

Hebron Public School Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

June 2021

Updated and approved by Hebron Public School Board on July 12, 2023

Introduction

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

This plan will describe how Hebron Public School District will ensure continuity of services for students while also maintaining health and mitigation strategies to keep students and staff safe. Questions about this plan should be directed to Mr. Myron Schaff at 701-878-4442.

On July 14, 2020, North Dakota school districts were required to develop a health and safety plan and a distance learning plan for the 2020-2021 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These plans required approval by the School Board prior to the start of classes with students. The Hebron Board of Education approved the 2020-2021 HPS Smart Restart Plan at a Board Meeting on August 20, 2020. The HPS Smart Restart Plan was based on recommendations and guidelines from city, county, state, and national health organizations, public education agencies, and government officials. Our team which was made up of staff, parents, and board members created these plans over the summer. Input from parents was gathered through informational sessions and through the opportunity for public comment at board meetings. Copies of both plans can be found on our website.

We returned to in-person instruction on August 19, 2020. Thanks to the diligent efforts of our staff, students and parents following our return to learning plans we stayed with in-person instruction the whole school year. Our Health and Safety and Distance Learning plans were followed consistently during the 2020-2021 school year. All mitigation strategies were implemented, and there was a major decline of cases by the spring of 2021. This allowed us to suspend our Health and Safety and Distance Learning plans. The suspension of these plans does not indicate that all health and safety protocols are dismissed. We have learned so much in the past year and will continue several strategies, as outlined below. We are also prioritizing student needs and will outline our plan for addressing those needs.

Health and Safety Strategies

HPS has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure the health and safety of students, educators, and other school staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. The goal of HPS is to provide a healthy school environment to foster greater academic achievement and healthier lives for students and staff.

Below is a description of the safety strategies we utilized and the current status of implementation.

Universal and correct wearing of masks

All students, staff and visitors will continue to have the option to wear masks as a mitigation strategy for COVID-19.

Physical distancing

In the 2020-21 school year, desks in classrooms were reconfigured to allow for social distancing as indicated for elementary and secondary grade levels. Elementary students remained within their cohorts throughout the day. Moving forward, HPS will continue to monitor the transmission of COVID-19 in school facilities and work to reduce transmittable moments as needed.

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Stations are available throughout school buildings that include hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, anti-bacterial hand soap, and adult and child disposable masks. Coughing and sneezing into a tissue or sleeve, proper disposal of used tissues and proper handwashing are stressed to students and staff. Posters and signage will continue to be used throughout all school buildings.

Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Deep cleaning measures were put in place throughout the entire school. Daily sanitizing and disinfecting became a daily practice throughout the entire school and on school buses.

Contact tracing

Custer District Health and the NDDoH will continue to work with Hebron Public School regarding notification and contact tracing for future COVID-19 cases impacting HPS.

Diagnostic and screening testing

In coordination with Custer District Health, COVID-19 testing continues to be available in the community. Initial screening of students, staff and visitors may be conducted should the need arise.

Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students

In coordination with Custer District Health, vaccination clinics were offered to all staff in March and April 2021, allowing staff members the opportunity to be fully vaccinated prior to the end of the 2020-2021 school year. Efforts are in place state-wide through public health and healthcare agencies to provide vaccinations to eligible individuals, including students.

Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities

Children with disabilities who are unable to wear a mask do not have to do so. Students continue to have the option to wear masks as a mitigation strategy for COVID-19.

Continuity of Services

Hebron Public School District has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs.

Academic Needs

HPS is utilizing a variety of sources, including state and local assessments, to identify learning gaps in mathematics and literacy. Students that are below grade level will be identified for services. Students were selected for the program based on assessment data along with their tier on the multi-tier system of supports (MTSS).

We have put the following items into place to meet the needs of students' learning.

- Identification of student gap areas in reading and math
- Creating of reading pathways for multi-tiered systems of support
- Hiring another paraprofessional
- Restructure schedules to allow for more interventions
- Purchase supporting materials
- Staff training and professional development for intervention strategies

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

Student and staff mental health has been at the forefront of our planning. Below is a list of what we have put into place for students' social, emotional, and mental health needs.

- Our counselor meets with classes weekly and is always available for one on one counseling with students.
- Our counselor is working with parents for students to receive therapy outside of the school setting.
- Our counselor does surveys on mental health with students and uses that information to support students that are struggling.
- Targeted discussion of student needs at our staff meetings

Other Services

Meal services have been provided since March of 2020 through transportation directly to homes, and on site pick up at the school. Student transportation services to and from school have been provided during each reopening phase in compliance with CDC guidelines. Extracurricular and athletic activities resumed following the guidance from the North Dakota High School Activities Association (NDHSAA) and public health recommendations during the 2020-21 school year. It is intended for activities to continue in the 2021-22 school year.

Opportunity for Public Comment

In developing the return to learning plans, our team worked with input from Custer District Health, a team of staff and board members during the summer of 2020. Input from parents was

gathered through informational sessions and through the opportunity for public comment at board meetings.

Periodic Review and Revision of Plan

During the period of the ARP ESSER award (until September 2024), HPS will periodically review and as needed, revise its plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. The plan will be reviewed at least every six months, and HPS will seek and consider public input during the review process. Plan revisions will address updated CDC guidance on schools remaining open if any are issued.