



Re-Opening Plan

Fall 2020

The Future Needs a Different Student.

8/25/2020

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Director’s Note:

On July 30th, the MN Dept. of Education and MN Dept. of Health released guidance that allowed for schools in Itasca County to return to school in Scenario 1 due to low infection rates in the area. This was only a recommendation and individual school districts were allowed to choose a more restrictive scenario (2 or 3) if the school board decided it was necessary to ensure the safe operation of the school.

On August 6th, the NLCS school board met in a special session and made the decision to return to school on August 24th in Distance Learning mode, with the goal of working towards getting students back in the building by November.

Introduction

NLCS closed its school building to students in March of 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the Governor's Emergency Executive Order 20-02, issued March 15, 2020. For the 4th quarter, students engaged in Distance Learning only.

In planning for the coming school year, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has requested that school districts plan for three different scenarios going into the 2020-2021 school year. Those three scenarios include:

Scenario 1: In-person learning for all students. Creating as much space as possible between students and teachers that is feasible during the day, but is not held to strictly enforcing the 6 feet of social distancing.

Scenario 2: Return students to school buildings implementing a hybrid model. Following strict social distancing and capacity limits to 50% maximum occupancy. Social distancing of at least six feet between people must always occur.

Scenario 3: Distance Learning only.

This *Re-Opening Plan* is based on the MDH 2020-2021 Planning Guide for Schools, MDE's Guidance for Minnesota Public Schools: 2020-2021 School Year Planning and current public health recommendations at the time this document was developed, which include:

- Maintain a distance of six-feet between individuals
- Wear face masks or coverings
- Screen for COVID-19 symptoms
- Practice good hygiene protocols including hand washing; and cleaning and disinfecting commonly touched areas
- Limit large group gatherings
- Plan for short-term school closures should there be a suspect or confirmed COVID-19 case

This is a working document to be updated as changes occur. It summarizes the methods Northern Lights Community School will utilize in all three scenarios.

Communication

Emergency Action Team (EAT)

NLCS has an EAT to create preventive and responsive plans to maintain a safe school environment. The team includes the following people.

EAT Members:

- Mike D. Hamernick, Director
- Henry Chung, Technology Coordinator
- Aimee Love, Social Worker
- Benita Hassel, Project Manager
- Vern Schroeder, Building Custodian

Director Mike Hamernick serves as the point of contact for all COVID-19 related matters. His information will be included on all communications.

The Director will determine what tasks student's involvement will be helpful on, and student advisors will involve students in the implementation of the tasks.

Communication Methods

NLCS will release regular communication updates in the following ways:

- Weekly emails from the Director to all staff
- Social media updates (webpage and Facebook), released weekly/monthly for students, parents and guardians
- Weekly staff meetings with the Director and building staff on Google Meets or Zoom
- Monthly school board meetings

NLCS will utilize the district website and Facebook for updating staff, students, parents/guardians, and the public. Written documentation will be available in the office for parents/guardians who do not have internet access.

Text/Voice Alert (messaging system) will be utilized to provide parents/guardians and staff with immediate updates when necessary.

Posters will be present within the building, including at the following locations:

- At all handwashing sinks to remind everyone of good handwashing practices
- On entry doors to remind people who have symptoms not to enter
- At entries notifying people of the screening methods occurring

Mental Health & Wellness

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing stress, fear, and anxiety for many people. NLCS will provide staff, families, and students with information on how to access resources for mental health and wellness in the following ways.

NLCS has the following mental health professionals available:

- Aimee Love, School Social Worker
- Kathy Anderson, Children's Mental Health Services, Inc.

SCENARIO 1 – In School

Students will all be provided with information on reaching counseling staff. Their contact information and hours will be provided to students to allow them to reach out for assistance.

Students that continually receive assistance will continue to receive assistance as per usual.

SCENARIO 2 - Hybrid

Students who are in the building can access services in the ways listed in scenario 1. Students at home will receive information on how to reach the counseling staff electronically.

Students that continually receive assistance, who are not in the building will be reached out to electronically. Advisors and Project Managers will assist in identifying students that may need assistance.

SCENARIO 3 – Distance Learning

Students at home will receive information on how to reach the counseling staff electronically.

Students that continually receive assistance, who are not in the building will be reached out to electronically. Advisors and Project Managers will assist in identifying students that may need assistance.

Reporting Methods

NLCS will request parents, guardians and staff to self-report if they or their student have COVID-19 symptoms, a positive test or have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19.

Parents, guardians or staff will report to Director Mike Hamernick at (218) 492-4400, ext. 11 or mike.hamernick@nlcschool.org.

Training and Education

Staff will receive training in the specific areas listed below.

- Currently known COVID-19 Facts
- Cleaning Methods and Schedule
- Employee Right-to-Know
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Identifying Symptomatic Students
- Screening Yourself

*NLCS will send home the MDH COVID-19 Decision Tree and MDH “Is it COVID-19”? to assist with symptom identification.

Screenings

NLCS will complete proactive screenings of students, visitors and staff entering the buildings.

MDH and CDC recommend that people are screened when entering the building. The MDH COVID-19 screening poster will be posted at building entrances to remind people entering of the symptoms of COVID-19. Posters will also be placed, notifying people entering that the school will be screening occupants.

To assist parents/guardians, students, and staff in determining when to come into the building based on symptoms, NLCS will provide and post the MDH Decision Tree factsheet.

SCENARIOS 1 & 2

NLCS will implement the following screening process for students taking the bus, driving themselves, dropped off, walking, staff and visitors:

- The screener will wear a face covering and wear gloves.
- The screener will visually inspect the person for signs of illness, which could include: flushed cheeks, rapid breathing/difficulty breathing, fatigue or extreme fussiness.
- The screener will conduct a temperature screening using a non-contact thermometer.
- People who have a temperature of less than 100.4 with no symptoms may attend. Those with symptoms or a fever will be turned away and need to go home.

- The students will be screened when they come to school. We will also rely on parents to report any concerns or keep students home if they are sick.

If a disposable or non-contact (temporal) thermometer was used and it did not have physical contact with a child, the screener does not need to change gloves before the next check. If it did touch the child, the screener should change gloves and wipe the thermometer with alcohol wipe.

Community Expectations

Hand Washing

Proper hand washing practices are very important to reduce the spread of any virus. Posters will be placed at all sinks to remind everyone of good hand washing practices.

Hand sanitizer will be provided to all staff members for their desks and workspaces. Hand washing is more effective than hand sanitizer in reducing germs. However, in instances where handwashing is not readily available, hand sanitizer can be used. Visibly dirty or greasy hands should still be washed as soon as feasible. Custodial staff will check hand sanitizer and hand washing supplies during each daily cleaning of the area.

Teachers are expected to encourage proper hand washing with all students.

Face Coverings

SCENARIO 1

Staff and students of NLCS will wear a face covering when in the building. That may include a face mask or plastic face shield. Both options will be provided, along with instructions on proper use and cleaning.

SCENARIO 2

Employees of NLCS will wear a face covering when in the building. That may include a face mask or plastic face shield. Both options will be provided, along with instructions on proper use and cleaning.

Students, 6-12th grade, are required to wear face coverings. That may include a face mask or plastic face shield. They will be made available by the school if needed. Students may choose to wear one of their own, providing that it is school appropriate and covers both the nose and mouth.

MDH face covering guidelines should be followed when wearing coverings. This includes: washing hands before applying, washing hands after taking off, not touching the covering repeatedly and keeping it clean.

The CDC and MDH do not recommend masks be worn by anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. They are also not recommended for children who cannot manage them on their own and are not to be

used on children under the age of two years old. If a student has a disability that doesn't allow for them to wear a mask, they will not be required to wear a mask. Other accommodations may be made to protect staff and other students from a student who cannot wear a mask. Administration and the SPED team will work with the families in these situations.

Protecting Those at Higher Risk

NLCS will accommodate the needs of students and staff who are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19. This includes honoring requests of parents who may elect to continue distance learning due to an underlying medical condition of the student or others in their home.

Before staff and students return to the building for scenario 1 or scenario 2, a survey will be sent to all staff and families to allow them to self-identify as high risk for illness. Mike Hamernick, Director, will review all staff and students that have identified as high-risk and reach out to them with individual plans. Individual health information is confidential and subject to HIPAA and FERPA. No sensitive information will be disclosed without consent.

Facilities

Physical Barriers

NLCS will install barriers on certain desks, and in key workspaces.

To lessen the traffic into the office, there will be a non-contact drop box for papers, lunch money, etc. in the hallway outside the office.

Drop bins labeled with teachers' names will be placed in the entryway to allow parents and guardians to drop off items for students as needed.

Gatherings and Visitors

To comply with current public health orders, NLCS will be limiting non-essential building visitors. It is also required that student drop-off and pick-up occur outside the building, rather than inside. Parents should call the office from their vehicle instead of entering the building to pick up their children.

Large group gatherings will occur virtually while this plan is in effect. We will not have Monday Town Hall meetings in the gym, nor will we book all-school speakers to come for all-school presentations. Presentation/Conference Nights will also be done as virtual conferences with parents/guardians.

Water and Ventilation Systems

Water systems will be flushed according to the CDC guidelines as outlined in the link below.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>

Ventilation systems will be assessed to determine they are operating properly. Dampers will be opened to bring in as much outdoor air as possible. Windows will be open when the

weather/temperature allows. All classrooms will have HEPA filtration units active while people are present.

Space Considerations

Technology

SCENARIOS 1 & 2

Each student will be issued their own tech device (Chromebook or iPad) and will clean it in the presence of their teachers at the start and end of each school day.

The copy area for staff will remain open and in-use. Those using the machine will be asked to use a provided alcohol wipe to wipe the touchpad clean when done. A poster reminding employees of the need to clean after each use will be posted.

Gymnasium

SCENARIOS 1 & 2

Physical Education classes will be held outside when weather permits. When physical education equipment is used, it will be placed in a “dirty” bin, located in the gym and items in the bin will be cleaned at the end of the day - prior to putting away. Activities where items are shared between players will be avoided.

Floor Markings

Floor markings made of non-skid materials, will be placed in areas that may see congestion, to encourage distancing and traffic flow. Narrow stairwells will be marked as “one-way only” to discourage people passing each other at close distance.

Classrooms

SCENARIO 1

Classrooms will be limited to essential teaching tools. Limiting the number of personal items in the classroom will lighten the cleaning load of the custodial staff. During this time, rugs, and all other non-standard furniture (couches, carpets, bean bag chairs, ball chairs, etc.) will not be allowed in the classroom as they present cleaning challenges.

SCENARIO 2

Classrooms will be limited to essential teaching tools. Limiting the number of personal items in the classroom will lighten the cleaning load of the custodial staff. During this time, rugs, and all other non-standard furniture (couches, chairs, bean bag chairs, etc.) will not be allowed in the classroom as they present cleaning challenges.

Markings will be placed on countertops and tables, marking safe distances for student spacing.

Drinking Fountains

Drinking fountains will be turned off at this time. Bottle fillers will remain in use and will be added to the list of cleaning items.

Cafeteria

SCENARIO 1

The cafeteria will be opened, and the tables/benches will be marked/modified allowing for seating distance between students.

SCENARIO 2

At this time, the cafeteria will be closed and will be used for staging of meals. Both breakfast and lunch will be served in the classrooms, pre-packaged by food service.

Students at home will receive pre-packaged meals available for pickup or delivery.

SCENARIO 3

Students at home will receive pre-packaged meals available for pickup or delivery.

Gymnasium Stage

The stage in the gym will be modified to accommodate a student or staff member should they need to be isolated until they can leave the building if they are showing symptoms of COVID-19.

Teachers and other staff members will need to call the office before sending a student.

Childcare

SCENARIO 2 & 3

Families will be surveyed to determine if they are critical workers who are in need of childcare. Staffing will be determined by the number of children needing childcare.

Scheduling

SCENARIO 1

All students will return to in-person learning within the building.

SCENARIO 2

To comply with scenario 2 and the strict social distancing guidelines, NLCS will adopt a hybrid scheduling model.

6-12 students will be split into two groups, A and B. Group A will be in the building on Monday and Tuesdays. Group B will be in the building on Thursday and Friday. Distance learning for all students will take place on Wednesdays.

Special education students will have their IEP's reviewed and their schedules will be tailored to the individual person.

A schedule will be shared with families if scenario 2 is necessary.

Class Schedules

SCENARIO 1

Students will proceed from class to class in one way traffic through the hallway.

Band: Class sizes will be limited to maintain social distancing. The current band room space allows for twenty (20) students to participate in class while maintaining social distancing requirements. Our goal would be to have fewer students than 20 in the room at a time and allow for ventilation/filtration of the room for at least one hour between band classes.

SCENARIO 2

Students will remain in their advisories, rather than changing groups and classes. This is with the exception of physical education and band classes.

SCENARIO 3

Distance Learning will mimic a daily 8:45 am to 2:55 pm schedule as if the students were still in school. The students will follow a "normal" hourly schedule, but at home.

Arrival and Dismissal

SCENARIOS 1 & 2

Students and staff who transport themselves to school, or walk, will enter through the main entrance only. School vehicles will drop off at the main entrance. It is also required that student drop-off and pick-up occur outside the building, rather than inside.

At this time, NLCS is planning to remain with the traditional start/stop times.

Staff will monitor the arrival and dismissal times to curtail congregating and ensure students go straight from vehicles to classrooms and vice versa.

Staff members will be allowed to access the building outside of standard hours of 7 AM to 4 PM, Monday through Friday. They are responsible for screening themselves each day.

Transportation

SCENARIO 1

AEOA is our transportation provider and is currently following CDC and MDH guidelines. They will utilize every other bus seat to separate riders, with families/households allowed to sit together. Masks will be required to ride the bus to school.

The bus will load from back to front. Seats will be marked, indicating where students may sit.

Hand sanitizer will be available on all transportation vehicles.

School vans will only transport up to 3 students at a time – one in each row. Riders and drivers will be required to wear masks.

SCENARIO 2

AEOA will utilize every other bus seat, with families/households sitting together. Masks will be required to ride the bus to school.

The bus will load from back to front. Seats will be marked, indicating where students may sit.

Hand sanitizer will be available on all transportation vehicles.

School vans will only transport up to 3 students at a time – one in each row. Riders and drivers will be required to wear masks.

Facility Cleaning Methods and Considerations

Cleaning Considerations

NLCS has prepared in depth cleaning practices to prevent the exposure of COVID-19. Key elements include:

- Staff will utilize Multi-Clean Microcide-TB Disinfectant Cleaner, which is rated to kill Human Coronavirus and SARS associated Coronavirus.
- The dwell time of the product for Coronavirus is two minutes.
- The SDS states that the PPE is required and includes chemical resistant rubber gloves and goggles or safety glasses.
- The SDS is available upon request.
- The containers are pre-labeled with GHS compliant labels.
- Staff have received training on good cleaning practices and Employee Right-to-Know.
- When technology items are needing to be cleaned, alcohol wipes will be utilized to prevent damage to the equipment.

Routine Cleaning

MDH and CDC recommend routine cleaning and disinfection occur to assist in prevention of the virus spread. NLCS accomplishes this through routine cleaning of high touch points as listed below, per CDC guidelines.

Internal custodial staff completes routine cleaning:

1. Wear chemical resistant gloves and safety glasses or goggles
2. If the surface is visibly dirty – Clean using soap & water

3. Disinfect surfaces using disinfectant provided and paper towels and or disposable scrub pads. The product needs to remain wet, on the surface for the designated amount of time.
4. Use a garbage bag for your waste. When full, place garbage in the dumpster.
5. Remove gloves and then wash hands thoroughly with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.

Cleaning with Suspected or Confirmed Case of COVID-19

MDH and CDC recommend additional cleaning measures take place should there be a known or suspect COVID-19 case within the building. Cleaning would occur in all locations where that person was present. The CDC recommends proceeding with regular cleaning if you receive this information seven days or more since the person has been in the facility.

Custodial staff completes the cleaning sequence below should there be a suspect or confirmed case:

1. Vacate the area - Leave windows open for circulation
2. Allow the space to ventilate for at least 24 hours, or more if feasible before cleaning
3. Wear chemical resistant gloves, clothing coverings and safety glasses or goggles
4. If the surface is visibly dirty – Clean using soap & water
5. Disinfect surfaces using disinfectant provided and paper towels and/or disposable scrub pads. The product needs to remain wet, on the surface for the designated amount of time.
6. Use a garbage bag for waste. Place garbage in the dumpster immediately.
7. Remove gloves and then wash hands thoroughly with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.

Special Cleaning Considerations

Porous Surfaces

During this time, unnecessary rugs and other porous objects will be removed from classrooms. Other porous surfaces may include: chairs, furniture, rugs, linens, clothing, etc. If porous surfaces do need to be cleaned, the following steps will be followed:

- Handle laundry wearing gloves
- Transport laundry in disposable garbage bags when possible OR clean and disinfect the method of transportation
- Do not shake laundry out
- Wash on hottest water setting with regular detergent
- Dry thoroughly

Handling Suspected or Confirmed Cases

NLCS will proceed as follows with suspect or confirmed cases:

- The person will be separated and held in the isolation area until they are able to be picked up by a parent or guardian
- While waiting they will be under visual supervision of a staff member
- The person waiting will be requested to wear a face mask, unless a person is unconscious, has trouble breathing or is incapacitated
- Cleaning steps outlined in the cleaning section will be followed, ensuring that communal spaces such as restrooms and copy rooms the person used are included
- MDH will be notified of confirmed COVID-19 cases of students or staff. It will be reported by emailing health.schools.covid19@state.mn.us

If it is determined that the person is in need of transportation home, NLCS will use district transportation methods to bring the person home. If medical care is needed, 911 will be called.