

SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON LEARNING



North Metro Flex Academy

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Training and Education	3
Screening	4
Community Expectations	4
Facilities	5
Cleaning Considerations	5
Facility Cleaning Methods	6
Handling Suspected and Confirmed COVID Cases	6
Testing and Quarantine	6

Introduction

In March 2020, North Metro Flex Academy closed its buildings due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the Governor's Emergency Executive Order 20-02. For the remainder of the Spring Semester and during School Year 2020-21, students were in different learning models (Distance Learning, Hybrid Learning, and On Site Learning). In planning for the coming school year, the district's Local Incident Teams will follow the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and Center for Disease Controls and Prevention (CDC) guidelines when possible.

The Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan is based on current public health recommendations at the time this document was developed, which include:

- Wear face masks or coverings
- Social distancing of 3 ft whenever possible, and maintain grade cohorts/pods
- Screen for COVID 19 symptoms
- Practice good hygiene protocols including hand washing, cleaning and disinfecting
- Contact tracing and quarantine
- Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities

This plan takes into account CDC guidelines, MDH guidance, and MDE requirements in order to provide a safe place for students to learn and staff to work. This document will be updated periodically regarding any changes from the CDC, MDE or MDH.

TASK FORCE:

North Metro Flex Academy has formed a Local Incident Team (LIT) in order to work on modifications needed to provide a safe and healthy environment for students and staff.

Debbie Kranz	School Principal
Chelsea Smieja	Operations Manager
Sandy Saline	COVID 19 Coordinator
Courtney Grant	Licensed School Nurse
Jessaca Karg	Office Manager
Dave Isaacson	Special Education Coordinator
Lacey Hastings	Health and Wellness Liaison

Sandy Saline serves as the COVID 19 Program Coordinator for the school, and is the point of contact for all COVID 19 related matters. She is also responsible for coordinating with local health authorities regarding positive cases. All school staff and families will be provided with her contact information, and it will be included on COVID 19 related communications. Sandy will communicate concerns, challenges, and preventative activities as needed with staff, students and their families, school leadership and local health officials.

Regional support teams have been established in partnerships with MDE, MDH and the CDC, and they will help the school with responses to situations in a timely fashion. When questions arise, Sandy Saline, COVID 19 Coordinator, will reach out to the Team lead, whereupon the Team lead will communicate with MDH regarding the situation and help provide solutions to the school.

Communication Methods:

The School will release regular communication updates using the following methods:

- School Website: <https://www.nmfamn.org/>
- JMC messages to families and students
- School Email
- Facebook

The school also works with a cultural liaison in order to provide translation of school messages, as needed.

The school will continue to provide updates and communication via the school website to inform staff, students and families, and the general public.

Posters will be present within the school building that provide protocols and expectations from the North Metro Flex Building Safety Plan in the area of sanitation, social distancing, and continued monitoring of COVID 19 symptoms.

Mental Health and Wellness:

The school district will continue to provide information on how to access resources for mental health and wellness. Resources are posted on the school website.

Reporting Methods:

North Metro Flex Academy will request parents/guardians and staff to self-report if they or their student have COVID 19 symptoms or a positive test. Anyone who is not fully vaccinated and has been in close contact with someone with COVID 19 should also report to the school. Individuals will report COVID-19 symptoms or cases to the COVID 19 Coordinator via email (ssaline@nmfamn.org or by calling 612-460-5053). Staff members will report using the same method so that the COVID 19 Coordinator may consult with the individual's supervisor.

Training and Education:

School staff have received training on the school's Restart Blueprint in the specific areas listed below:

- Currently known COVID 19 facts
- Cleaning methods and schedule
- Employee Right-to-Know
- Personal Protection Equipment
- Identifying Symptomatic Students
- Face Coverings
- Daily Health Screening
- What to do if staff feel ill
- Hand hygiene and glove use

- Transferring items from Home to School if applicable to the building
- Daily Health Screening of students
- MDH COVID-19 Decision Tree

Cross Training and Absence Planning:

Staff have been cross trained appropriately to maintain duties and functions in the event of needing to plan for an absence. The school personnel and their appropriate backup are listed below:

Staff member	Back up
Debbie Kranz, Principal	Chelsea Smieja, Operations Manager
Chelsea Smieja, Operations Manager	Jessaca Karg, Office Manager
Jessaca Karg, Office Manager	Chelsea Smieja, Operations Manager
Dave Isaacson, Special Education Coordinator	Chelsea Smieja, Operations Manager
Sandy Saline, COVID-19 Coordinator	Jessaca Karg, Office Manager

Screenings:

MDH requires people to be screened when entering the building. The MDH COVID-19 screening poster will be placed at building entrances to remind people who enter the building the symptoms of COVID-19.

Community Expectations

Hand Washing:

Proper hand washing practices are very important to reducing the spread of any viruses. Posters will be placed in the building that remind everyone of good hand washing practices. Hand sanitizer will be provided throughout the building. Teaching staff are expected to encourage proper hand washing with all students.

Face Coverings:

Students, staff and all visitors inside the school building are required to wear a face covering. Face coverings may be temporarily removed in situations where it is difficult or not possible to wear a face covering, provided that physical distancing is maintained, including when eating and drinking. The school will maintain a supply of face coverings for students who forget to bring them.

During instruction time, teaching staff may choose to wear a mask or a face shield. Students in grades K-8 will be required to wear a face covering (such as cloth masks and neck gaiters) when in the building. Face shields may be worn by a student when wearing a face covering is otherwise problematic for the student. Additionally, a student may wear a face shield if they are unable to tolerate a face covering due to a developmental, behavioral, or medical condition. This will be documented in the student’s Individual Education Plan or 504.

MDH face-covering guidelines should be followed when wearing coverings. The school will have CDC guidance documents on how to safely wear face coverings. The CDC does not recommend that N95 respirators be used by

individuals at this time, other than healthcare workers with direct exposure to patients, however employees may choose to wear these. When respirators are used voluntarily in the workplace, OSHA requires that voluntary user information form regarding respirator use be signed by that individual.

Facilities

Physical Barriers:

The school has installed physical barriers on reception desks at the entrance of the building.

Gatherings and Visitors:

The school will limit non-essential building visitors during school hours. Student drop-off and pick-up outside of regular school transportation times is allowed as long as the school is given advance notice.

Ventilation Systems:

Ventilation systems are checked regularly to ensure that they are operating properly. All classrooms have an air purifier, that is constantly operating, that filters particles greater than 0.1 Micron. The school's HVAC system is also equipped with MERV-13 filters, which is a higher grade purification filter, in order to further limit the spread of airborne viruses. Additionally, the HVAC system has UV light inserts in each duct that leads to classrooms. This helps to minimize the potential spread of any airborne or aerosolized viruses in classrooms and hallways.

Cleaning Considerations:

The school will follow MDH and CDC recommendations for routine as well as additional cleaning measures.

- Staff will use approved disinfectants on the EPA list N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-Cov-2.
- Students will be allowed to clean only using soap and water or disinfectant wipes sold over the counter for home use.
- Staff have received training on good cleaning practices and Employee-Right-to-Know
- When technology items are needed to be cleaned, sanitizing wipes will be used to prevent damage to the equipment.
- Spray bottles with food safe sanitizer and alcohol wipes, will be in every classroom for teachers to use for cleaning of hard surfaces and technology items.
- Use a garbage bag for waste, when full, place the garbage bag in the dumpster.

The school will use MDH and CDC recommended cleaning measures should there be a suspected or positive case of COVID-19 in the building. Cleaning will occur in all areas where that person was present. Staff will complete the following cleaning sequence:

- Vacate the area.
- Allow the space to ventilate for 24 hours if possible.
- If the surface is visibly dirty, clean using soap and water
- Disinfect using the proper protocol of the cleaning solution needs to remain on the designated surface for the required amount of time.

- Use a garbage bag for waster, when full, place the garbage bag in the dumpster.

Handling Suspected or Confirmed Cases

North Metro Flex Academy will proceed as follows with confirmed or suspected cases:

- The person will be separated and held in the designated isolation area until a parent or guardian can pick them up.
- They will be under visual supervision by a designated staff member while waiting to be picked up.
- The supervising staff member will wear a face covering.
- Communal areas where the individual had contact will be cleaned as well as any classrooms they had been in.
- Sandy Saline, COVID-19 Coordinator, will notify the local Team of the confirmed case of COVID-19.
- The school will share information regarding the positive case with students and families that are considered a close contact, following the Need-to-Know protocol, and in consultation with the Dept of Health.
- Any staff or student who are identified by MDH case investigation as having close contact with the infected person will be notified separately with instructions.
- If it is determined that the person is in need of transportation home, the COVID-19 Coordinator will contact parents, and the parents will need to provide safe transportation home as soon as possible.
- If immediate medical care is needed, 911 will be called.

Testing

Testing may be necessary depending on the situation should it arise. MDH has provided guidance on who should get tested below:

- Anyone who has symptoms, even if they have had COVID-19, or are fully vaccinated.
- Anyone who has not been fully vaccinated, that has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. It is best to get tested 5 days after you were in contact with the positive test case.
- Anyone who is not fully vaccinated, and has attended a high-risk activity, such as a large indoor gathering or outdoor event where people are not masked or you are not able to stay 6 feet apart.
- Anyone who is not fully vaccinated and works in close contact with a lot of people, including teachers, child care providers and coaches.
- Anyone who is not fully vaccinated, and participating in in-person learning, extra-curricular activities or sports activities.

Quarantine

The school will follow a shortened quarantine period of 10 days for unvaccinated students and staff who have had close contact with a person with COVID-19.

The COVID-19 Decision Tree shown will be used for all students and staff who have COVID-19 symptoms regardless of vaccination status.