

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



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Introduction

On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plans (ARP) Act was signed into law. In it, the U.S. Department of Education is providing an additional \$121.9 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III Fund). This legislation will award grants to state educational agencies (SEAs) for providing local educational agencies (LEAs) with emergency relief funds to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools across the nation.

Wisconsin will receive \$1,540,784,854 in ESSER III funds from the Act, with 90 percent being awarded to school districts with amounts determined in proportion to the amount of Title I, Part A funds they received in summer 2020 from funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The remaining funds will be used for state-level activities to address issues caused by COVID-19.

This plan describes how the LEA or district will provide a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools, including those that have already returned to in-person instruction.

Maintaining Health and Safety

Overview

A district's plan must include how it will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and LEA staff, and the extent to which it has adopted policies or practices and a description of any such policies or practices on each of the CDC's safety recommendations including the universal and correct wearing of masks; modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding); hand washing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation; contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the state, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments; diagnostic and screening testing; efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible; appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies or practices; and coordination with state and local health officials.

Description on maintaining the safety of staff and students

The Prairie Farm School District began the 2021-22 school year with a five-day week and have continued that into the 2022-2023 school year. The district will utilize a face-to-face instructional model and will continue to adhere to the following health protocols. Accordingly, the District will:

- publish and post the COVID-19 informational fliers provided by the Public Health Department,
- share the Prairie Farm School District Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan with students, staff and families via the district website,
- encourage staff members and students to stay home or go home if they are showing COVID-19 symptoms or if they have tested positive for COVID-19,
- continue to space students out in classrooms,
- communicate with public health when there is a positive COVID-19 case in the building,
- provide sanitizing stations throughout the building and conduct a schedule of regular cleaning and sanitizing of high touch points, as necessary.

Description to continue to provide services regardless of the mode of instruction (for example, health and food services if the LEA must pivot to virtual or hybrid instruction)

The Prairie Farm School District offered in-person learning five days a week according to the Board adopted 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 Academic Year Calendar. The school district has also provided families the option to enroll their students in virtual learning on a semester by semester basis. In the event of school closure due to the pandemic, the district purchased devices for all students to continue virtual learning. Students in grades K-1 will be provided with an iPad and students in grades 2-12 will be provided with a Chromebook. If students do not have access to the internet at home the district will provide hotspots to allow for access to necessary learning materials.

For the 2021-2022 school year, regardless of the mode of instruction, the Prairie Farm School District continued to provide meals under the community provision. During the 2022-2023 school year the district transitioned back to traditional food service provision. If school is closed due to a pandemic, the district will assess its ability to distribute meals utilizing the same process it used during the spring of 2020.

The Prairie Farm School District employs a school nurse who will continue to offer health services in-person or virtually. The school district also partners with Northlakes Community Clinic to provide mental health support for families.

Mitigation Measures

Optional wearing of masks

The Prairie Farm School Board stated that the wearing of masks is optional for students, staff, and visitors while on school property. The board reserves the right to require the wearing of masks dependent on COVID activity in individual classrooms or schools, and the level of COVID transmission within the district's geographic boundaries, or in Barron County.

Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing

Staff will maximize the use of classroom space in order to keep the largest amount of space possible between students and their peers while seated at their desks, if needed.

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette is taught to students with high emphasis in the primary grade levels. Signage is posted throughout buildings as reminders of handwashing and respiratory etiquette.

In addition, hand sanitization stations/liquids are available in all classrooms.

Students are encouraged to wash their hands prior to lunch and snack times.

Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Enhanced sanitation procedures have been implemented and continue focusing on high-touch surfaces. The District uses cleaning solutions that are rated to kill the SARS virus.

The majority of classrooms have had new filtration units installed in order to increase air flow, improve filtration and improve the control of the filtration remotely.

All classrooms, common areas, and buses are cleaned daily.

Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments

The Prairie Farm School District will continue transparent reporting to the public of COVID-19 cases and staff quarantines within the District when applicable. To provide transparent reporting for our stakeholders, the District maintained a COVID-19 case spreadsheet throughout the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school year and have continued to do so for the 2022-23 school year.

The Prairie Farm School District will guide parents/students, employees, and contractors on screening protocols. Each school will continue to provide current health information to staff, students, and families about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, when they should stay home, and when they can return to school.

The Prairie Farm School District will receive guidance from the Barron County Health Department to determine length of quarantine and need for modification of quarantine dates based on new information as it arises.

The district will monitor not only positive cases of students and staff but will also monitor positive cases within the home which impact students and staff who are determined to be close contacts to the positive case.

Diagnostic and screening testing

The Prairie Farm School District recommends students and staff get tested for COVID by their medical provider, local pharmacy or community testing site, when necessary. If students or staff are experiencing symptoms it is highly recommended that they are tested prior to their return. Should the District see the need for on-site testing, students could have the option to be tested with parent permission when they are identified as close contacts or become symptomatic. The Prairie Farm School District has at home tests available for students or staff.

Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible

All eligible staff employed in 2020-2021 were provided the opportunity to be vaccinated during the Spring of 2021. All eligible staff were also offered the opportunity to receive the booster vaccination at the end of October 2021 and at the beginning of November 2022. Students ages 12 and up were offered the opportunity to be vaccinated in November 2021. The district will continue to offer opportunities for vaccination as recommended by Public Health.

Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies and practices

When circumstances require specific policies or procedures designed to protect the health and safety

of students, 504 and IEP teams will determine if modifications and/or reasonable accommodations are needed for individual students with disability-related issues.

Coordination with state and local health officials

The CDC recommends that all decisions about implementing school-based strategies should be made locally, collaborating with local health officials who can help determine the level of transmission in the community. The Prairie Farm School District continues to work with Barron County Public Health to implement mitigating strategies for the safety of students and staff.

Continuity of Services

Overview

Districts must describe how the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

District response on continuity of services

The District will provide for continuity of services as follows:

Student Academic Needs

The District continued to provide full-time, in-person instruction during the fall of 2022, with limited exception. Additional instructional personnel have been added to staffing to implement further academic recovery efforts in core curriculum areas. The Prairie Farm School District hired an additional academic interventionist along with an additional special education teacher. These specialists will assist students with the highest level of need based on local assessments and staff observations.

Student Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs

Students will receive additional training/presentations from professionals about how to develop and maintain resilience in difficult times. Presentations will be made to students according to age/grade level. The Prairie Farm School District will also continue to partner with Northlakes Community Clinic to provide behavioral health support to students who have been referred.

Other Student Needs (which may include student health and food services)

Food service provided meals under the community provision through the 2021-2022 school year. Meal provision transitioned back to the traditional food service program during the 2022-2023 school year. Meals will be provided for all students following the National School Lunch Program guidelines.

Staff Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs

Staff will receive additional training/presentations from professionals about how to develop and maintain resilience in difficult times. Staff will receive training during staff inservice days. The staff's social, emotional, and mental health needs may also be addressed through the Employee Assistance Program provided through the District insurance program.

Other Staff Needs

The District will follow national, state, and local governing agencies' laws and directives concerning staff employment and benefits.

Periodic Review

Overview

Districts are required to review and, as appropriate, revise their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023, including seeking public input and taking such input into account in determining whether to revise the plan and, if revisions are determined necessary, on the revisions it makes to its plan.

District response on ensuring periodic updates to its plan

The Prairie Farm School District will periodically review and, as needed, revise the plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. The plan will be reviewed at least every six months, and the school system will seek and take into account public input during the review process. Plan revisions will address updated CDC and County Public Health guidance on safely reopening schools if any are issued.

Public Input

Overview

The ARP Act requires that school districts make their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan available to the public online and that the plans be in an understandable and uniform format; to the extent practicable, are written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent. Before making its plan publicly available, school districts must seek public comment on the plan and develop the plan after taking into account public comment.

District response on public input in the development of its plan

The Prairie Farm School District has taken the following steps to make its plan available to the public:

- The plan is posted at <http://www.prairiefarm.k12.wi.us/cms/One.aspx?portalId=104659&pageId=27315823>
- The plan is available in multiple languages through the use of our web provider powered by Google Translate.
- The plan was approved at the Prairie Farm School District Board of Education meeting on December 20, 2021. An opportunity for public comment was available during the November 15, 2021 Board meeting.
- The plan was approved at the Prairie Farm School District Board of Education meeting on June 20, 2022. An opportunity for public comment was available during the May 16, 2022 Board meeting.
- The plan was approved at the Prairie Farm School District Board of Education meeting on December 19, 2022. An opportunity for public comment was available during the November 28, 2022 Board meeting.
- The plan was approved at the Prairie Farm School District Board of Education meeting on June 19, 2023. An opportunity for public comment was available during the May 15, 2023 Board Meeting.
- Upon request, a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA may be provided with the plan in an alternative format accessible by contacting our district office.