

Extended Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan

Date Submitted: October 1, 2020

Name of District: Hale Area Schools

Address of District: 311 N Washington, Hale, MI 48739

District Code Number: 35020

Email Address of the District: rcolby@haleschools.net

Name of Intermediate School District: Iosco Regional Educational Service Agency

The District hereby provides assurance it will follow the requirements for an Extended Continuity of Learning Plan as mandated in HB 5911-5913 of 2020.

Hale Area Schools is currently in Phase 4 of the COVID-19 recovery and Return To School Roadmap. It is our intent to return to in-person instruction for all students on Monday, August 24, 2020.

The goal of our Extended Continuity of Learning Plan and COVID-19 Response Plan is to ensure that Hale Area Schools, to the best of our ability, provides each student with alternative modes of instruction to help them stay on pace in their learning in the event that in-person instruction is not possible. HAS recognizes that there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution; multiple means of engaging students and supporting families will be necessary and will vary by grade level and students served.

Returning To School

District Preparedness and Response Plan - posted to the district website

Return To School Operational Protocols - posted to the district website

HALE AREA SCHOOLS RETURNING TO SCHOOL OPERATIONAL PROTOCOLS

We are in the process of finalizing plans for the upcoming school year. Our plan for returning to school will be driven by our Governor's Return to School Roadmap. The focus will be on returning to school as we are accustomed to while being as safe as we can be. The Governor's Roadmap is based on six different Phases of recovery from COVID 19. Hale Area Schools is currently in Phase 4, which allows for in-person instruction with precautionary measures.

A mandated component of the Governor's Return to School Roadmap is a Preparedness and Response Plan for returning to school. Hale's plan can be found on our website haleschools.net. This plan will help answer most of your questions about returning to school.

Our plan of operation will include everything we can do to prevent infections here at school.

- All students must wear masks to ride a bus and/or enter the building.
- All staff and students will be screened daily for temperature and exposure checks upon entering the building.
- No persons unrelated to work and instruction will enter the building, including parents.

- Social distancing will be practiced throughout the day, especially during lunch and recess.
- Parents are being asked to monitor children at home and not to send children to school if they have any COVID related symptoms.
- Any person that becomes ill or shows symptoms at school will be quarantined and removed from the building as soon as possible.
- Any student or staff member having to remain home due to suspected COVID infection will be encouraged to seek testing prior to returning to school.

Pursuant to the October 14, 2020 Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) Emergency Rules, in-person work for employees is prohibited “to the extent that their work activities can feasibly be completed remotely”. An audit of all employee groups has been completed and any employee group that cannot feasibly complete their work remotely have been identified and documented why those employees must be physically present in the workplace and the aspects of their work that cannot be completed remotely.

There are responses built into our Preparedness and Response Plan that could cause us to close schools for periods of time due to identified infections. Our staff is prepared to carry on instruction during any closure period. It is likely that we will experience one or more of these closures during the school year. Don't be alarmed when a closure occurs, take comfort that we are being proactive to protect our students and families.

Parents should be prepared for some level of at-home instruction using the student Chrome Books and Google Classroom.

Our focus is planning for regular, face-to-face, instruction at school with mandated social distancing and recommended health precautions. We are preparing alternative variations for returning to school, which would include a hybrid system of in-person and remote learning and finally (worst case scenario) a continuation of remote learning only. COVID continues to be a health risk in our State. Michigan appears to be in recovery mode, but nobody can say for sure what may happen. Again, we are preparing for the best and planning for the worst.

As things stand now, our first school day for students will be Monday, August 24.

The goal of our Extended Continuity of Learning Plan and COVID-19 Response Plan is to ensure that Hale Area Schools, to the best of our ability, provides each student with alternative modes of instruction to help them stay on pace in their learning in the event that in-person instruction is not possible. HAS recognizes that there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution; multiple means of engaging students and supporting families will be necessary and will vary by grade level and students served.

Our Preparedness and Response Plan as well as our Return To School Operational Protocols have been developed in cooperation with our local Health Department Officials and are compliant with the MI Safe Schools Return to School Roadmap. We will monitor the science, data, and public health evidence to inform our decisions about instructional delivery to safely serve our students and families. The key metrics used to develop the Return To School Roadmap will be monitored weekly along with regular communication with DHD2.

Why an extended plan is needed to increase student engagement and achievement for school-year 2020-21.

Hale Area Schools plans to return to school on Monday, August 24, 2020 with in-person instruction for all students. We have made all necessary accommodations and provisions for social distancing and safety to allow for in-person teaching and learning. An Extended Continuity of Learning Plan (ECLP) is necessary to ensure student engagement in the learning process in the event of another school closure that would prohibit in-person instruction. It is also intended to be the district response for any student that would have to be excluded from the school environment for health/safety reasons. The ECLP will be our "Alternative mode of Instruction"

Educational Goals to be Achieved

1. Keep students actively engaged in the teaching and learning process, making the same progress on learning objectives as usual.
2. Follow our curriculum scope and sequencing as adopted
3. Attain appropriate academic growth in all content areas for all students(averaging a year's growth for a year's instruction) as measured by the NWEA
 - .4 - .5 grade equivalent of growth by mid-year
 - .8 - 1.0 grade equivalent of growth by the end of the school year
4. Ensure the same academic growth for our economically disadvantaged students

Instructional Delivery

Again, our plan is to return to in-person instruction with all students attending all day. The ECLP is our alternative to in-person instruction. Hale Area Schools Extended Continuity of Learning Plan includes a variety of instructional initiatives. Student instructional materials and activities will be provided in hard copy through student packets (if necessary) and on-line learning using Google Classroom. All instruction includes direct communication with the teacher using multiple venues based upon the needs and wants of each family. Our teachers use electronic communications within Google Classroom for regular 2-way interactions, as well as other social media avenues for communicating with students and parents. During times of remote access learning, the district will ensure 2-way interactions for all students. The regularity of these interactions will be monitored monthly and reported publicly as part of our Board's reaffirmation of the instructional delivery plan.

Hale Area Schools has had one-to-one technology for the past couple years. All of our students are issued a Chromebook and are familiar with using Google Classroom and other on-line learning activities. Electronic learning is a part of our regular instructional delivery even while in our normal, in-person, school experience.

Many of our secondary students participate in dual enrollment opportunities that are typically delivered in an Interactive 2-way Video Conferencing System for a blended on-line/in-person experience. These classes have transitioned to fully on-line delivery for the foreseeable future.

Our instructional delivery, whether in-person or via remote learning, will follow our adopted scope and sequencing consistent with our K-12 curriculum and adhere to district and State academic standards.

At any point during the school year that in-person teaching and learning is interrupted, our special needs students will receive instruction through the same means as mentioned above, receiving their assignments either from their general education teacher or special education teacher depending upon their IEP. Our Special Education teachers support the learning to every extent practicable without face-to-face instruction. Making use of our Chromebooks and the assistive technology available they offer, we are able to support special needs students. We fully understand that this delivery system does not completely meet the needs of all our special needs students, but under the circumstances it is the best that we can provide. We have had discussions with all parents of our special needs students to talk about our obligations as written into the IEP. We have discussed services that are not practicable via remote learning and have shared that it is the intent of the district to offer compensatory services as soon as it can be arranged. Additionally, our Special Education Teachers have written contingency plans for each special needs student speaking to the services and accommodations that are practicable in a remote learning situation.

Grades K-5

In the event that we are able to hold in-person instruction and can not have all students in attendance due to social distancing requirements the district will ensure that students in grades K-5 as well as all special needs students will attend school full time. All other students will be placed on a blended schedule, rotating day of in-person instruction and remote learning.

Benchmark Assessments

Hale Area Schools uses NWEA as a benchmark assessment. We will administer this test some time during the first two weeks of the school year. We administer the test again in January as a mid-year assessment and then again in mid-May as a final student achievement growth measure.

Equitable Access

We are a small rural school district of Northeast Michigan. However, based upon tracking and a review of Chromebook use among our students, we feel there is a high level of accessibility to connectivity. That being said, we have some very remote areas in our school district without adequate access to the internet. We have identified a small number of students and families that have limited or no internet access. We are working with those families to find alternatives to internet access and/or providing hard copies of assigned work.

We have expanded our internet capacity here at the school, adding equipment that boosts our signal hundreds of feet from the building. Parents and students are able to access our network from parking areas all around our building. We are encouraging parents to take advantage of this connectivity, especially on days when they are coming to the school to pick up meals.

No student will realize any negative impact due to the lack of access to devices or connectivity.

Communicating with Families

The need among our families here in the Hale Area School District is substantial under normal circumstances. As a school district we have a poverty level of 80%. Any school closure and the accompanying travel restrictions and economic impact creates real hardship in our area.

We push out communications to our families almost daily. We use multiple delivery methods for these messages. We use a running update posted to our home page of the district website entitled COVID 19 Operational Procedures. We make use of our All-Call system to keep students and families informed of any day-to-day changes in our operations as well as new items of information. The All-Call system sends text messages as well as voice messages to reach as many members of our district as possible.

Our goal is to ensure that every student and every parent feels well supported in our on-going efforts to maintain academic engagement. In the event of any school closure our School Social Worker will employ distance video meetings to maintain a working relationship among students on her caseload. She engages students individually as well as conducts group sessions using Google Meets.

Manage and monitor learning by pupils.

Our district will manage and monitor student learning by making the most of our Student Information System. Skyward is the SIS we use. All our families have remote access to this system and are able to track a number of data points related to their children, including individual assignments and academic progress. Our teachers enter all academic assignments into the system that are assigned to students. Teachers also enter performance scores for each student and each assignment.

In the event that we realize an extended period of remote learning, our teachers will weigh all assignments equally and use total points earned as a cumulative scoring method to judge student learning and progress. Elementary teachers will use total points earned on assignments over the marking period to arrive at a credit / no credit determination for each subject area.

Our secondary teachers will eliminate the weighting of assignments, counting all assigned work equally. Student assessment and accountability will be based on total points earned on assignments. All assignments will continue to receive a letter grade.

The exception to these accountability measures is our kindergarten teachers and students. In kindergarten we use a standards-based report card. Our kindergarten teachers will be maintaining hard copy records for all assignments sent and returned as well as records in Google Classroom that parents and administrators have access to.

Many of the details included in our plan came from the people closest to the services being provided. Information related to alternate educational delivery, grading and student accountability came from our teachers.

Name of District Leader Submitting Plan: Robert E Colby

Date Approved:

Name of ISD Superintendent/Authorizer Designee:

Date Submitted to Superintendent and State Treasurer: