

**Prevention and Mitigation Strategies consistent with CDC guidance on reopening schools**

The Meade County Schools (MCS) will implement a multi-layered approach to safely reopen schools in accordance with CDC and state guidance. This approach will include the purchase of recommended PPE, sanitizing equipment, etc. It will also include some additional staff and/or staff time to utilize and organize this equipment. The School District collaborated meaningfully with a variety of stakeholders to develop this plan. District employees (certified teachers, administrators, and classified staff) were included in discussions on plan development. Additionally, students, parents, and community leaders actively participated in discussing ideas and strategies to develop an effective plan. Items related to this area include:

1. Chromebooks
2. Cleaning and sanitation supplies
3. Purchase of 14 additional school buses
4. Hire one additional school nurse
5. Hire MyMeade Online staff
6. Hire District Health Coordinator

District leaders took the stakeholder input and grouped it into the following categories. Once we had organized the stakeholder input, we were better able to narrow the plan into specific items that would most benefit the school district and the community in general.

Results of stakeholder input:

**Additional Staff:** Our stakeholder groups shared that the district should hire additional staff to most effectively utilize these funds. Staff could be classroom teaching staff, small group coaches, instructional coaches, interventionists, one-on-one support staff, a Covid health coordinator, staffing to coordinate Covid testing sites, etc.

**Resources to Support Strong Instruction:** Stakeholders shared that these funds should be used to help with staffing and resources to implement small group instruction. They noted that small groups would be an effective way to shrink learning gaps created through the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Mental Health (Social Emotional Learning):** Our stakeholder groups also frequently identified mental health supports as a high priority item. They wanted the district to invest in staff, resources, professional development, and strategies that would target healthy emotional well being in our return to in-person instruction. Staff may include additional school counselors, an additional assistant principal working with behavior issue students at the intermediate grade level, and sponsors for additional after school activities.

## **How the LEA will use funds to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.**

1. **MAP:** The LEA will utilize MAP (Measures of Academic Progress), a research based assessment tool to identify math and reading learning gaps caused by COVID-19. MAP is used by all students in grades K through 10 in Meade County. Students utilize this formative assessment tool three times each year to help teachers see individual student academic growth and to identify students who have fallen behind their peer group. This will help inform instruction and help teachers more effectively reduce the academic impact of lost instructional time.
2. **Instructional Resources:** The stakeholder groups that we worked with mentioned textbooks, instructional resources, and supplies as high priority items for the use of these funds. Even though technology has reduced the need for some classroom resources, textbooks, hands-on-manipulatives, and other instructional resources have proven to be invaluable in enhancing student achievement. Many of the district resources in this area have become outdated and were in need of replacement. Virtually every student in the district will benefit from these resources as resources will be given at all grade levels in all of the district schools.
3. **Hire COVID-19 Teachers/Coaches:** Our stakeholder groups also said additional staff were needed, particularly staff who could coach and help improve overall instruction in our district classrooms. Each elementary school will hire one highly qualified teacher to serve as a COVID-19 interventionist/coach. Our middle and high school will share a COVID-19 coach. These 7 employees will be great resources to help MCS target and track students as they transition back to face-to-face in-person instruction. They will coach, intervene, and lead our teaching staff as they transition most of our 5000 students back into the building. We will also hire an additional gifted and talented teacher to provide additional small group instruction. Teachers will also be paid for summer school and after school instruction. We believe these hires are essential in our district plan to eliminate COVID-19 related learning gaps quickly.

## **How the LEA will spend the remainder of its funds.**

1. **MCHS Media Center technology:** Since Meade County High School is the only high school in the district, every student will find themselves walking the halls of MCHS eventually. To ensure that this media center meets the needs of our students, the LEA will add additional touch screen panels and group seating options to enhance student learning. With this additional technology, students will be able to complete group and individual assignments with modern research tools and technology.
2. **Hire one additional school safety officer:** 1-2 additional School Resource Officers would help the district meet the emotional learning needs of the students in our district. Adding additional school safety officers would help the DARE program be more efficient in each of our schools. It would also put an additional safety support system in the schools located furthest from the central office.
3. **Buses:** Additional buses will allow for increased social distancing while students are traveling to/from school on the buses. Additional buses will help MCS catch up on an aging fleet. Two of the elementary schools (Ekron and Payneville) will be able to have their own buses and students will have an equitable instructional time experience in accordance with the rest of the district schools. ESSER funds

will also be used to help with the district shortage of bus drivers. Funds will be used to pay current drivers additional funds when they have to drive additional routes and to pay classified staff for additional hours of student monitoring before and after school.

4. **High School Extracurricular Groups:** Extracurricular clubs and sports teams had a significant loss of revenue during school closures and the pandemic because they were not able to conduct fundraising events. The district will allocate funds to each club based upon their membership to supplement these losses.
5. **Technology:** MC Schools provide 1:1 learning through chromebooks in grades 7-12 currently. The purchase of approximately 350 additional Chromebooks will give all interested students the ability to participate in online instruction. Edgenuity is the curriculum platform the district uses for virtual learning. It is essential to the online learning during the pandemic MCS provide a virtual platform that is rich in rigor and instruction. Students virtual and in-person would have access to the learning program for Core instruction as well as enrichment/remediation.
6. **New Technology Staff Member:** The district has purchased hundreds of new devices online due to COVID-19. An additional technology support staff would ensure virtual learning would be constant across the district. This would help ensure equitable learning experiences for all MC students.
7. **Hire School Nurses:** 1-2 additional nursing staff would be hired and used on the Flaherty/Ekron campus. This additional staff member(s) would allow our nursing staff to provide services to students AND provide COVID support to the district.
8. **Leadership and Athletic Development Program:** Meade County has committed to support students through the addition of a Leadership and Athletic Development Program. This program will be based at the LEA high school (Meade County High School) and will be available to both males and females during their time at MCHS. The purpose of this program is to grow and develop leaders through the use of strength training, athletic development, and focused leadership training. Research has shown that leadership development is a critical need that will address the social and emotional well being of the students who are engaged in the program. Scheduling for this course has been highly successful at Meade County High School with all courses already being filled. Both males and females have been highly interested in the course. To implement this program effectively, we will need to purchase equipment and supplies that include leadership development curriculum, weight lifting equipment, and various training/conditioning supplies that will enable our student athletes to grow and develop in this essential area.
9. **Substitute Scheduling Software and Staffing:** The COVID-19 pandemic has created a challenge in maintaining an adequate supply of substitute workers in all areas of our workforce. Quarantines, isolations, COVID-19 cases, child care, and generalized fear have all contributed to this challenge. The district has already been contracting with Frontline Education to streamline applications and employment processes. Adding the second layer of Substitute Calling and Scheduling will greatly help the district to keep our doors open for student learning with a more efficient method of notifying and scheduling substitute teachers, assistants, secretaries, custodians, drivers, and a variety of other job classifications that will impact our ability to effectively educate our students. Also, each school will be assigned a dedicated additional substitute teacher to work in their building each school day. This staff person can take the place of an absent employee or provide small group instruction as needed.

**How the LEA will ensure that interventions address the academic impact of lost instructional time and respond to the academic, social, emotional and mental health needs of all students.**

1. **Student Desks and STEAM Classroom:** Meade County Schools is investing in innovatively designed student desks that promote student engagement through high-yield instructional strategies. The district will also purchase furniture and instructional supplies to create a new STEAM lab for elementary students. This will enable high level learning for students from each of our elementary schools on a rotating basis.
2. **District Strategic Planning Assistance:** The Meade County Schools will contract with Studer Education to help identify strategic priorities for the district. This work is timely as the transition to more face-to-face full time instruction in Meade County will require both a keen focus on strategic priorities and much communication with our community stakeholders. Already the district has identified student and family needs that have been magnified during this pandemic. The Meade County Schools must be the leader in this community to support students and families as they struggle out of the pandemic. Research tells us focusing on a few tightly aligned strategies and measuring their progress is the most effective way to implement initiatives. Studer has research based strategies to ensure the Meade County Schools are leading this community through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Citations (Mark)

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