Spearfish School District

Safe Return to In-Person Learning and
Continuity of Services Plan

Based on the Requirements of the U.S. Department of Education

First Reading: July 11, 2022
Plan Approved: August 15, 2022

Please direct questions to Kirk Easton, Superintendent: keaston@spearfish.k12.sd.us or 605-717-1229

INTRODUCTION

The Spearfish School, like many across the nation, is the beneficiary of federal funding to support math and literacy interventions as well as access to mental health supports. However, in order to access the federal funding through the American Recovery Plan each school district must prepare a Safe Return to In-Person Learning and Continuity of Services Plan.

In preparing our Plan, the district administration and the Board of Education took into consideration stakeholder comments prior to and during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years, analytical data regarding COVID cases during the 2020-2021 and the 2021-2022 school years, student growth & achievement data, information from the CDC, the SD Department of Health, and the SD Department of Education. The Board of Education has offered the opportunity for stakeholder input at each of their regular scheduled Board meetings since July 12, 2021.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CONSIDERATIONS
The guidance and considerations outlined in this document are grounded in the following principles:
1. Safeguarding the health & safety of students and staff;
2. Traditional, in-person learning;
3. Monitoring the school populations and the community, when necessary, changing operations to appropriately contain COVID-19 spread;
4. Emphasizing access and support to the students who are emerging from COVID-19 pandemic disruption.

CONTINUITY OF SERVICES
1. The Spearfish School District will have traditional, in-person learning in our schools without a 100% remote learning option. The central belief is that our students are best served when connected in person with our school's academic programs, activities, and social-emotional supports led in person by our teachers, counselors, coaches, administrators, and mentors.
2. Credit recovery; tutoring, both during and after school; summer school; and extended school year will be offered to assist students who may need additional support and help outside the normal classroom setting due to absences as a result of COVID-19.
3. In the event of a school closure and the move to remote learning, instructional delivery and academic learning will be accomplished through the Learning Management Systems outlined under *Remote Learning.*
   a. During a period of remote learning, breakfast and lunch meals may be provided to students via a single pick-up location (TBD).
   b. During a period of remote learning, school counselors will be available to address student social, emotional, and mental health needs.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK
COVID-19 has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is extremely contagious and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact. As a result, federal, state, and local governments and federal and state health agencies recommend social distancing and have, in many locations, prohibited the congregation of groups of people. The Spearfish 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.

MASKS
- Masks are not required; however, they may be recommended based on school or community level of spread.

HEALTH SCREENINGS
- Daily health screenings will not be required
- Diagnostic COVID-19 testing as supported by resources from the SD DOH
- As always, please keep your child home if they are sick

HEALTH PROTOCOLS
- Teach and reinforce proper hygiene measures such as hand washing and respiratory etiquette
- Staff and students will wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer regularly
- Hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom and throughout SSD buildings
- Inform/train staff on all safety protocols
- Post signs in highly visible locations that promote everyday protective measures and how to stop the spread of germs
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Create distance between students and staff when possible
- Discourage the sharing of personal school supplies
- Encourage students and staff to use personal water bottles and water bottle filling stations vs. hallway/classroom drinking fountains

BUILDING VISITATION & FACILITY USE
- All visitors and volunteers should be in good health with no COVID-19 related symptoms
- All facilities will be available for outside organization use (subject to availability)

TRANSPORTATION & BUSING
- Normal bus routes
- Masks are not required; however, they may be recommended based on school or community level of spread
- Increased cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
- Sanitation wipes and/or hand sanitizer provided in each bus
- If possible, students should sit with cohort (same students sit together each day – preferably with a family member or classmate)
- Open windows and roof vents, when practical, to improve ventilation

STUDENT MEALS
- Follow safe food handling procedures when handling, preparing, or serving food
- Clean cafeterias and high-touch surfaces throughout the school day
- When able, implement alternative seating arrangements and/or locations to decrease the number of students dining together during each serving session
- Hand sanitizer station set up in service line for student to sanitize before and after meals

CLEANING/MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS
- Adequate supplies provided to support healthy hygiene behavior
- Normal daily cleaning and disinfecting
- Normal maintenance operations
- HVAC systems will utilize outside air whenever possible to achieve fresh air flushes
- HVAC System filters will be upgraded in compatible systems

ISOLATION GUIDELINES

Per the CDC/SD DOH, a student or staff member who has tested positive for COVID-19 shall isolate for at least 5 days. The student or staff member may leave isolation after 5 full days and return to school/work if they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have significantly improved. The CDC/SD DOH recommends that the individual wears a mask for 5 days upon return to school/work to minimize the risk of infecting others.

** Please note: When isolation dates established by the district differ from those of the SD Department of Health, the district will defer to the dates provided by SD DOH.

CLOSE CONTACT GUIDELINES

As of February 28, 2022, the CDC no longer recommends universal case investigation and contact tracing for COVID-19. Individuals that are COVID positive will be asked to inform their own close contacts of possible exposure. As of August 11, 2022 the CDC recommends that if you were exposed to COVID-19, you wear a high-quality mask for 10 days and get tested on day 5.

STAYING HOME WHEN APPROPRIATE
- Employees and students that are experiencing symptoms of an infectious disease such as COVID-19, RSV, and/or GI infections should stay home and get tested for COVID-19.
- In addition, students and staff should be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and show symptom improvement before returning to school. This precautionary measure applies to any student or staff member with a fever regardless of whether or not they had a positive COVID-19 test result.
- Please use Appendix A for COVID-19 Screening Questions and Appendix B for COVID-19 symptoms.

COVID-19 VACCINATION

COVID-19 vaccination information can be found at: https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/

CONTINUANCE OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
- When a student is not able to attend school for the duration of time indicated above because they tested positive to COVID-19, displayed the symptoms, or have to quarantine due to contact tracing – school staff will work with the student to address any learning loss or missed assignments during absence. COVID-19 related absences will not be held against the student and will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

REMOTE LEARNING

Remote Learning includes the closure of a school and the move to remote learning. The decision to move to remote learning will be based on the ability to maintain an effective in-person learning environment. Activities may be suspended during the period of remote learning based upon the circumstances at the time of the decision. Staff will be working with students the first weeks of school to prepare them should we have to move to remote learning.
- Every teacher in grades kindergarten through 8th grade will have a Google Classroom set up for their classroom or course sections.
- Every teacher in grades 9 through 12 will have their course sections set up in Google Classroom or Moodle.
- Every teacher in kindergarten through 5th grade will use ClassDojo to communicate with students and parents.
- Every teacher in 6th through 12th grade will use email. The Remind app may be used as supplemental means to communicate with students and parents.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Every child and adolescent with a disability is entitled to a free and appropriate education and is entitled to special education services based on their individualized education program (IEP). Students receiving special education services may be more negatively affected by distance-learning and may be disproportionately impacted by interruptions in regular education. It may not be feasible, depending on the needs of the individual child and adolescent, to adhere both to distancing guidelines and the criteria outlined in a specific IEP. Attempts to meet the needs of the individual child and may require creative solutions, often on a case-by-case basis. Appropriate accommodations will be made for students with disabilities in respect to THEIR health and safety. Please contact your child's case manager if you need assistance.

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

- Students – each student will have access to a qualified school counselor in their respective grade level building. The school district will also utilize community mental health providers to address gaps in mental health services. In addition, the school district has hired a school/community liaison to connect students and families with school and community resources.
- Staff – each school employee will have access to three (3) therapy sessions during the 2022-2023 school year with a counseling service contracted by the school district.

VIRTUAL ACADEMY OVERVIEW

The Spearfish School District will allow students to access virtual learning opportunities when it is determined to be in the best educational interest of the student or is necessitated due to a medical condition. The district's preferred provider for virtual learning is the Black Hills Online Learning Community. If you have questions, please consult the online information available at http://bholc.org. However, other approved virtual learning options may available for remediation or credit recovery for students in grades 6-12.

Virtual learning is a unique opportunity that is not guaranteed for everyone. The criteria below outline the circumstances that a student may be considered for virtual learning.   A team from each respective building will make a recommendation to the superintendent. The superintendent will make the final decision.

To be eligible:

1. The student must be enrolled in the Spearfish School District.   Students must meet and maintain all pertinent enrollment requirements of the district.   Students will not be allowed to open enroll into the Spearfish School District to participate in virtual learning.
2. A student who has an immune compromised system or are living with a family member with an immune compromised system. A physician's recommendation that explicitly states the student should not attend school in-person must be provided; or
It is determined that it is in the best educational interest of the student to participate in virtual learning.
3. Acceptance into virtual learning for students with an IEP or 504 will primarily be based upon the decision of the IEP/504 team as they determine the best educational placement for the individual student.

Considerations:

1. Student performance will be reviewed each trimester/semester. Learners not making adequate progress, not demonstrating proficiency, or are failing may be removed from the program at subsequent trimesters/semesters.
2. Students will be allowed to participate in athletics and extra-curricular activities.
3. Students are required to take state assessments administered by the district regardless of whether the course for which the examination is required was taken virtually or in the traditional classroom. Failure to take the state assessments may result in denial to continue with virtual learning.

Students taking courses virtually are subject to district policies, procedures and rules applicable to students enrolled in traditional courses including, but not limited to, the district's discipline code and prohibitions on academic dishonesty, discrimination, harassment, bullying and cyberbullying.

<div align="center">Direct Inquiries To:</div>

- Mountain View and West Elementary Parents may contact Nick Gottlob at ngottlob@spearfish.k12.sd.us or 605-717-1205
- Creekside Parents may contact Dan Olson at dolson@spearfish.k12.sd.us or 605-717-1210
- SMS Parents contact Brady Sumners bsumners@spearfish.k12.sd.us 717-1215 or Don Lyon dlyon@spearfish.k12.sd.us 717-1215
- SHS Parents contact Shelly Lammers mlammers@spearfish.k12.sd.us 717-1214 or Steve Morford smorford@spearfish.k12.sd.us 717-1212

Appendix A

BEFORE SCHOOL!

Parents, please complete the following health screening before sending their child to school.

(Parent(s) do not need to send the questionnaire to school)

COVID-19 SCREENING QUESTIONS

Has your child had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
_____ Yes _____ No

Does your child have new or worsening shortness of breath?
_____ Yes _____ No

Does your child have 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 (unrelated 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

If YES to ANY of these questions, STOP!

Do not send your child to school. Contact your healthcare provider. Contact your school to inform them of your child's symptoms. You may also contact the SD Department of Health with any COVD-19 questions 1-800-997-2880.

If you are able to answer NO to ALL questions, go to school.

Appendix B

Appendix C

How to Wear and Take Off Your Mask

Accessible link: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html

How to Put On and Wear Your Mask Correctly

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before putting on your mask
- Put it over your face and mouth
- Be sure your mask fits snugly against the sides of your face and under your chin
- Make sure you can breathe easily

Wear a Mask to Protect Yourself and Others

- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth to help prevent getting and spreading COVID-19
- Wear a mask in public settings, especially when you cannot stay six feet apart from people who don't live with you

How to Take Off Your Mask

Untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops

Handle only by the ear loops or ties

Fold outside corners together

Wash hands immediately after removing

Other Ways to Protect Yourself

- Stay at least 6 feet away from others
- Avoid crowds and places with poor ventilation
- Wash your hands often
- Get a vaccine when it is offered

CDC

cdc.gov/coronavirus

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