



New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva Public Schools

Independent School District No. 2168

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Empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed.

Our Mission

Empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed.

Our Vision

To be the school district of choice, inspiring excellence in academics, arts, and activities.

Planning for the Start of the School Year

Dale Carlson, Superintendent
July 2020

Our vision as a school community is to *be the school district of choice, inspiring excellence in academics, arts, and activities*. We strive to do this every day by *empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed*.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) provided public school districts on June 18 with its [2020-21 Planning Guidance for Minnesota Public Schools](#) for preparing for the 2020-2021 school year. School and district administrators are directed to develop three contingency plans to prepare for the 2020-21 school year using the three scenarios described below:

Scenario 1: In-person learning for all students. In this planning scenario, schools should create as much space between students and teachers as is feasible during the day, but will not be held strictly to enforcing 6 feet of social distancing during primary instructional time in the classroom. Activities and extracurricular programming should continue to follow the COVID-19 Prevention Guidance for Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs (PDF) at <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/socialdistance.pdf> This scenario may be implemented if state COVID-19 metrics continue to stabilize and/or improve. All requirements in this guidance apply to scenario 1.

Scenario 2: Hybrid model with strict social distancing and capacity limits. In this planning scenario, schools must limit the overall number of people in school facilities and on transportation vehicles to 50% maximum occupancy. Sufficient social distancing with at least 6 feet between people must occur at all times. If distancing cannot be achieved in a space or on a transportation vehicle, the number of occupants must be reduced. Schools must also include plans for contactless pick-up and/or delivery of meals and school materials for days that students and staff are not in the school building, as well as implementation of a school-age care program for critical workers. This scenario may be implemented if COVID-19 metrics worsen at the local, regional, or statewide level. Scenario 2 may also be implemented within a school if they experience clusters of cases within a classroom or the school.

Scenario 3: Distance learning only. This scenario may be implemented if local, regional, or statewide COVID-19 metrics worsen significantly enough to require the suspension of in-person learning. The requirements in this guidance regarding in-person protections would not apply to the general school community, as students and staff would be utilizing distance learning and would not be gathering in groups on school grounds. However, schools may be open to provide emergency child care or other functions.

School districts have been informed that Governor Walz's Office, in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), will determine and announce the scenario model under which schools may reopen for the 2020-21 school year based on state COVID19 metrics by the week of July 27. At the time of submitting this article, no further decisions had been provided to school districts. Future decisions to increase or loosen restrictions will be made if COVID-19 metrics at the local, regional, or state level worsen or improve. Schools may

choose to implement strategies that are more restrictive than the scenario established by the state, but may not choose to implement plans for a scenario that is less restrictive.

To better prepare for the Governor's decision as to which scenario will be implemented at the start of the 2020-2021 school year, a study committee made-up of teachers, principals, and other staff resources, has started its work of developing a plan to be ready for implementation in the fall. The committee is focusing its efforts on Scenario #2 (Hybrid Model) based on a belief schools will continue to have to operate within strict social distancing and other health and safety guidelines that will make the option of returning 100% of our students to school very challenging. However, the committee acknowledges any of the three scenarios could happen. By planning for the Hybrid model, it is believed that both "in-person" and "distance-learning" instructional delivery components will be addressed.

More to come . . . stay tuned!

A reminder that the School Board conducts its regular monthly meeting on the third Monday of each month. The location of the meeting is rotated monthly between the NRHEG Secondary School Media Center in New Richland and the NRHEG Elementary School Media Center in Ellendale. However, due to construction, the monthly Board meeting will be held at the Secondary School on July 20 and August 17. Until further notice, Board members have the option to attend the meeting remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There will be a minimum of one Board member and myself at the designated site. All COVID-19 CDC safety guidelines will be enforced for any public attending. Members of the public may view the Board meeting live via YouTube by clicking on the link <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeJxHiECoUTI90UwNd2p0KA>. Recordings of the Board meeting are available by going to the same link as above. You may also access the link by going to the District's website at <https://www.nrheg.k12.mn.us/pages/NRHEG>. At this time, anyone wishing to make a public comment to the Board will have to attend in person at the designated site.

We celebrate together in the accomplishments of our students because we are in this journey together as a school community. Thank you for all you do to support NRHEG Public Schools and our students!