

TO: GOVERNANCE TEAM MEMBERS

DA: JULY 7, 2020

FR: KATHLEEN MORTENSEN

RE: COVID-19 POLICY COMPONENTS

As we convene to work on WLA policies, we need to create a COVID-19 policy to support the overall health and wellbeing of our students and staff members, and to mitigate (not eliminate) risks. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the Center for Disease Control. (CDC), and the American Association of Pediatricians (AAP) all have requirements and/or recommendations for what needs to be/should be included in policy. I have outlined the policy components as follows:

1. Assign a COVID-19 Program Coordinator: This person will identify or serve as, the district and building point of contact and collaborate with the building nurse. This person will also communicate concerns, challenges, and lessons learned, as well as communicate preventative activities as needed with staff, students, families, leadership, and local health officials. (The WLA COVID-19 Program Coordinator will be Dr. Kathleen Mortensen, WLA Executive Director.)
2. Social Distancing and Minimizing Exposure: This refers to keeping space between yourself and others, and is critical for decreasing the spread of COVID-19. Schools should create as much space as possible while recognizing that it is not always feasible to have 6' of social distancing in the classroom.
 - a. Requirements for scenario 1 and 2
 - i. Provide floor and seat markings in waiting and reception areas
 - ii. Review transportation capacity to create as much space between riders as possible
 - iii. Review classroom spaces with the goal of creating space between students, and recognizing that 6' social distancing is not always feasible. 3' for students is reasonable. (AAP)
 - iv. Mark 6' of spacing to remind staff and students to always stay apart from each other during lunch, arrival, dismissal, restroom use, locker rooms and so forth.
 - v. Have staff members monitor arrival and dismissal to curtail congregating and ensure that students go straight from vehicles to classrooms and vice versa.
 - vi. Nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations should be restricted.
 - vii. Discontinue self-service with meals and beverages.
 - b. Additional Requirements for Scenario 2
 - i. Limit number of students on buses or in the building to 50%
 - ii. Ensure 6' social distancing is followed

- iii. Implement contactless pick-up and delivery of instructional materials
 - iv. Implement a school age program for critical care workers
 - c. Requirements for Scenario 3
 - i. Implement contactless pick-up and delivery of instructional materials
 - ii. Implement a school age program for critical care workers
 - d. Recommendations for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Keep cohorts of students and staff together throughout the day as much as possible. Limit mixing of students in lunchrooms, bathrooms, arrival, dismissal and recess.
 - ii. Minimize opportunities for exposure by social distancing
 - 1. Arrange classroom seating so that students are 6' apart if possible, and consider facing all students in the same direction
 - 2. Consider the use of transparent dividers to separate individuals
 - 3. If social distancing is not possible in the lunchroom, consider serving lunches in classrooms
 - 4. Use visual aids to illustrate traffic flow through the building
 - 5. Space out furniture in common areas
 - iii. Stagger arrival and dismissal times if possible
 - 1. Use visual cues, signage and barriers to direct traffic flow
 - 2. Consider using several entry points to avoid funneling students through one entry
 - iv. Place physical barriers such as plexiglass for protection at reception desk or similar areas
 - v. Hold physical education and music classes outside as much as possible
 - 1. Be aware that COVID-19 spreads rapidly among groups that are singing or physically exercising
 - vi. Discontinue activities that bring large groups of people together, including assemblies, field trips, and large group use of playground equipment. Staff members will sanitize the playground and recess equipment as needed.
 - vii. Consider having staff using alternative spaces for discretionary preparation time.

3. Cloth Face Coverings: These are recommended to protect other people in case the wearer doesn't know they are infected.

- a. Recommendations for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Use cloth masks and non-medical face shields if possible when on buses or school grounds, particularly when 6' social distancing isn't possible.

1. Schools are recommended to maintain some stock of masks for people that have forgotten to bring a mask.

ii. Masks should not be worn by people who are having difficulty breathing, who is incapacitated and cannot remove the mask themselves, or anyone who cannot tolerate a cloth covering due to developmental, medical, or behavioral health needs. The MDE is suggesting that after three infractions where parents and school staff have spoken, have a meeting with parents and discuss moving the student to the on-line option. The Commissioner stated that suspending students for these behaviors is not acceptable, and that schools must work with families to resolve the problem.

4. Protect Vulnerable Populations:

a. The CDC considers the following individuals to be of high risk:

i. Chronic lung disease, asthma, serious heart conditions, compromised immune system, severe obesity, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, liver disease, hemoglobin disorder

b. Requirements for Scenario 1 and 2

i. Create a process for students/families, and staff to self-identify, and have a plan to address requests for alternative learning arrangements, or work reassignments

ii. Evaluate all current health plans (504's, IEPs) and update accordingly.

iii. Offer blended learning for students/families who are medically vulnerable or unwilling to return in-person to the school setting.

c. Recommendations for Scenarios 1 and 2

i. When a student uses a nebulizer, staff should disinfect the area prior to having other children enter that area.

5. Hygiene Practices:

a. Requirements for Scenarios 1 and 2

i. Ensure that appropriate supplies are available to support healthy hygiene, and develop a process for checking and refilling supplies

ii. Build routines for hand hygiene, teach and reinforce hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and/or the use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content (per MDH)

iii. Supervise student hand washing

iv. Reinforce handwashing during key times throughout the day, such as before lunch, and whenever touching objects that others have touched.

b. Recommendations for Scenarios 1 and 2

i. Use media and posters to reinforce health etiquette, in highly visible areas.

6. Cleaning and Materials Handling:

- a. Requirements for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Establish a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting on high-touch surfaces and shared equipment. Increase the frequency of cleaning throughout the day.
 - ii. Do not use cleaning products near children, and ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using products. Securely store products away from children.
 - iii. Use diluted bleach to clean or disinfectants on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) list "N", for products that are safe for humans and safe for the environment.
 - iv. Ensure that adequate supplies are stocked, and minimize sharing of supplies and equipment
 - 1. Avoid sharing electronic devices, books, toys, and other games or learning aids, whenever possible.
 - 2. Have students keep personal items in individual cubbies or lockers.
 - 3. Handle non-disposable food service items minimally and wash with hot water and soap in a dishwasher.
- b. Recommendations for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Discourage the use of items that are difficult to clean and disinfect.

7. Monitoring and Excluding for Illness: Regular screening and self-monitoring can help identify and reduce exposure. Staff or students who develop symptoms during the school day must notify health services immediately. The CDC does not recommend universal testing at this time.

- a. Requirements for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Require that staff or students stay home if they have tested positive for, or are showing COVID-19 symptoms, until they meet the criteria to return.
 - ii. They have recently had close contact with a person who has tested positive with COVID-19, or until they meet the requirements to return. (follow the MDH Decision Tree for People with COVID-19 symptoms in Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs)
 - iii. Conduct symptom screening for every person entering the building, and communicate the expectations and process for entering the building.
 - iv. Establish action steps for students and staff that arrive to the school building with symptoms, and develop plans for back-filling positions of employees on sick leave.
- b. Recommendations for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Conduct daily temperature checks with a fever defined as 100.4 or above.
 - ii. Determine any PPE needs
 - iii. Enforce sick policies for staff members
 - iv. Establish liberal use of sick days for students and staff members.

8. Handling Suspected or Confirmed Positive Cases of COVID-19:
 - a. Requirements for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Designate a staff member who will be responsible for responding to COVID-9 concerns (WLA will designate Amy Cahlander, Health Services) who will help coordinate with health authorities. All school staff and families should know who this person is, and how to contact them.
 - ii. Put systems in place for staff and families to self-report COVID-19 symptoms, or a positive case, and ensure that FERPA and HIPAA are adhered to.
 - iii. Post signage requesting that people with symptoms not enter the building. (Follow recommended guidance for return to school.)
 - iv. Establish a dedicated space for symptomatic students to wait to go home and ensure that they are under visual supervision. Both students and staff should wear masks. The space should accommodate social distancing needs if possible, and there should be a cleaning process for this area.
 - v. Develop a plan to transport staff or students to homes if necessary.
 - vi. Notify MDH of confirmed COVID-19 cases as established by MN rule.
 - vii. Develop a system for notifying families, staff, and the public as needed if a person with COVID-19 was on-site while infectious, while maintaining FERPA and all other state and federal laws.
9. Water and Ventilation Systems:
 - a. Recommendations for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Ensure that all water systems and features are safe to use after a prolonged building shut-down.
 - ii. Ensure ventilation systems are working. Open windows and doors after a prolonged building shut-down.
 - iii. Clean and sanitize drinking fountains and encourage staff and students to bring their own water bottles.
10. Transportation:
 - a. Requirements for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Review bus capacity with social distancing considerations.
 - ii. Clean and disinfect vehicles regularly, focusing on touched surfaces, and keep doors and windows open when cleaning vehicles.
 - iii. Follow symptom screening procedures for all people boarding the bus.
 - iv. Require people who become ill during the day, to find alternative transportation home.
 - b. Additional Requirements for Scenario 2
 - i. Ensure that social distancing is adhered to.
 - c. Provide hand sanitizer and keep bus windows open if appropriate.

11. Support Mental Health and Wellness: The COVID-19 pandemic is causing stress, fear, and anxiety for many people. It's important that people have access to mental health resources as needed to stay healthy during this challenging time.

- a. Requirements for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Provide staff and students with information on how to access resources for mental health and wellness.
- b. Recommendations for Scenarios 1 and 2
 - i. Increase capacity to offer social support
 - ii. Encourage staff, students and families to talk with people they trust about their feelings and concerns regarding COVID-19.