

Belt Public Schools  
2020-21 Fall Reopening  
Health and Safety Plan



Adopted 8-5-2020

This plan takes into consideration recommendations from the MT Office of Public Instruction, the Governor's Plan for Reopening Schools, Center for Disease Control (CDC), The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and Belt School District Policies. Every effort will be made to facilitate the safety of the students and staff of Belt School as we reopen the school building for the 2020-21 school year. It is important to recognize that these efforts are intended to mitigate, not eliminate, the risk of Covid-19 transmission. In addition, it is not realistic to expect that every recommended safety guideline (i.e. physical distancing, face coverings) will be 100% adhered to throughout the school day. Belt is committed to providing as safe of an environment as possible, while understanding that there are risks associated with school reopening. In spite of these risks, the negative impact on students and families due to school closure has to be considered. The following plan of action outlines the steps and considerations that Belt School will take to mitigate the risk of virus transmission within the school environment. These efforts are sure to change and evolve, and we will require a great deal of flexibility from the community, parents, staff and students as we work through the progression of this pandemic. Reopening our school will require everyone to be responsible for taking care of their own health and the health of their families while also respecting the needs of those around them.

The components of this plan will remain flexible and adaptable to the [potential changes in the phases](#) and levels of concern for individual and public health. Therefore, this document will be dynamic and updated regularly as new information becomes available and/ or additional requirements are requested of the School District.

#### **Full Distance Learning Option:**

- Students will have the option to engage in remote learning and will not be required to attend school within the building. **The deadline to notify the district if a student will use this option is 5:00pm on August 19th.**
- Students opting out of in-person in the brick and mortar instruction and choosing virtual learning at home will need to print out and return a signed [Online Learning Contract](#).
- There will be a full workload of classes each day. The rigor will match that of the classroom.
- Students will be enrolled in an online learning system.
- There must be a commitment to online learning for a full semester. Students will only be allowed to return to face to face instruction at the start of a new semester.
- Students will need significant assistance from an adult (parent/guardian) who will serve as a learning coach.
- Attendance will be taken daily as students login to complete assignments.
- Students will be graded as if they were present in school, this includes meeting course deadlines.
- Juniors and seniors who need a particular course to fulfill graduation requirements that is not offered remotely will need to take that course on campus.

- Students choosing the full distance option will not be eligible for extracurricular activities.

### **School wide organization:**

- Efforts for physical distancing will occur in every setting. Face coverings will be required of all students, staff, and visitors in the building, unless there is a verified medical condition. Please refer to the [Belt School Guidance on wearing masks](#) for further information.
- Masks will not be required while eating/drinking, outside, or during strenuous physical activity. While students are encouraged to wear masks at all times, with teacher discretion, students may remove their masks if they are seated and physically distanced in a classroom.
- Where it is safely possible, Teachers may remove their masks when providing instruction.
- Students will be organized into grade level “cohorts” schoolwide. Efforts will be made to prevent intermingling of grade level cohorts during the school day including [before and after school](#).
- Students will be instructed and monitored to maintain physical distance when travelling hallways. Staggered dismissals will be implemented to avoid congregation of students.
- Students will be permitted to travel from class to class, rather than the teachers moving from classroom to classroom. Hallway transitions will be staggered and closely monitored to maintain appropriate social distance.
- Recess and [lunch](#) will be scheduled and structured to avoid intermingling of grade level cohorts.
- Students will be assigned one-to-one technology devices to avoid sharing keyboards with other students. This will depend on device availability starting at grade 12 and working down.
- Field trips, assemblies, and other gatherings may be permitted under appropriate State of Montana phased reopening. ([Link to State of Montana Phases](#))

### **Visitors:**

- Visitors in the building will be greatly restricted. Limited access may be allowed to visitors, vendors, and volunteers.
- Visitors to the building will need to fill out a Visitor Screening and Tracing Form.
- Parents and classroom volunteers will not be permitted into the classrooms without approval from school administration.
- Visitors will be asked to mask up and use hand sanitizer before entering the building.
- Visitors with COVID symptoms not caused by another condition, exposure to COVID-19 or a positive test, and/or a temperature over 100.4 degrees will not be allowed into the building.

- Workout Room- Community members are not allowed to use the facility during the school day. Community hours are 5-7:30am and 4:00-10:00pm. The weight room will be cleaned and disinfected every morning prior to students using it.

**Buses/Transportation:**

- Students will have assigned seating on the bus to help with contact tracing. Family members may be assigned to sit together. Students will be spaced out as far as possible.
- Hand sanitizer will be available on the bus, it should be used as students enter and exit the bus.
- Practice of respiratory etiquette by all.
- Windows will be down, when appropriate, for ventilation.
- Students will be asked to wear masks while on the bus. Mask will be provided for anyone that does not have their own.
- Follow previously established bus rules.
- Parents should keep sick children at home.
- Bus drivers will wear a mask.
- Bus drivers will self-monitor their health, symptoms, and temperature.
- Bus will be disinfected and cleaned after each route.

**Classroom organization:**

*Physical Distancing:*

- Physical distancing is defined as 6 feet of spacing from any other person.
- Efforts will be made to provide 6 feet of physical distance whenever possible as recommended by the CDC. In the event 6 feet distance is not possible, desks/students should be spaced out at least 3 feet as recommended by the AAP.

*Hygiene:*

- Every class will instruct and encourage appropriate hygiene, including frequent thorough hand washing, use of hand sanitizer, and respiratory etiquette.

*Face Coverings:*

- Face coverings will be required of students in staff, unless there is a verified medical condition, when students and staff are present in the building.
- While students are encouraged to wear masks at all times, with teacher discretion, students may remove their masks if they are seated and physically distanced in a classroom.
- Face covering will not be required when students engage in strenuous physical activities such as recess and PE classes. Students will also not be required to wear masks when outside, during lunch/snacks, and during musical/theatrical activities.
- Face coverings will be provided to students and staff that do not have their own.

*Sneeze shields:*

- Sneeze shields will be installed as requested and as necessary and needed around the school facility.

*Sharing of materials:*

- Classroom Teachers should avoid and monitor the sharing of classroom

materials between students.

*Utilization of outdoor spaces:*

- Teachers are encouraged to utilize outdoor spaces when instruction and weather permits.

*Close Contact:*

- Classrooms should be organized in such a way that limits the number of “close contacts” a student is exposed to during the day.
- “Close Contact” is defined by individuals within 6 feet of each other for a duration of 15 minutes or greater.
- Seating charts should be utilized, and remain as constant as possible to minimize the number of close contacts and to aide in contact tracing.
- Specials courses (i.e. [physical education](#), [instrumental music](#), [vocal music](#), CTE) will require additional mitigating measures including holding classes outdoors when permissible, small ensemble pieces, no sharing of equipment, frequent sanitization, special attention to physical distancing, and encourage outdoor and individual activities when possible.

**Building Cleaning and Disinfection:**

- Additional custodial staff will be provided in an effort to increase building sanitation on a frequent basis.
- Teachers and staff will be asked to assist in sanitizing frequently touched surfaces within the classroom. (i.e. desks, door handles, pencil sharpeners, keyboards).
- Appropriate chemicals (EPA -approved) will be utilized in disinfecting surfaces, and utilized when students are not present if at all possible.
- Custodial staff will document regular sanitation of commonly used areas. (i.e. restrooms, playground equipment)
- Playground equipment will be sanitized on a routine basis as recommended by safety and health guidelines.
- Shared items such as PE equipment and Library books will be sanitized between classes.

**Health Screening:**

- Parents will need to do temperature checks and monitor their child’s health on a daily basis.
- Temperature checks will be conducted by office staff and classroom teachers as necessary.
- Any student or staff member with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher should not be present in school. A student with a fever will be isolated and given a mask to wear. Parents will be contacted immediately to pick the child up from school.
- School staff will monitor students for symptoms of illness and contact parents if there is a concern.

- Students and staff should be fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours prior to returning to school (Please see Student Handbook page 7, Guidelines for Keeping Sick Children Home from School).

**Parent Responsibilities:**

- Children exhibiting symptoms of illness must be kept home and not sent to school.
- Students should be dropped off at school after the school building has been opened to avoid a congregation of students prior to the start of the school day.
- Students should be picked up after school outside of the school building, parents and visitors will be very limited within the school building during school hours. Students will be dismissed in a staggered manner to avoid congregation and crowding.
- Parents will communicate with the school office immediately should their student show symptoms or become ill.
- Parents will make sure that the school has up-to-date contact information including phone, email, mailing address, physical address, and emergency contacts.
- Contact the school secretary to update your information when necessary.

**Reaction to a confirmed positive COVID-19 Case in Belt School:**

- Belt School will follow safety and health guidelines and recommendations from local health officials in the event of a confirmed positive case including:
- Possible school closure if necessary for contact tracing and disinfecting.
- Work in coordination with city and county health on the necessary action and a timeline to return to school.
- Reassess school safety procedures to evaluate effectiveness.
- During building closure, offsite online/remote learning will be conducted.
- Onsite instruction within the building will resume upon approval from local health officials.
- Individuals testing positive will be required to quarantine as directed by health officials in accordance with public health and safety guidelines. Those exposed to a positive case will quarantine as directed by health officials in accordance with public health and safety guidelines.
- Students will be provided remote learning opportunities during the period of quarantine.
- Staff will be accommodated to allow remote instruction with an aide in the classroom during the quarantine period.
- **Accommodations extended to students and staff who are required to quarantine due to exposure or possible exposure:**  
*Ideas for instruction may include:*
  - Broadcast live classroom instruction
  - Paper and pencil packets sent home and returned daily
  - Online activities such as Ed Ready MT, MTDA, Moby Max, AR, Edgenuity
  - One-on-one virtual meetings as time permits
  - Staff who are themselves at risk should not attempt to return to the classroom

- Para-professional assistance will be provided within the classroom, and staff will teach into the classroom remotely
- Communication and collaboration with families as it relates to IEP and 504 for students who will be learning remotely will be required

**Extra-curricular Activities:**

- The decision to conduct extracurricular activities will be made by the board of trustees, with guidance from state and local health officials and the MHSA.
- MHSA, CDC and AAP guidelines will be followed should extracurricular activities resume including planning for [spectators](#).

**Communication:**

- Communication with school staff will be conducted in person and via school email.
- Training regarding the implementation of the school safety plan will occur during August PIR days.
- Communication with parents will occur through automatic messenger communication via School Messenger.
- Parents are encouraged to ensure that the school has up to date contact information (phone, email, mailing address, emergency contacts).
- Substitute teachers will be trained on the implementation of the school safety plan prior to working within the school building.