

# **WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

## **RETURN TO SCHOOL PLANNING DOCUMENT for 2020-2021**

**06-25-20 ROUGH DRAFT – NO FINAL DECISIONS MADE YET**

We have worked on all kinds of scenarios up to this point. We have participated in numerous meetings/briefings with health department leaders, other school districts, statewide leaders/elected officials, and others as we have carefully analyzed many possible plans. This is a very challenging situation and we will make adjustments as we move forward in the coming weeks.

### **Belief Statements:**

- We believe in doing all we can to provide a high-quality educational experience to all students regardless of the circumstances.
- We believe it is a top priority to do all we can to keep our students and staff safe.
- We believe that schools, by following all of the guidelines and strategies below, are safe learning and working environments.
- We believe that being proactive in planning and preparation is critical in order to effectively respond to challenging situations.
- We believe that it is important to share with our Westside staff, parents, students, and community stakeholders the “why” behind our thought processes and decisions.
- We believe that “being in school” is the best place for students to receive an education, interact socially with peers, and to be enriched by a positive and consistent routine.
- Our ability to re-open and keep our schools open will be a shared responsibility that depends on all of our students, their families, and our staff. This has to be a community-wide effort.
  - You can do your part to protect yourself and stop this disease in the community by wearing masks, washing your hands, and maintaining social distancing.

### **Important Info:**

- As of this minute, we intend to begin school on Tuesday, August 18<sup>th</sup> with all of our students returning to our schools.
- We intend to make/publish decisions for 4-6 week periods at a time as this could be an ever-changing situation. What we do in October might be different than what we do in August. March might look different than November.

## Options being pursued:

Ultimately, it looks like the decision as to what school will look like in August and beyond will be made by local school districts with directives and input from the Governor's Office, the Douglas County Health Dept, and the Nebraska Dept of Education.

- **GREEN Status** – 100% of students back in school using close to traditional school-day and school-year calendar with numerous social-distancing guidelines and safety measures in place. *As of today, this is what we are planning on for August and a formal announcement of this could be made soon knowing that changes can always occur in the coming weeks as this pandemic evolves.*
- **YELLOW Status** – Less than 100% of students (likely 50%) back in school using close to traditional school-day and school-year calendar with numerous social-distancing guidelines and safety measures in place.
  - This plan is about de-densifying our buildings
  - Our students will be in “Group A” or “Group B” and will alternate days they are in school
    - Group A comes to school on Mondays and Tuesdays (has at-home/extended campus learning Wednesday-Fridays).
    - Group B comes to school on Wednesdays and Thursdays (has at-home/extended campus learning on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays).
    - We can NOT accommodate ½ day learning every day for each group as it would double our transportation costs, make school meal access inequitable, and would not de-densify our buildings.
  - As time allows, outside of in-person instruction, the at-home/extended campus days will provide more direct, video instruction and social interaction than this past spring. We are thankful all of our students would be with their teacher at least two days a week in this status. We are trying to keep it as simple for our families as possible for week-to-week daycare scheduling, etc.
    - Children in same family would be on same schedule
  - Depending on their IEP, students with disabilities will be eligible to receive more frequent in-person instruction than the two days mentioned in yellow mode
  - YELLOW is the most challenging option to pull off from the district perspective
- **RED Status** – NO students are on campus. Staff may or may not be required to be on campus. We are in extended campus mode.
  - The at-home/extended campus days will provide more direct, video instruction and social interaction than this past spring
- **There might be scenarios where K-6 is in GREEN while grades 7-12 might be in Yellow**
- We look forward to helping to stress social-emotional learning and supports for students and staff as we move forward, regardless of what color status we are in.
- We understand that some of our students/families will not feel comfortable coming back to school in our Green or Yellow status.

## ***FAMILY SURVEY RESULTS AS OF June 16<sup>th</sup>***

### ***• 887 families responded***

- *52% said they're coming back no matter what*
  - *36% said they're coming back as long as social-distancing is in place*
  - *12% indicated they plan to stay home*
  - *80+% of students indicated they're not immuno-compromised*
  - *56 families indicated they intend to keep their child(ren) at home but did not identify them as immune-compromised*
  - *36 families indicated they intend to send their child(ren) on a limited basis but did not identify them as immune-compromised*
- We have to make decisions as an organization that serves the needs of 6,000+ students and approximately 1,000 staff members. We wish we could accommodate each person/family's unique situation(s) but that is simply not feasible.
- 

### ***Protocols we are working to establish***

#### **Hand Washing/Hand Sanitizing**

- Students and staff will sanitize their hands upon entering the building and in classrooms, hallways, and common spaces throughout the day as sanitizer pumps will be readily available throughout all facilities. (70% alcohol solution)

#### **Masks**

- Has shown to be a pretty divisive topic so far....we hear lots of feedback that many do NOT want masks required....we hear lots of feedback that we should require them as well.....from those who have reached out to us, it's a pretty even 50/50 split with passions often running high on both ends
- Please understand that we receive "DHMs" (Directed Health Measures) and "recommendations" from the Douglas County Health Department. We are legally obligated to follow all DHMs. A "recommendation" is not legally binding but obviously viewed as best practice. School systems do not write DHMs but must follow them. We also follow *recommendations* as they come from the medical experts that we rely on and are backed by scientific studies.
- The current *recommendation* we are following emphasizes that when you cannot social distance, or when you are in public settings indoors, you should wear a mask.
- In settings where we cannot provide adequate social-distancing, in order to follow expert medical advice available to us today, we would need to require masks because the safety of our students and staff is our primary and most important objective. If school was in session today, we would require masks. We don't see this changing by August 18th but will continue to follow DHMs and recommendations from medical leaders.
  - Exceptions could include those with documented medical, behavioral, or developmental issues that could be impaired by masks.

- If/where/when masks are required, we will take hourly mask breaks in social-distanced settings
  - We know mask cleanliness will pose challenges, it is more age appropriate for some more than others, etc. It's a very complicated issue.
  - All students would be provided with 3 reusable neoprene/cloth masks but may also elect to use their own
  - All staff would be provided with 2 reusable neoprene/cloth masks but may also elect to use their own
  - Exceptions could be PE and Music classes
  - Daily disposable masks will also be readily available as needed
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-covering.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wash-cloth-face-coverings.html>

### **Touch Surface Cleaning**

- Desks, door handles, and restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected on a very frequent basis.
  - Employees are responsible for all cleaning protocols. No student responsibilities for cleaning.

### **Social-Distancing and More Social-Distancing**

- Maintain at least 6-feet of physical distance *whenever possible* when there is no physical barrier between individuals (such as classrooms, hallways, etc.)
- Use tape, plexiglass barriers, and other measures to ensure distance and designation of applicable areas
- Limit the number of people in a hallway or entryway at one time
- Classroom desks will be spread apart in rows all facing the same direction with as much distance in-between as possible
- Band and Music classes will be conducted outside as often as possible and in smaller groups inside when applicable to de-densify traditional music classroom space
- ALL Westside employees have a responsibility to model appropriate social-distancing measures while also ensuring that students do the same

### **Pre-Screening for Students**

- Parents screen children at home for temperature, cough, and other symptoms (ADD SPECIFICS). Students do not report to school if symptomatic, call medical professional.
- *Also pursuing the possibility of having each student's temperature taken at school each morning – working through many layers of logistics*

### **Pre-Screening for Employees**

- All employees self-screen at home for temperature, cough and other symptoms (ADD SPECIFICS) and do not report to work if symptomatic, call medical professional.
- *Also pursuing the possibility of having each staff member's temperature taken at school each morning – working through many layers of logistics*

## **Bussing**

- Students are assigned seats and required to wear masks due to close proximity others.
- Drivers are required to wear masks.
- Surfaces are wiped down between routes.

## **Water Fountains**

- No mouth drinking from fountains.
- Students bring their own water bottles.

## **Cafeteria / Meals**

- Social-distancing to the best of our abilities utilizing traditional and non-traditional eating spaces and staggered eating schedules, to possibly include outside eating spaces if/when possible
- No self-serve items
- All food to be served by gloved and masked employees behind plexi-glass
- Students will be allowed to bring lunches from home
- No sharing of food

## **Recess**

- We envision recess time being outside as much as possible and mask-free with social distancing measures in place

## **Passing Periods**

- Passing periods throughout the day will be adjusted as necessary to ensure enough time for touch-surface cleaning protocols to occur

## **School Calendar**

- As close to a traditional school calendar will be followed. School is scheduled to begin for students on Tuesday, August 18<sup>th</sup>.
  - **Elementary start time is moved up with school beginning at 8:30 AM this year.**
  - WMS and WHS will begin at 8:00 AM as in past years.
  - Same Wednesday early-outs as past years
  - Same dismissal times as past years

## **Building Engineering**

- Create dedicated facility entry and exit points that are deep cleaned multiple times daily
- Secure all facility entry/exit points as needed
- Will work to increase air flow through facilities, where possible, while also maximizing clean air recirculation through appropriate filtering and sterilization measures where possible

## **Environmental Safety and Cleaning Policies**

- Provide necessary and ongoing training on best practices and approved materials so we can develop and maintain a highly trained environmental services workforce
- Analyze on a regular basis our inventory of cleaning supplies, sanitizers, disinfectants, and applicable equipment so we don't run low
- High-touch surfaces will be sanitized frequently, to include:
  - Door knobs and handles
  - Push plates and crash bars on doors
  - Automatic door openers
  - Overhead light and lamp switches
  - Handrails and stairway doors
  - Elevator call and interior buttons
  - Drinking fountains
  - Vending machines and ATMs
  - Tables and chairs in commons areas
  - Refrigerators and microwaves
  - Surfaces and fixtures in kitchens and bathrooms
  - Others areas as identified by staff
- Make hand sanitizer dispensers available and functional throughout each facility, particularly at high traffic areas like entrances, exits, hallways, commons areas, lunchrooms, etc.
- Make sanitizing wipes and hand soap dispensers readily available
- Ensure that deep cleaning of all common areas happens daily or nightly
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
- Use no-touch handles, knobs, etc. when possible

## **Positive Cases and Response (IRON THIS OUT – MORE details needed from Douglas County Health Department)**

- Positive case (student or staff)
  - Public health will receive the laboratory result and at that time will contact the positive case and do a contact investigation asking questions i.e. who have you been around closer than 6 feet for longer than 10 minutes, most likely that is the household and some classmates and or colleagues. Those are contacts who then should quarantine at home for 14 days.
  - The Health department may ask the school to help out in identifying classmates sitting close by the positive dependent on the class set-up. Those students in closer contact will be contacted by the health department or in collaboration with the school. We will follow the lead of the experts at the Douglas County Health Department.

- A classroom and/or building will be closed for a minimum of 24-48 hours and deep cleaned with a report of a student testing positive for COVID-19 that has been in a school facility. **(IRON THIS OUT – MORE details needed)**
- ***Parents/Staff need to know that there might be times throughout the year that their child's school is closed down for 1-2 days with very limited notice***
- Communication to families will be similar to that of MRSA and Whooping Cough
- Infected individuals can return to school 10 days after the symptoms started, 3 of those days have to be fever-free without fever-reducing medicine and the symptoms must have significantly improved. Quarantine persons can return to school 14 days after they had last contact with the positive case.
  - Will be supported by our extended campus/at-home learning model while out
- Communication with environmental services to facilitate rapid cleaning and disinfecting surfaces to immediately limit exposure to others
- Develop, implement, and communicate a “return to school” policy in coordination with local health experts for all recovering individuals, those returning from caring for an infected individual, and those returning to the community from high-risk locations **(IRON THIS OUT – More details needed.)**

#### **Response to sick students in school building (any sickness, not just specific to COVID-19)**

- The student will be sent home and all classroom families will be contacted. Standard e-mail communication provided to building secretaries to send out within 2-4 hours of the illness. Classroom will be deep-cleaned.

#### **Facility usage by outside organizations**

- Daycares and before/after school programming that operate in school facilities will follow state directed health measures.
- We reserve the right to limit or eliminate usage to other outside groups like youth sports, rentals, etc. as necessary for cleaning, etc.

#### **Common Space Use (hallways, restrooms, cafeterias, gyms, playgrounds)**

- Will follow as much social-distancing as possible with methodical and frequent cleaning throughout the day.

#### **Pick-up / Drop Off of Students**

- No congregating at entrance or exit areas
- Social Distancing practices should be followed
- Parents are encouraged to stay in their vehicle during pick-up and drop off

## **Visitors at School**

- All visitors, to include family members, will be restricted except for special meetings like IEP's, disciplinary hearings, etc.
  - Masks will be required of all visitors that do enter our buildings for IEP's, disciplinary hearings, etc.
- Unfortunately, as we begin the school year, we will not be able to accommodate "lunch guests" and other special drop-in guests like we used to and always enjoyed.

## **Staff Travel**

- No professional travel outside of Nebraska is authorized at this time
- We ask that all staff members that travel outside of Nebraska or our bordering states for personal reasons to let your supervisor know

## **Communication**

- Post ample signage throughout each facility directing risk-minimizing behaviors
- The importance of handwashing and surface sanitizing procedures
- Covid-19 symptoms, what to look for, and how to respond and stop the spread
- Importance of staying home when sick
- Screening and testing access, process, and requirements

## **Individual Student Situations**

- How will we handle students with no medical documentation but don't feel comfortable coming back?
- How will we handle students that have medical documentation that can't come back?

## **School Activities**

- We will follow the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) guidelines

## **Miscellaneous**

- Alternate ways to conduct Sneak-a-Peek, Curriculum Nights, etc.
- Classroom parties and celebrations, as we've had them in the past, will likely be modified (especially 1<sup>st</sup> semester)...outside?
- Movie Nights, Ice Cream Socials, and Fundraisers will likely be limited
- Large pep rallies and school assemblies, as we've had them in the past, seem doubtful this year (especially 1<sup>st</sup> semester).....outside?
- Parent-Teacher Conferences will be conducted via email, phone, and/or video chat this year due to altered school calendar, limiting of visitors, etc.

## **Wrap-Up**

- NO decisions have been made as of tonight (6/25/20)
- We will continue to work and fine-tune details on our end



- We intend to make/publish decisions for 4-6 week periods at a time as this could be an ever-changing situation. What we do in October might be different than what we do in August. March might look different than November.
- We have additional forums scheduled on July 16<sup>th</sup> and July 30<sup>th</sup> for more updates
- [lucas.mike@westside66.net](mailto:lucas.mike@westside66.net)

### **Q and A in a friendly way**

- **WE** are Westside

### **Resources**

[Return to School Roadmap](#)

[Launch Nebraska](#)

[School Resource Hub](#)

[NCAA Sport Science Institute](#)

[National Federation of State High School Associations](#)

[Education Next](#)

[National Association of Independent Schools](#)

[Protecting the Rights of Students With Disabilities as You Reopen Schools](#)