

# DPS Health Plan



**Adopted August 9, 2021**

# Dickinson Public Schools

## INTRODUCTION

The Dickinson Public Schools Health and Safety Plans addresses the actions that DPS will take in conjunction with the three risk levels contained within the district's Continuity of Services Plan. Those three risk levels identified are as follows:

**Risk Level 3** is the level of significant transmission and high risk for exposure due to widespread community spread of COVID-19. In Level 3, DPS will incorporate significant mitigation strategies that may include the closing of schools to all but those deemed as essential workers, and a shift to remote learning for all students.

**Risk Level 2** indicates a level of heightened exposure risk and transmission. In Level 2, DPS may shift to a hybrid schedule with students alternating between face-to face and online learning. Other enhanced mitigation strategies may include use of approved face coverings, enhanced social distancing protocols, health screening, rapid testing, robust contact tracing and the increased cleaning/disinfecting of high-touch surfaces and shared spaces. School specific protocols will be developed by each building's Leadership Team. Accommodations will be made for staff and students who are considered at high risk due to preexisting conditions. Those who are sick, or who are experiencing symptoms, will be asked to stay home and seek testing for COVID-19.

**Risk Level 1** indicates a low risk level for exposure or transmission of the COVID-19 virus. In Level 1, DPS will return to normal face-to-face instruction on a regular 5-day schedule with limited safety protocols. Limited protocols may be identified by the school board and the building's Leadership Team and may include some social distancing, modified schedules, disinfecting practices, etc. In Level 1, most normal activities will resume while practicing standard precautions and awareness of health guidelines such as routine hand washing, stay home when sick, cover your cough, etc.

Each level of guidance after Risk Level 1 becomes progressively more restrictive. Every level strives to protect student and staff health, and outlines mitigation strategies. The decision to move from one level to the next will be made by the Dickinson School Board in consultation with the superintendent and Southwestern District Health officials. In making its decisions, the board may consider the number of cases reported, positivity rates, testing capacity, hospital capacity, occurrence of point-source outbreaks, level of community spread, vulnerable populations, and the availability of personal protection equipment (PPE), etc.

## Guiding Principles

Dickinson Public Schools created the following Health and Safety Plan utilizing the following guiding principles:

1. Dickinson Public Schools (DPS) will ensure high levels of learning for all DPS students.
2. Dickinson Public Schools will provide rigorous and relevant learning experiences regardless if those experiences are in person (face-to-face), virtual (online/distance) or a hybrid of both.
3. Dickinson Public Schools will take practical steps to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus

while maintaining a focus on student learning.

4. Dickinson Public schools will act to ensure a Safe, Supportive, and Collaborative culture for all students, staff, and patrons.
5. The district's understanding of, and responses to, the COVID-19 pandemic may change throughout the school year. When making decisions, DPS will consider the most current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), current spread in and around the school community as reported by NDDoH, guidance from Southwestern Health Department, and what the board believes to be in the best health interests of district's students, staff, and families.

## Resources

ND Department of Public Instruction - <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/parentscommunity/nddpi-updates-and-guidance-covid-19>

ND Department of Health - <https://www.health.nd.gov/diseases-conditions/coronavirus>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

## Best Intentions

Despite taking reasonable precautions, Dickinson Public Schools cannot guarantee that our schools will be without risk as it relates to COVID-19. The virus may be present on our buses, in our classrooms, and at our activities. In certain situations, social distancing will not be possible in a school setting. Our actions, as outlined in this plan, cannot guarantee that a student or staff member will not be exposed to the virus. Because of this, we ask that our students and staff abide the following recommendations:

### Protect Yourself and Others

#### *Wash your hands often*



- Students are encouraged to wash their hands often throughout the day.
- Wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

#### *Avoid close contact*



- Whenever feasible, keep social distance (at least 6 feet apart) from others. Visual cues/reminders will be provided to help individuals understand social distancing protocols.
- Alternate or modified schedules, adjustments to use of common areas, use of outdoor spaces and other actions that increase physical separation may be considered.
- The sharing of instructional materials should be limited as much as possible.
- Physical separation on busing will be recommended but cannot be guaranteed.

- Entry to school buildings, by visitors, shall be restricted to those essential to the instructional function or maintenance of the building. Nonessential visitors may be limited beyond the front office, without the permission of the building principal.
- Parents/Guardians may accompany their child to the school but are encouraged not enter classrooms without permission of the teacher. Parents/guardians are encouraged to remain in common areas.

*Cover coughs and sneezes*



- Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw tissues away and wash hands or use hand sanitizer to prevent spread.

*Clean and disinfect*



- School staff will clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.
- Disinfect shared materials (the use of which will be limited whenever feasible).
- Classrooms cleaned and disinfected by custodial staff following approved protocols.

*Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others.*



- Depending on local conditions, the wearing of face coverings may be deemed necessary by the School Board. The decision to require facemasks will be made in collaboration with the Southwestern District Health Officials.
- Students who choose to wear a face covering are free to do so.

*Monitor your health daily*



- Be alert for symptoms. Watch for a fever, cough, or shortness of breath.
- Parents are asked to screen their children each day before sending them to school.
- Staff and students who are sick should stay home.
- Individuals who are experiencing symptoms, or who have come in close contact with an individual with COVID, are encouraged to get tested for the COVID-19 virus.
- Temperatures of symptomatic students or staff may be taken at the school office.
  - Symptomatic students will be isolated, and their guardians contacted.



## Risk Level 1/ The New Normal

*DPS schools will reopen but incorporate health guidance and protocols to try and mitigate risks and limit the spread of COVID-19:*

<p>COVID-19 Response Plan:</p>	<p>The district will designate an individual as the official contact that will be notified by public health officials of COVID-19 cases occurring within the district’s staff and student population. The district contact will notify the building principal of COVID-19 cases within their building’s staff and student population</p> <p>All contact tracing in Level 1, and associated communication, will be the responsibility of state health officials.</p> <p><b>Any staff or student who has tested positive for COVID-19 must secure and present a release from their State Health Case Manager before returning to school.</b></p> <p>At each school within the district, the Building Leadership Team will develop a safety preparedness and response plan with the objective to ensure a Safe, Supportive, and Collaborative learning environment for all students, staff and patrons. Each building’s <b>Level 1</b> plan will include the following:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Each Building Leadership Team will identify a process to identify Students &amp; Staff at High Risk in accordance with CDC recommendations.</p> <p>This process will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Back to School and enrollment processes that include questions asking families to identify if their child is at-risk, based on a health professionals’ diagnosis. This information will be provided to the building principal who will contact the family and discuss the opportunity for distance/online learning.</li><li>• Staff members who believe that they are at-risk based on a health professional’s diagnosis, will be invited to communicate with their building principal. The building principal will work in partnership with the HR department and the employee to coordinate feasible adjustments to the employee’s work schedule or workplace when possible.</li></ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Each Building Leadership Team will identify a process for monitoring students and staff for symptoms of COVID-19 that may</p>
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include the taking of staff and student temperatures. As a part of this plan, it is expected that each staff member and parent will self-monitor their own, or their child's health. While at school, students and staff will follow healthy hygiene practices including, best practices for hand washing and use of hand sanitizer throughout the day.

In the event that a student or staff member exhibits COVID-19 symptoms or becomes sick at school, the following protocols will be followed:

- Student
  - Direct / escort the child to the designated location.
  - The child shall be provided a facial covering and isolated in the designated space at each building.
  - Parent / guardian will be contacted to pick up their child.
- Staff
  - Inform your supervisor immediately and wear a facemask / shield until they can be replaced if supervising students at that time.
  - Leave the school building/grounds and consult with a health care professional.
- Multiple students in a single classroom
  - Building administration will consult with the assistant superintendent and Southwestern District Health Officials to determine an appropriate response.
- Any individual exhibiting symptoms is strongly encouraged to get tested for the COVID-19 virus.

Each school will maintain a response kit supplied with PPE for staff to use when responding to a child who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms. Before the start of the year, staff will be notified of the location of the response kits and provided training on the proper use of the PPE. Said training will include the appropriate steps to be taken after being exposed to an individual who is exhibiting symptoms of the COVID-19 virus.

The following CDC recommendations will be followed in the event that a staff member is exposed to an individual exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms: "workers may be permitted to continue work following potential exposure to COVID-19, provided they remain symptom-free and additional precautions are taken to protect them and the community." Those precautions include checking temperatures and assessing symptoms of the employee, ideally before entering the facility or operation. If no fever (>100.4 F) or COVID-19 symptoms are present, employees should self-monitor for onset of symptoms.

	<p>Any individual who has been exposed to the COVID-19 virus is strongly encouraged to get tested for the virus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Each Building Leadership Team will develop protocols that provide feasible social distancing during common times/congregate settings. (e.g. start of school, passing times, lunch periods) When feasible, protocols will include visual helps/reminders for students to reinforce social distancing protocols.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Each Building Leadership Team will develop guidelines for providing support and training for staff and students on the school Health and Safety plan.</li> </ul> <p>In an attempt to limit student and staff exposure to the COVID-19 virus each Building Leadership Team will develop protocols for limiting exposure from nonessential visitors and volunteers.</p>
Classroom Spaces:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Protocols to limit the use of shared student learning devices -iPad, Chromebook or laptop, materials and supplies. A part of this plan will include the use of 1-to-1 devices.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Each Building Leadership Team will develop a plan to provide training for all instructional staff on Chapter 8 of <i>The New Art and Science of Teaching</i> book. This training will focus on helping teachers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish rules and procedures.</li> <li>- Organize the physical layout of the classroom.</li> <li>- Demonstrate a high degree of withitness.</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Increased utilization of outdoor learning spaces when feasible.</li> </ul>
School Spaces:	<p>Dickinson Public School recognizes the important role that good nutrition plays in a child’s health and ability to learn. Schools will provide students access to a healthy breakfast and lunch that meet the USDA school lunch guidelines. The District’s Dietitian will work with the Southwestern District Health staff to create guidelines for hygiene practices that include the manner and frequency of hand-washing, use of gloves and wearing of face coverings and provide each kitchen staff training on the implementation of the identified guidelines while preparing and serving meals. Furthermore, the District’s Dietitian will work with Southwestern District Health officials, along with other state and federal officials, to create and communicate safe protocols including the use of self-serve food distribution stations. In preparing these guidelines, guidance from the CDC will be followed when feasible.</p>

The District Dietitian will also assist building staff in creating feasible disinfecting protocols for food prep, serving/eating, and dishwashing areas.

□ The Building Leadership Team will collaborate with the Head Custodian to create protocols for cleaning/disinfecting learning spaces, frequently touched surfaces and other areas used by students and staff. These protocols will be developed based on the unique needs of each school building and CDC recommendations

Custodial staff in each building will work with administration, in consultation with Southwestern District Health staff, to determine the most prudent path forward in the event that a building is exposed to an infected individual. When feasible, the following CDC guidelines will be followed:

- When cleaning an exposed area, staff should wear a mask when performing any task that could aerosolize the virus.
- **Open outside doors and windows** to increase air circulation in the area.
- **Wait 24 hours** before you clean or disinfect. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- Clean and disinfect **all areas used by the person who is sick**, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment, etc.
- Vacuum the space if needed. Use vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particular air (HEPA) filter, if available.
  - Do not vacuum a room or space that has people in it. Wait until the room or space is empty to vacuum, such as at night, for common spaces, or during the day for private rooms.
- Once the area has been **appropriately disinfected**, it **can be opened for use**.
  - **Workers without close contact** with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.
- If **more than 7 days** since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
  - Continue routine cleaning and disinfection. This includes everyday practices that businesses and communities normally use to maintain a healthy environment.

	<p>□ The Building Leadership Team will collaborate with the transportation provider to determine a workable student drop-off and pick-up schedule that will support social distancing to the greatest extent feasible.</p> <p>Transportation staff will disinfect busses daily. Drivers will wipe down and disinfect frequently touched handrails/surfaces at the entrance to the bus.</p>
<p><b>Priorities in Risk Level 1:</b></p>	<p>* Ensure students and staff who are sick or showing symptoms stay at home.</p> <p>* Implement social distancing and cohort groups where reasonable.</p>
<p>Moving From Risk Level 1 to Risk Level 2.</p>	<p>The decision to move from the Level 1 to Level 2 will be made by the School Board in consultation with the Southwestern District Health Officials. In making this decision, consideration will be given to official orders /recommendations from federal, state and local governmental leaders, and the most relevant data on COVID-19 trends in the Dickinson area. When making the decision to move from Level 1 to Level 2, every reasonable effort will be made to minimize the impact of the decision on the patrons of the community while maintaining a focus on keeping students and staff safe from the spread of the virus. Depending on conditions, a move to Level 2 could occur in a single school, within a cluster of schools or district wide.</p>

## Risk Level 2 - Hybrid

***Based on guidance from health officials, DPS may decide to shift to a hybrid schedule where students would attend on alternating days and learn part-time in school and part-time at home. Depending on conditions, hybrid schedules could be implemented in a single school, within a cluster of schools or districtwide. Here is what to expect:***

<p>COVID-19 Response Plan:</p>	<p>At each school within the district, the Building Leadership Team will develop a safety preparedness and response plan with the objective to ensure a Safe, Supportive, and Collaborative learning environment for all students, staff and patrons. Each building’s Risk Level 2 plan will incorporate the same safety protocols that are identified in the Risk Level 1 plan, (See Risk Level 1) in addition to the following enhanced protocols.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Each Building Leadership Team will identify a process to rapidly notify staff and parents of exposures in the school setting as directed by state health officials.</li> </ul>
<p>Classroom Spaces:</p>	<p>Students will attend school on a hybrid schedule (an alternate days schedule). DPS will make every effort to try to ensure children from the same families attend school on the same days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Approximately 50% of the students (all A-K last names) will attend school on Mondays/Wednesdays, and every other Friday with the remaining 50% of students (all L-Z last names) attending Tuesdays/Thursdays and every other Friday.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teachers will utilize the Learning Management System (LMS) while presenting their in-person (F2F) lessons. This will accommodate the anticipation that some students will need to be absent from the F2F class due to Covid-19 restrictions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Students will receive direct instruction on the days that they are at school. Students will work independently to practice concepts and grow mastery when they are working at home. In general, students will not be learning new material while working independently at home.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Staff and students may be expected to wear face coverings while in the school building except for those designated times/learning experiences where face coverings are not possible.</li> </ul>
<p>School Spaces:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In an attempt to limit exposure, Building Leadership Teams will develop plans that allow students to move in cohort groups where</li> </ul>

feasible. School schedules may be adjusted to reduce the number of students passing in hallways.

School events, assemblies and gatherings may be changed or cancelled to limit large gatherings.

Dickinson Public School recognizes the important role that good nutrition plays in a child's health and ability to learn. Schools will provide access to a healthy breakfast and lunch that meet the USDA school lunch guidelines to those students scheduled to attend school in person on that given day. Lunch times may be staggered to reduce the number of students in the cafeteria and allow for social distancing. Salad bars and self-serve options will be limited or eliminated. Some students may be permitted/assigned to eat in other areas of the school or outside, weather permitting.

The custodial staff in each building will work with administration, in consultation with Southwestern District Health staff, to determine enhanced cleaning/disinfecting protocols of learning spaces, frequently touched surfaces and other areas used by students and staff based on the unique needs of each school building.

Bus transportation will be provided for students on their scheduled school day. This will result in approximately 50% of the scheduled riders on a bus at a time. Seating assignments will be modified to provide increased social distancing when feasible. The following protocols will be put in place for students while riding on the bus:

- Whenever feasible, social distancing practices will be employed.
- Staff and students will wear approved face coverings while on the bus.
- Busses will load from the back to the front.
- Seating charts/assigned seats will be utilized on each route bus.
- Some windows will be left open whenever the weather permits. Passengers will be encouraged to dress appropriately to permit this practice to continue even during cool weather.

Transportation staff will ensure that each bus is disinfected twice a day (following the completion of the morning routes and the afternoon routes).

Drivers will wipe down and disinfect frequently touched handrails/surfaces at the entrance to the bus.

When cleaning, staff should wear a mask when performing any task that could aerosolize the virus.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Building Leadership Teams will develop enhanced utilization of outdoor learning spaces when feasible including increased opportunities for outdoor recesses/activities.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Building Leadership Teams will develop enhanced protocols for use of congregate spaces/activities. (e.g. cafeterias, common areas, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A plan to implement sneeze guards and other enhanced protective measures to protect staff and students will be considered where feasible.</li> </ul>
<b>Priorities in Risk Level 2:</b>	* Maximize social distancing cohort groups by reducing the number of students in school buildings.
Moving From Risk Level 2 to Risk Level 3.	The decision to move from Risk Level 2 to Risk Level 3 will be made by the District School Board in consultation with the Southwestern District Health officials. In making this decision, consideration will be given to official orders /recommendations from federal, state and local governmental leaders, and the most relevant data on COVID-19 trends in the Dickinson area. When making the decision to move from Risk Level 2 to Risk Level 3, every reasonable effort will be made to minimize the impact of the decision on the patrons of the community while maintaining a focus on keeping students and staff safe from the spread of the virus. Depending on conditions, a move to the Red risk level could occur in a single school, within a cluster of schools or district wide.

## Risk Level 3: Learn at Home and Stay Safe

*In extreme conditions, which could include a local or state stay-at-home order, DPS will close schools and shift to remote learning for all students. Based on local conditions, DPS could close a single school, a cluster of schools or close all schools. Here is what to expect:*

Remote Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Implement the DPS Distance Learning Plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop a clear communication plan to ensure that all students and families stay informed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create protocols to provide identified students with some face-to-face learning opportunities.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a plan to provide support and training for parents who need help accessing technology, tools and online curriculum.</li> </ul>
Moving from Risk Level 3 to Risk Level	<input type="checkbox"/> The District’s School Board will work closely with District administration, Southwestern District Health officials and the Building

2.	Leadership team to make the decision on when it is best to move from Risk Level 3 to Risk Level 2. The District’s School Board will follow the guidelines contained in the DPS Continuity of Services Plan as well as the most recent guidance from Southwestern District Health Officials and the North Dakota’s Governor’s and DPI office.
School Spaces:	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed to the general public except by special appointment.  Dickinson Public School recognizes the important role that good nutrition plays in a child’s health and ability to learn. Schools will continue to provide students access to a healthy breakfast and lunch that meet the USDA school lunch guidelines by utilizing a curbside pick-up model. The District’s Dietitian will work with the Southwestern District Health staff to create guidelines for hygiene practices that include the manner and frequency of hand-washing, use of gloves and wearing of face coverings and provide each kitchen staff training on the implementation of the identified guidelines while preparing and serving meals.  <input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to school nutrition program utilizing a curbside pickup model at Dickinson Middle School, Lincoln Elementary School and Heart River Elementary School.
<b>Priorities in Risk Level 3:</b>	* Reduce the risk of further community spread by closing schools.