



## **2023-2024 School Reopening Plan**

**(First reading June 12, 2023 with Board Approval June 26, 2023)**

### **Plan Review Dates**

**December 2021 (in conjunction with December Child Count)**

**June 2022 (in conjunction with Year-End Sign-off)**

**December 2022 (in conjunction with December Child Count)**

**June 2023 (in conjunction with Year-End Sign-off)**

**Last Updated May 18, 2023**

**\*Changes to this plan may occur based on updated guidelines from national, state, and local health officials. Direct questions to Dr. Steve Willard, Superintendent of schools.**

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The Belle Fourche School District is committed to the safety of students and staff. In the event of a COVID outbreak, this plan outlines procedures that will be used by staff, students, and parents for a safe return to school.

### Three Phases of School Operations:

#### **Phase 1: Traditional Face-to-Face Learning**

**(Minimal cases in the building)**

Little to no virus activity will allow us to welcome students back into the buildings for face-to face instruction. Safety precautions, as needed, will be incorporated to implement social distancing. Regular handwashing and the use of hand sanitizer will be highly encouraged.

#### **Phase 2: Blended Learning**

**(Isolated cases in the building)**

An increase in virus activity will necessitate restrictions that limit the number of students that are permitted in the buildings. Small, prioritized groups of students would receive face-to-face instruction, or parts of the student body would attend on pre-determined days (i.e., AM/PM, M/W, and TUES. /THR). In Phase 2, students would utilize both face-to-face and virtual learning styles as learning instruction.

#### **Phase 3: Virtual Learning**

**(Substantial cases in the building)**

When a substantial spread of COVID-19 results in a need for students to transition to virtual learning the following steps will be taken:

- Staff will report to buildings and deliver virtual instruction from their workstation.
- Staff will evaluate student learning and continue to refine ways to deliver instruction. In the most effective manner by building level.
- Should a stay-at-home order be issued, then staff and students alike will work virtually.

#### **Virtual Instruction Option**

This option exists for families who may prefer to receive instruction virtually, even if school is in session. This option utilizes an application process that must be approved by the superintendent. Instruction would be provided through the Black Hills Online Learning Community (BHOLC).

## **Assumption of Risk**

COVID-19 is a worldwide pandemic as identified by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is extremely contagious and believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact. The Belle Fourche School District has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19, however, the District cannot guarantee that individuals will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, school attendance could increase the risk of contracting COVID-19. Federal, state, and local governments and federal and state health agencies recommend social distancing.

## **Social Distancing Procedures**

Social distancing will be encouraged at all times; therefore, precautions and procedures detailed below are in place to monitor the health of students and staff:

- Visitors' presence in our buildings will be limited to the building's front lobby to protect the health of our students and staff. Most needed interactions can be handled from that point. Visitors will be admitted into the buildings only when there is a clear need.
- Nonessential visitors and activities involving external groups or organizations will be limited.
- Students and teachers will remain in small cohort groups that stay together as much as possible during the day and from day-to-day. Mixing between cohort groups will be limited as much as possible (e.g. during recess, lunch in the cafeteria, elective courses, and during arrival and dismissal).
- Procedures for arrival and dismissal of students will be in place at each school site to minimize the congregating of groups.
- Social distancing floor/seating markings will be available when appropriate.
- Activities that involve bringing together large groups of people or activities that do not allow for social distancing, (i.e., assemblies, in-person field trips, large groups using playground equipment simultaneously) may be suspended.
- Events such as field trips, parents/family meetings, assemblies, and performances will be conducted as virtual events when and where possible.
- Facemasks or coverings are strongly encouraged for staff and students and are essential when physical distancing is difficult. Teachers will demonstrate the correct wearing of masks.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

The Belle Fourche School District is committed to supporting the whole child and developing a broad range of students' interests. The District will maintain extra-curricular activities to the degree possible, keeping consistent with the various reopening phases. Activities and events will follow the same phase guidelines as the regular school day. All requirements and recommendations will apply.

## **Transportation**

- Rural routes and in-town shuttles will run as usual.
- Busses will be sanitized daily.
- Busses will be loaded from back to front and family members are encouraged to sit together.
- Students will follow safety measures such as avoiding unnecessary touching of objects and will use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting the bus. Students will be encouraged to wear a mask.
- Individual building principals will communicate about drop-off and pickup procedures.

## **Technology**

The various phases of the reopening plan will require flexibility in delivering instruction to our students. Each building level will utilize an online learning management system that will allow teachers to deliver instruction, house important materials, assess student learning and communicate regularly with parents.

- Students in grades 9-12 will utilize Schoology along with various online platforms for distance learning.
- Students in grades K-8 will utilize Canvas for distance learning.
- Students will have access to a district device for use at home in the event of school closure.
- Parents will receive information on how to support their students from home using both Schoology and Canvas.

## **Food Service**

Nutritious meals at school are part of a critical safety net to support the physical, mental, social, and emotional health and well-being of students. All students should have access to school meals and adequate time to consume them. The School District provides meal options that best meet the nutritional needs of students in an environment that promotes social distancing and personal hygiene practices as a means of supporting optimal academic success.

### **Overall Safety Procedures**

- Disinfecting of tables and chairs or other contact surfaces will occur before, during (as needed), and after meal services.

### **Meal Service Options**

- Meal service options and operating procedures will continuously be monitored to determine where modifications may be needed to support student/staff acceptance, student/staff well-being, and promote meal participation.

## **Cleaning and Hygiene**

- Adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors (e.g., soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, and tissues) will be available.
- Hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) will be provided at every building entrance and exit, in the cafeteria, on every classroom and on every bus.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers will be systematically and frequently checked and refilled.
- Time will be allowed between activities for proper cleaning and disinfection.
- Students will be reminded of proper handwashing. Posters will be up in bathroom areas to remind students on how much time it should take to wash hands.
- Handwashing during key times such (i.e. before, during, and after preparing food; before eating food; after using the toilet; after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing; and after touching objects with bare hands which have been handled by other individuals will be encouraged by all staff.)
- Frequent handwashing and sanitation breaks will be incorporated into daily classroom activities.
- Sharing personal items and supplies such as writing utensils will be discouraged.
- Students' personal items will be kept separate and in individually labeled desks, cubbies, containers, or lockers.
- Staff will remind students to cough or sneeze into their arm.

## **Operations: School/Classroom Safety**

- Seating/desks will be arranged to allow for maximum physical distancing. CDC guidelines recommend six feet apart when feasible.
- Each student's belongings will be kept separate from others' and in individual spaces.
- Water fountains will be restricted to bottle fillers only.
- Students and staff will be encouraged to bring their own water bottles from home.
- The installation of highly efficient air filters are in all buildings to assist in the prevention of sickness.

- South Park and North Park have new air filtration systems.
- Teachers will have disinfectant available in their classrooms to disinfect student desks, tables, and other areas in the classroom.
- Buildings will be cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis.

### **Student and Staff Health/Safety**

- National, state, and local guidance should always be consulted for the most up-to-date requirements and recommendations. Staff and families are encouraged to practice good hygiene, physical distancing, recognizing symptoms of Covid-19, and when to stay home due to illness.
- Before sending their children to school parents should use the checklist provided in Appendix A. If staff or students believe they have been exposed to the COVID 19 virus they should use the checklist in Appendix A before returning to school.
- The Belle Fourche School District has the Quidel QuickVue over-the-counter COVID-19 take home quick test and the Abbott BinaxNOW test available free. The Abbott test requires parental permission to administer at school. The QuickVue test is administered at home.

### **Protocols for Virus Cases**

Students or staff displaying symptoms of illness are encouraged to stay home. If a student becomes ill during the school day, the student or staff member will go to the designated isolation area in that building until they go home.

- Staff members will make arrangements to go home.
- The parents of ill students will be contacted to pick up their students from school as soon as possible.
- See included appendices for additional details on the process for addressing virus cases.

### **Special Services**

Special Education and ELL services are modified to meet the needs of the student and the content delivery method. Case managers will communicate with students and families individually.

- If your child receives distance learning, special education services (including related services) will continue being provided virtually, in accordance with your child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). For questions about special education services, please communicate with your child's case manager or the Special Education Director.
- A child's case manager will be responsible for overseeing your child's services and communicate regularly with you regarding progress. The case manager will also communicate with your child's general education teacher(s) regarding supports and services.
- If a student is receiving academic services virtually and the district is required to update your child's evaluations, parents/guardians will be contacted about scheduling a time that works for the student to come into one of the buildings to complete the required evaluations. As a precaution related to the current pandemic, parents/guardians will be given the option to hold a child's IEP, or related meeting, virtually (video conference or phone call). If you would like to discuss your meeting options, please communicate with your child's case manager or the Special Education Director.
- We are committed to providing free and appropriate educational opportunities for students with disabilities, to the greatest extent possible in alignment with public health guidelines. Collaboration with families has always been an integral part of the special education process and continues to be essential during this time. It may not be feasible, depending on the needs of the individual child/adolescent, to adhere both to distancing guidelines and the criteria outlined in a specific IEP. Attempts to meet health and safety guidelines should meet the needs of the individual child/adolescent and will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the case manager, Special Education Director, and collaboration with the family.

## **Student Learning Loss**

- After school homework help and Friday Intersessions will be available for student remediation.
- Summer school, JAM, and TRAK programs are available to help students with remediation.
- Academic Interventionists are hired to help with students' remediation during the school year.

## **Student's Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs**

- Each educational area will have a qualified counselor on staff.
- An outside counseling service is being contracted to assist with individual student and group counseling.

# Appendix A

## STUDENT SYMPTOM SCREENING CHECKLIST

Parents must complete a daily symptom screening check by answering these questions before sending their child to school,

Has your child had close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) with a confirmed case of COVID-19?	_____ YES	_____ NO
Does your child have new or worsening shortness of breath?	_____ YES	_____ NO
Does your child have a new or worsening cough?	_____ YES	_____ NO
Does your child have a fever of 100.4 or greater?	_____ YES	_____ NO
Does your child have chills?	_____ YES	_____ NO
Does your child have diarrhea?	_____ YES	_____ NO
Does your child have unexplained muscle pain?	_____ YES	_____ NO
Does your child have a headache (not related to a known health condition i.e. migraines)?	_____ YES	_____ NO
Does your child have a sore throat?	_____ YES	_____ NO
Does your child have a new loss of taste or smell?	_____ YES	_____ NO
Has your child been vomiting or is experiencing nausea?	_____ YES	_____ NO



If YES to ANY of the questions, DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL. Please seek guidance from your medical provider. Contact your school to inform them of your child's symptoms. You may also contact the South Dakota Department of Health at 1-800-592-1861 with questions.

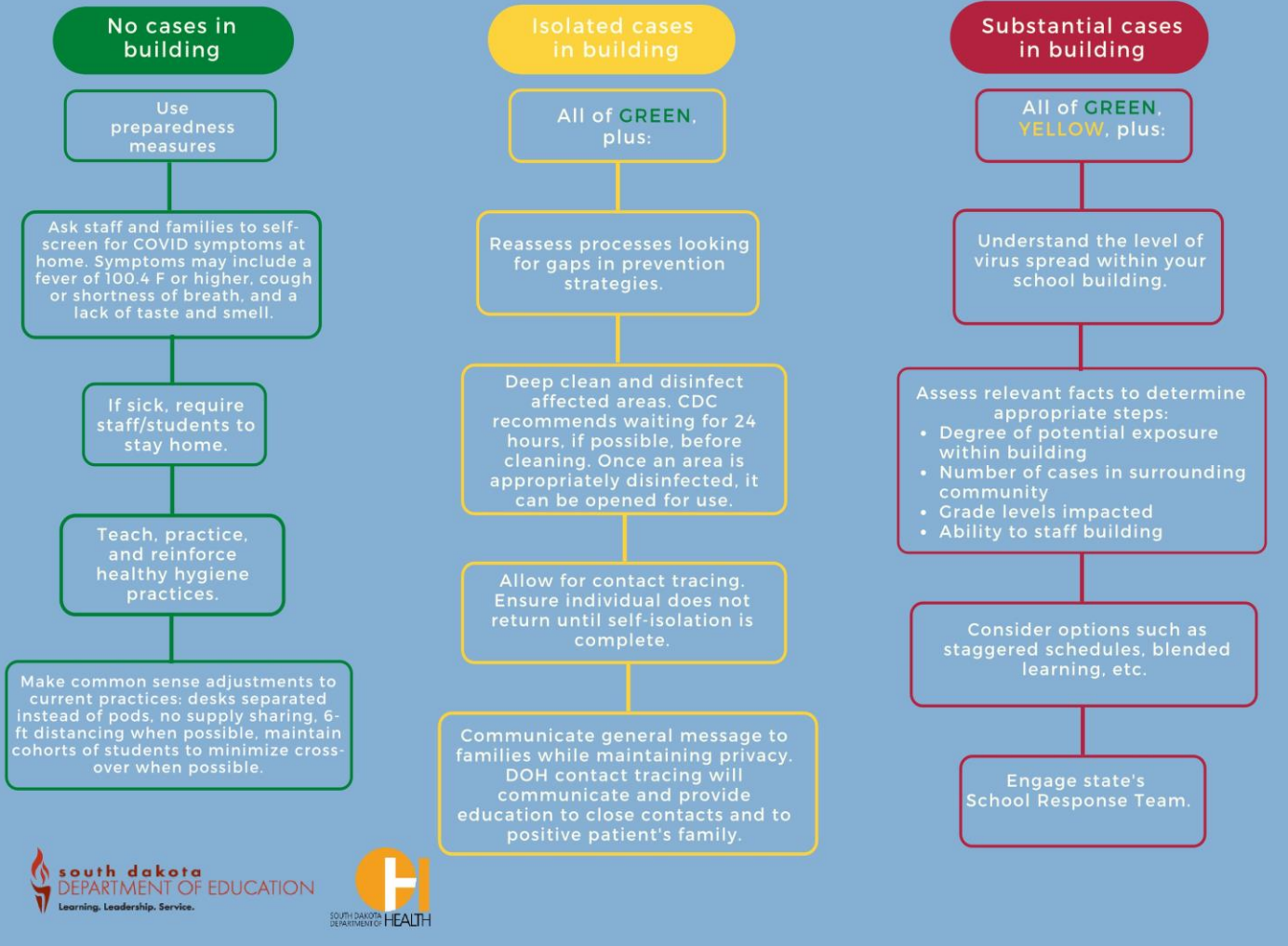


If NO to ALL questions, go to school.

# Appendix B

## COVID-19 Mitigation in Schools

Updated 7/6/20





## Appendix C

# COVID-19 School Scenarios

Planning for the school year under multiple conditions

Prepared by the South Dakota Department of Health - Revised July 7, 2020



### **Scenario One:** No active cases in your community, and no cases in your school building

The South Dakota Departments of Health and Education recommend that school take place with appropriate preparedness measures (e.g., requiring students/staff who are sick to stay home; teaching and reinforcing healthy hygiene practices; cleaning and disinfection efforts).

### **Scenario Two:** Active cases in your community, but no cases in your school buildings

The South Dakota Departments of Health and Education recommend that school take place with appropriate preparedness measures (e.g., requiring students/staff who are sick to stay home; teaching and reinforcing healthy hygiene practices; cleaning and disinfection efforts).

### **Scenario Three:** Student or staff member identified by Department of Health as close contact of a positive COVID-19 case outside of the school community

The South Dakota Departments of Health and Education recommend that school should continue with appropriate preparedness measures in place.

### **Scenario Four:** Active case is identified in one of your school buildings

The South Dakota Departments of Health and Education recommend that school officials reassess processes - looking for gaps in prevention strategies. In the short-term, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends closing off areas used by the sick person and waiting 24 hours (if feasible) before cleaning and disinfecting. Once an area is appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.

### **Scenario Five:** Multiple active cases identified in your buildings at the same time

The South Dakota Departments of Health and Education recommend that school officials review relevant data to understand level of virus spread within the school building and conduct a risk/benefit analysis of factors such as degree of potential exposure within building; case trends in surrounding community; grade levels impacted; remote learning options; scheduling options; ability to staff buildings, etc. in determining the next steps. School leaders can request technical assistance from the DOH/DOE School Response Team if desired.