep communication lines open between all stakeholders to navigate our way through the school year. The district will do its part; we ask parents to do the same.

COVID COMMUNICATION

	No Known Cases	Isolated/Limited/	Substantial/
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	in Building GREEN	Controlled Cases in Building YELLOW	Widespread Cases in Building RED
Board	The board of education will receive updates “as needed” related to COVID cases.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
District Patrons & Community	The superintendent will work with local media to provide updates related to COVID cases when requested.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
Parents	All school-wide or building communication relating to COVID will be sent out via School Messenger, phone calls, or email.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
Staff	Communication relating to COVID will be shared via email or staff meetings.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN
Students	Communication relating to COVID will be shared with students when deemed necessary.	Same as GREEN	Same as GREEN