COVID-19 and the 2020-21 School Year

Minnesota’s three learning environment scenarios

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) announced that three learning environment scenarios will be prepared for the 2020-21 school year. The MDE [2020 Planning Guidance](#) for Minnesota Public Schools (MDE 2020 Planning Guidance) describes the three scenarios in depth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario 1: In-person learning for all students</th>
<th>Scenario 2: Hybrid learning with strict social distancing and capacity limits</th>
<th>Scenario 3: Distance learning for all students</th>
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</table>
| This scenario will be implemented if public health data indicates that the COVID-19 pandemic has sufficiently stabilized and/or improved to permit a reopening of schools. As students return to school, the school district should maximize the space between students and others, though it may not be feasible to enforce 6 feet of social distancing during classroom instructional time. Activities and extracurricular programming should continue to follow the [COVID-19 Sports Guidance for Youth and Adults](#). | This scenario will be implemented when state officials determine that COVID-19 metrics have worsened at a local, regional, or statewide level or if a cluster of COVID-19 infections occur in a classroom or school. Under Scenario 2, schools must:  
- Limit the overall number of people in school facilities and on transportation vehicles to 50% maximum occupancy  
- Ensure a minimum of 6 feet social distancing at all times. If this distancing cannot be achieved, the number of occupants must be reduced  
- Plan for contactless pick-up and/or delivery of meals and school materials for days that students and staff are not in the building  
- Implement a school-age care program for critical workers | This scenario will be implemented when state officials determine that COVID-19 metrics have worsened significantly enough at a local, regional, or statewide level to require suspension of in-person learning. Under Scenario 3, schools must follow federal and state requirements, ensure that students be able to participate equitably in their learning, and provide access for students to all relevant services and supports. |