

Bison School District Safe Return to In- Person Instruction Plan

Mission Statement

The Bison School District wants students, staff, and community members to be safe from communicable diseases such as Covid-19. We believe that the environment at school gives students the best chance to succeed academically, and meet their social and emotional needs. We will need a team effort from parent(s)/guardian(s), school personnel, and students to make school a safe environment for learning during the 2021-2022 school year. Our Safe Return plan outlines strategies that will be incorporated for the upcoming school year regarding social distancing, health screening, building access, food service practices, transportation, and sanitizing protocols. This is a living document that is subject to change based on the Covid-19 pandemic in our region and state. The Bison Board of Education, along with administration, South Dakota Department of Health, and the South Dakota Department of Education will work together to adapt this document throughout the school year.

Back to School committee members

Marilyn Azevedo, Supt., Arla Kopren, Board Member, Christi Ryen, AG Teacher and Technology Coordinator, Christy Kolb, School Counselor, Julia Brixey, Special Education Teacher, Carrie Beer, Fifth Grade Teacher, Stacy Kvale, Fourth Grade Teacher, Grant Lolley, 7-12 Social Studies Teacher, and Alan Grinsteinner, 7-12 Science Teacher. School Board approved of this plan on

Parent Expectations

- Parents are important to help keep the school environment safe for students.
- Parents are expected to keep sick children at home.
- The Bison School District recommends that parent(s)/guardian(s) check each of their student's temperature daily and that their student feels well prior to going to school in order to prevent prolonged remote at-home learning. Please refer to student checklist sent home with this plan.
 - If a student has a fever over 100, the South Dakota Department of Health recommends students stay home for **one day (24 hours) without fever-reducing medication**
- Parents need to make sure that their child(ren) practice(s) good hygiene skills such as washing their hands after using the restroom and touching surfaces that have been touched by other individuals.
- Parents need to make sure that their child(ren) properly hydrated themselves throughout the day by having your student bring a sanitized water container to school to ensure proper hydration. Water bottles should be brought home and cleaned at least once a week.
- We recommend that parent(s)/guardian(s) and community members use hand sanitizer when coming into the building for extra-curricular activities and other school functions such as parent/teacher conferences. Sanitizer stations will be provided at school entrances for these events.

Students Expectations

- The Bison School District reserves the right to check student's temperatures as needed. If a student has a temperature over 100 degrees, parents will be notified and they will be sent home.
- Students need to use good hygiene practices such as sanitizing hands before entering classroom, while entering and exiting restrooms, before and after recess(es),

- before and after eating, and before and after activity practice/competitions.
- Students have the option to wear a mask to school, but it is not mandated or required.
- Students need to practice social distancing as much possible on school buses, classrooms, cafeterias, and other rooms throughout the school.
- Students will stay to the right in the hallways unless they are accessing their lockers and be at least an arm's length distance apart.
- Students are encouraged to stay with their class as much as possible throughout the school day.
- Students will sit in their teacher assigned seat in each classroom.
- Students who go off campus for lunch or other reasons will be expected to sanitize hands upon re-entry to the building. When in the hallway after lunch please do not congregate in one location, spread out as much as possible.
- Students should use water bottle filling stations or classroom sinks for water.

School District Personnel Expectations

- Bison School District personnel will check temperatures of themselves daily and will model good hygiene.
- Bison School District personnel will create an environment in school that will reduce the spread of germs.
- Bison School District personnel will educate students on proper health etiquette throughout the year.
- Bison School District will socially distance students as much as possible throughout the school day.

Safety Protocol and Procedures by School Personnel

- Parents and students are encouraged not to arrive before 7:55AM or as close to that time as possible.
- Staff will use their key fob to enter the building not their fingerprints to avoid unnecessary touching of surfaces.
- School doors will open at 7:30 am for those who need supervision in the morning due to work commitments.
 - K-5th grade students will enter via the gym entrance and report to the cafeteria,
 - 6-12th grade students will enter through the main entrance, go to their lockers, and report to their first period class.
- Students will be socially distanced as much as possible in the classroom, hallways, and cafeteria.
- Surfaces that are touched by students will be sanitized daily by school personnel.
- School transportation will be sanitized by school personnel every time it is used.
- Students will be released in intervals to eat as a class during lunch. Students will be seated in tables for lunch with their classmates and spread out as much as possible.
 - K-3-11:00-11:25AM
 - 4-6-11:25-11:55AM
 - 7-12-12:00-12:32PM
 Classes will stagger their dismissal to the cafeteria to help students' social distance.

Social and Emotional Mental Health Needs

- Our school counselor will be available to meet with individual students and groups who are struggling with issues.
- If our Safeschool should go to remote learning, our counselor will check in with students via zoom.
- Our counselor will make referrals to other mental health professionals for students who need further assistance.
- Our counselor and administrators will also check in on teachers and staff to be sure they are not having any issues they may need help with.
- Our school counselor will be using an SEL (social emotion learning) program with students struggling with mental health issues.

Fever Protocol in School

- If a student has a fever of over 100 in the school, student will be given a mask to wear, isolated, temperature rechecked, and parent called.
- If a student is found to have a fever in class, the teacher will call office to notify of student arrival to the main office where their temperature will be checked.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by office staff that the student has a temperature and will need to get the student as soon as possible.
- The students will remain out of school until they are fever free for 1 day (24 hours) without fever reducing medication.
- Our district does not participate in the BinaxNOW testing program or the Sentinel testing program. We do not have a school nurse and our board voted not to participate in the testing programs offered by the state.
- We do coordinate and make referrals to our Horizon Health Clinic in Bison. If a student is showing symptoms, we encourage them to go there and be tested. They also offer vaccinations for our teachers and students should they desire one.

Phases for Instruction

Depending on the circumstances in the Bison School District, we need to be prepared to implement each of the following phases listed below. As the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic evolves, the SD DOH and SD DOE will continue to provide updated guidance and recommendations to school districts on navigating the academic, social, and emotional effects on students and employees. We need to be able to transition back and forth between phases as conditions change and to transition quickly. Administration and the Bison Board of Education will use data from local hospitals, county health personnel, South Dakota Department of Health, and South Dakota Department of Education to decide the education phase for the Bison School District. Please note that this process is ongoing throughout the school year.

1. Phase One- Traditional learning with safety procedures in place while preparing students for possible remote learning. Students will be taking the interim assessments to help teachers see what they are missing academically. Students who have gaps in their learning from school closures will be provided with tutoring, summer school, or credit recovery opportunities to keep them on track academically.
2. Phase Two- Remote learning for student(s) testing positive for Covid-19 or in the case a member of the student's family tested positive for Covid-19 or students who have been in close contact with some who tested positive for Covid-19. The Department of Health will notify people in those situations. Close contact is defined as any individual that was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset. The student that tested positive for Covid-19 or has a family member with a positive Covid-19 test, will do remote learning for 10 days. Rooms that have had positive case Covid-19 will be thoroughly cleaned according to DOH recommendations. After 10 days, students can come back to traditional learning as long as they are symptom free.
3. Phase Three- Remote learning for all students will be implemented when there are numerous positive Covid-19 cases within the school. Decisions will be made by the Bison School Board and administration. The length of time will be determined by various factors in the community and discussions with the South Dakota Department of Health and the South Dakota Department of Education. A student who has tested positive for Covid-19 will do remote learning until they are cleared by their physician to return to school. Rooms will be thoroughly cleaned according to DOH recommendations while the school is closed for remote learning.

Remote Learning Expectations

- All students will be assigned a device and shown how to access Google Classroom.
- During remote learning, student's attendance times is mandatory and attendance will be taken daily.
- If the student is sick the parent will contact the school. If they are able, they should complete the assignments posted on Google Classroom.
- Teachers will have instructions and activities posted daily.
- Students will communicate with the teacher via Google Classroom.
- Teachers will be available via Google Classroom, and through their K12 email during regular school hours.
- If school is in session, teachers will be unable to respond immediately and will get back to parents and students as soon as they can.
- Assigned work during remote learning will be due within one week of the assignment.
- Teachers will contact parents of students who are not participating in remote learning activities.

Positive Covid-19 Test

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified if their student has been in contact with an individual with a positive Covid-19 test by the school or the SD Department of Health.
- The Bison School District acknowledges that there is no way to guarantee a totally safe environment from an infectious disease but implementing best practices and following deliberate procedures has proven to significantly reduce the risk and spread of the virus.
- Contact tracing will be done in coordination with the Department of Health.

Sanitizing and Maintaining Health and Hygiene in the Building

- Posters that encourage handwashing will be displayed around the building and in classrooms.
- Extra time will be provided to students for handwashing throughout the school day.
- Hand sanitizer will be located in various locations around the building and in the classrooms.
- Water fountains are bottle filling stations so students may remain hydrated throughout the school day.
- The school has been thoroughly cleaned before school is in session. It will be sanitized after school using a disinfecting fogger.
- Each teacher will be provided with a disinfecting kit and will disinfect repeatedly touched areas.
- Students will need to bring home water bottles and gym clothes for washing weekly.
- Virtual tools and platforms will be utilized when needed to conduct essential business.
- Our heating and ventilation system has been updated to include BIPOLAR IONIZATION technology. We purchased the Global Plasma system and had it installed in December of 2020.

Social Distancing and Classroom Organization

- Students will stay to the right while passing in the hallway and keep at least an arm's length distance apart.
- Lockers will be assigned by grade cohorts.
- Limit locker use to one or two times a day, carry necessary materials with them if possible. Students in grades 8,9, and 11 will get their books and belongings for period 1-4 in the

morning and carry them until lunch. 7,10,12 will use lockers in the morning and carry their books after lunch for periods 5-7.

- Elementary teachers will make sure to rotate locker use.
- Classroom teachers will need to keep student items separate and labeled to avoid sharing, including gym shoes and snacks.
- Face shields will be available for lab activities in certain classrooms.
- During recess, students will not congregate in one area, they will spread out around the playground and enjoy the fresh air and sunshine.

Transportation

- Bus drivers have the ability to check a student's temperature upon entering the bus if they are showing symptoms. If the child has a fever with a temperature over 100, they must go home with their parent.
- Parents will need to wait until the bus pulls away from the bus stop before leaving.
- Bus windows will be open as much as possible.
- Students will sit with family members or the same friends daily.
- Students will load the bus from back to front, and will exit from front to back.
- The bus driver will use their disinfecting kit to wipe down or spray surfaces after every run.

Food Service

- Students will social distance as much as possible in the cafeteria, all tables will be used.
- All students will use hand sanitizer upon entering the cafeteria.
- Silverware will be wrapped for students to take with their tray.
- All trays are sanitized after each meal.
- Tables in the cafeteria will be sanitized after each lunch.
- Students will not be allowed to share food.
- If there is an extended school closure, food distribution to students and families will become available.

Contact Mrs. Azevedo at the school with any questions, 605-244-5961.

School Board Approved on July 12, 2021