

Newman Grove Public Schools

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



General Information (Pursuant to the Federal American Rescue Plan)

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, Public Law. The ARP Act includes nearly \$122 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) Fund that allows state and local education agencies (LEAs) to take additional steps for continued safe in-person instruction and to address unfinished teaching and learning to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic. The ARP Act requires each school district that receives ARP ESSER funds to develop and make publicly available on the school district's website, no later than 30 days after receiving ARP ESSER funds, a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction, and continuity of services for all schools (Safe Return Plan). The ARP Act further requires that the district seek public comment on the Safe Return Plan and take those comments into account in finalization of the Safe Return Plan. A school district must periodically, but no less frequently than every six months through September 30, 2023, review and, as appropriate, revise its Safe Return Plan.

The purpose of this document is to provide a guide for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic as we prepare for school. The guide is structured to allow the district to adapt and respond accordingly to changing public health circumstances. The Newman Grove Return to School Plan was developed based on recommendations made by the Newman Grove Schools Board of Education and the Newman Grove Education Association. This document also contains recommendations from the Center of Disease Control and the Elkhorn Logan Valley Public Health Department which serves Madison, Stanton, Burt, and Cuming counties. These recommendations are NOT all-inclusive.

Please Note: The district plans to operate in a traditional learning environment during the 2022- 2023 school year. The only reason for any change would be if there is a state or federal mandate that requires school districts to close.

Development Team

Mikal T. Shalikow - Superintendent of School

Erin Forre - K-12 Principal

Tina Sauser - K-12 Assistant Principal and Technology Director

Jeanie McCloud - School Board President

Meghan Flood - Newman Grove Education Association President / Elementary Teacher

Teresea Wondercheck - School Nurse

Shelley Dunlap - Elementary Teacher

Andrea Miller - Science Teacher

Abby Albracht - Wellness Coordinator / Elementary Teacher

Mask Wearing

The school may mandate masks if there is a state or federal mandate that requires Nebraska school districts to mandate masks or COVID cases rise and it is believed that it will help prevent further spread and possible school closure. Otherwise, masks will be optional unless the district believes an individual has been exposed. If an individual is exposed the school would follow mandates recommended by the CDC and Elkhorn Logan Valley Health Department. The CDC encourages staff and students who have not been vaccinated to wear a mask.

Facility Physical Distancing

If the school would have a significant increase in COVID activity, the school would implement physical distancing in the facilities.

Handwashing & Respiratory Practices

Students will be asked to wash their hands frequently. In addition, the district has signage posted demonstrating proper hand washing, cough etiquette, and nose blowing. Signage is widely posted, disseminated, and encouraged through various methods of communication.

Cleaning & Maintaining Healthy Facilities (Including Improving Ventilation)

The district's janitorial staff will work diligently to continuously clean all facilities. The district is also looking into improving ventilation with their HVAC system.

Contact Tracing (Isolation & Quarantine)

The district will monitor students and staff who may have been exposed. If symptoms occur, students or staff members will be sent home. The district will not request healthy students and or staff to quarantine or isolate. Newman Grove will continue to follow sick procedures including, students and staff who are sick must stay home, students and staff must be fever free for 24 hours (without medication) before returning.

Accommodations for Children with Disabilities

Students qualifying for support through an IEP or a 504 plan will continue to receive services and learning according to their IEP. Accommodations, modifications, and related services will be provided as outlined in a student's plan during in-person learning.

Coordination with State and Local Health Officials

The superintendent has been in contact with Elkhorn Logan Valley Health Department, and the superintendent will continue to work closely with ELVHD. This would include working with them on mitigating and safety protocols including but not limited to quarantining, isolation and screening if necessary.

Vaccination Efforts

Newman Grove has provided the opportunity for onsite vaccinations for all staff. Newman Grove has information available for students and parents who wish to receive this information.

Screening of Symptoms

Parents and guardians are encouraged to screen students for COVID related symptoms at home, and to follow health department guidance regarding testing, isolation and quarantine. The district may start on site symptom checks to prevent further spread and possible school closure.

Continuity of Services

If the district is closed due to a mandatory closure by state or federal officials, all students will be provided a digital learning tool provided to ensure continuity of instruction. In addition, students will continue to be provided accommodations as stated in their IEP or 504 plans during remote learning. Parent input will be sought to develop a plan for the provision of remote IEP services and student progress will be reviewed by the student's team when in-person learning resumes.

If the school district is mandatorily closed by state or federal officials, breakfast and lunch may be provided to students through a USDA approved system. School counselors and mental health support staff will be available online by appointment for any students or staff in need of assistance.

General Guidelines (added, January 7, 2021)

Individuals who have tested positive for COVID - 19 or are symptomatic, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, are required to stay home for five days beginning with the day of the positive test or start symptoms.

After day five (5), if symptoms are gone or getting better without fever, students/staff can return to school, but must wear a mask for five (5) more days. If a fever is still present on day six (6), continue to stay home until the fever is gone and symptoms are improved. A mask is required for ten (10) Days. If students/staff choose not to wear a mask, they must stay home for the entire 10 days.

If students exhibit any of the following they should stay home: new cough, new onset of shortness of breath, or new loss of or change in taste or smell. Students with two (2) or more of the following: fever 100.4 F. or above, chills, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or fatigue.

Public Comment Requirements

July 9, 2021 - President of the NGEA was consulted and received the district's Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service.

July 12, 2021 - An opportunity for public comment was provided at the July regular scheduled board meeting.

July 12, 2021 - The Newman Grove Public School Board of Education received, reviewed and approved the Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services.

July 29, 2021 - Plan was sent to Elkhorn Logan Valley Health Department of recommendations and feedback.

August 3 and 5, 2021 - Community meetings were scheduled in conjunction with the back to school nights, this gave teacher, students, staff, community and patrons and opportunity to provide input in to the Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

August 9, 2021 - The Newman Grove Public Schools Board of Education will review the plan again with updated information and changed plan

August 10, 2021 - Plan will be provided to all Non Certified staff members, all members will have an opportunity to provide input.

August 11, 2021 - Plan will be provided to all certified teachers, all teachers will have an opportunity to provide input.

January 10, 2022 - Public Comment was allowed at the regular January board meeting.

August 1, 2022 - President of the NGEA was consulted and received the district's Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service.

August 8, 2022 - Public Comment was allowed at the regular August board meeting.

Dec. 15, 2022 - President of the NGEA was consulted and received the district's Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service.

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