

# **Aitkin Public Schools**

## **2020-2021 School Year Opening**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

(work in progress)

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# **Aitkin Public Schools Fall 2020**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **District Wide**

#### **Introduction to Options**

What does In-Person-Learning mean?

**A:** Students will attend school in person following set guidelines and protocols so we can do our best to ensure a safe learning environment for everyone.

What does Remote learning mean?

**A:** Classes are held virtually, using our Learning Management System Canvas. We have taken great strides in better preparing our teachers and paraprofessionals on the use of this tool. Our goal is to be able to have students live stream classes and instruction when they are not attending in person school.

Is there flexibility between, In-Person and Remote Learning?

**A:** If you have a reason to switch between learning models at any point during the year, you need to contact the Rippleside or High School Principal and set up a meeting to discuss and prepare for the transition.

Can a student's enrollment be switched from in-person to all distance learning once the academic term has started?

**A:** This will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Ideally we are looking for enrollment changes to happen at the end of the term (quarter or semester)

What does hybrid learning mean?

**A:** Details of our Hybrid Learning Model

- Rippleside Elementary and Aitkin High School:  
We will provide in-person learning 2 days a week for each student. We will split our groups alphabetically for the most part. We will keep families together, attending in person on the same days. Students with the last name A-L will attend on Monday and Thursday, they will be remote learning on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday. Students with the last names M - Z will be attending on Tuesday and Friday, they will be remote learning on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

#### **SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

What would be the process and timeline of determining when the district needs to switch between learning models?

**A:** *This information will be provided at a later date. We are waiting on the final plan/process from the Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota Department of Education.*

What safety guidelines are in place?

**A:** The following safety precautions will be taken in the school buildings during in-person learning:

- Cloth Face Masks/Face Shields (when wearing a face mask creates education issues for the student)
- Masks and PPE for direct support student services.
- Hygiene education and routines.
- Daily building cleaning and frequent cleaning of high touch surfaces.
- Restrict nonessential visitors.
- Discontinue large gatherings.
- Monitor and exclude for illness of staff and students.

The following additional safety precautions will be taken during in-person Hybrid learning:

- Continue with the practices above.
- Social distancing is strictly maintained at all times.

What is entailed with the "health screening" prior to the school day?

**A:** *We will be sharing information that has been provided by our school nurse in conjunction with Aitkin County Health and the Minnesota Department of Health as to signs and symptoms to look for in determining personal health screenings for yourself and your children.*

Who has to wear masks and what kind are required?

**A:** Masks are required at school for everyone in Kindergarten and up . Face shields are the alternative when wearing a mask is a difficulty. More information from the MN Department of Health [HERE](#).

What if someone can't wear a face shield?

**A:** This will be handled on a case-by-case basis and will need to be either required in an an IEP modification or by a doctor's verification to create an appropriate accommodation. We will provide a face covering exemption form as needed.

How will you make sure staff and students stay compliant with wearing their mask correctly?

**A:** *We will work to educate each student on the need to use masks. We want to be able to have our children in our school, this is a necessary step at this time.*

Will you have the students stay 6 feet apart? In halls and in class?

**A:** We are looking at the capacity of each room and considering social distancing guidelines to determine class sizes. Social distance will be managed by spreading students out throughout the school buildings. Six feet social distancing is required in the Hybrid model, recommended whenever possible in the In-Person model. We will make plans to help encourage proper social distancing.

Will the classrooms and bathrooms be cleaned completely between classes, and uses?

**A:** Frequently touched surfaces (railings, door knobs, etc.) throughout the building will be disinfected throughout the day with daily cleaning after school. At the conclusion of each school or transportation session, cleaning protocols will be strictly adhered to and followed.

What kind of masks/face shields will be acceptable? Can people use their own?

**A:** Type of acceptable face masks are described [HERE](#). People can supply their own compliant face coverings. If they do not have one, the district will provide one.

Will there be COVID-19 tests done at school for students?

**A: No**, we have no plans, supplies, or staff to conduct COVID-19 tests at school at this time.

What steps have been taken to ensure the air quality in each district building is safe for staff and children to share throughout the day?

**A:** COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person which makes building wide transmission less likely. However, adjustments to the building ventilation systems are being made to utilize as much outdoor air whenever possible. Additionally increased filtration will be added to any recirculated air by increasing the effective filtration (MERV rating) of air filters located in air handling units.

## **COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS**

What will happen for students when they must quarantine?

*A: We will be working with the Minnesota Department of Health and Aitkin County Health to create this procedure. If a student is in quarantine, we will provide remote learning.*

What happens when a student who is attending in person school tests positive for COVID-19 or has a positive contact?

*A: We will be working with the Minnesota Department of Health and Aitkin County Health to create this procedure. We will participate in contact tracing which is part of the state plan. Staff and students are identified as potential contacts meeting criteria with the person with a positive test will be notified.*

How long does that student need to stay home and will anyone else at the school (classmates, teachers, etc) need to stay home as well?

**A:** If a student is in quarantine at this time due to exposure they will need to quarantine for 14 days. If a person contracts Covid -19 they are quarantined 10 days after their last symptom disappears.

If a student is sick will a COVID-19 test be required to show evidence it wasn't Covid-19 vs a cold (or other various illness)?

**A:** This may not be the case, a student may be quarantined for up to 14 days for experiencing symptoms, but may not be required to take a Covid-19 test. Whether to test or not determination will need to be made between the family and their doctor.

Will you be doing COVID-19 tests at the school?

**A:** No.

## **NON-COVID-19 RELATED SICK DAYS**

Will children who are home due to a non-COVID-19 illnesses be expected to do distance learning from home during that short time?

**A:** Yes this can be an option when they are healthy enough to participate in their school work. Remote learning will be used to help students stay current with their academic work.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

What safety measures will be taken on school buses?

**A:** The buses will be sanitized at the end of each route. In a Hybrid Model; Buses will be at 50% capacity so students can spread out.

## **FOOD SERVICE**

Will breakfast and lunch be served at school?

**A:** Yes. More information will be provided by each building as to the processes that will be used.

## **BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL CARE**

What district-sponsored child care options are available?

**A:** Kids Plus will be operating before and after school child care.

Will Kids Plus operate under different restrictions and guidelines as well?

**A:** Kids Plus will follow the same guidelines as schools and other child care centers. Students will likely be placed in small groups with other students from their school.

Do we know how much after school care is going to cost and where it's going to be?

**A:** Kids Plus fees will remain the same as in the past.

Will there be emergency child care for essential workers?

**A:** Yes, the district will offer no-cost emergency care to the children of Tier 1 employees during the school day on distance learning days for students in grades kindergarten through age 12. This will not be offered to families who choose the all distance learning option if we are in the In-Person model. Kids Plus will continue to offer fee-based before and after school child care, including on the shortened school days.

Is child care available for the distance learning option?

**A:** If a family chooses the distance learning option while we are in the In-Person Model, the district would not provide child care.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

How will devices be distributed for the 2020-2021 school year?

**A.** The high school has set dates that will be shared with students and families for pick up times. Devices in the elementary school will be handed out as part of the Entrance Conferences. Not all devices for the elementary school are here at this time and will most likely need a later delivery plan, most likely toward the end of September. Please stay tuned for more information.

Will Devices be provided to students opting into the all distance learning model for the academic term or year?

**A:** Yes.

## **MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS**

Will volunteers be allowed to work in the school buildings?

**A:** The guidelines suggest that nonessential visitors and volunteers in school buildings be limited. Parents will be allowed into the school office but not into classrooms. Unfortunately volunteers will not be allowed inside the school buildings at this time.

## **DISTANCE LEARNING**

How will distance learning this fall be different than it was last spring (both in the hybrid model for grades 6-12 and in the all distance learning option for all grades)?

**A:** There will be a structured learning day; school will have a defined start and end time with identified live time with teachers. The learning experience will be more aligned between teachers and classes. Teachers have been able to participate in specific professional development to improve their skills in delivering distance learning. Each student will have their own device.

# Aitkin High School

## Back to School Plan and Frequently Asked Questions - FALL 2020

### Aitkin High School Student's Daily Schedule:

Your student's education is a high priority and will be constantly monitored by all staff as the year progresses. Aitkin High students, when attending school in person or the hybrid model will be following their regular daily schedule with one modification. The 8<sup>th</sup> hour Homeroom will be removed to give all regular classes extended time to work with students and sanitize classrooms. This will also reduce the number of passing times the students experience throughout the day. Students will be expected to move between classes as quickly as possible and avoid any physical contact with fellow students.

### 7-Period Day

Period 1	8:20 - 9:16
Period 2	9:20 - 10:16
Period 3	10:20 - 11:16
Period 4	11:20 - 12:16
Lunch 4A	11:20 - 11:48
Lunch 4B	11:48 - 12:16
Period 5	12:20 - 1:16
Lunch 5A	12:20 - 12:48
Lunch 5B	12:48 - 1:16
Period 6	1:20 - 2:16
Period 7	2:20 - 3:20

### Scenario 2 & 3 Hybrid & Remote Learning.

Students that do not have internet access at home will be allowed in the building throughout the hybrid learning days to load and submit homework for their different classes. Students will be expected to report to the Media Center or to the senior commons area to access our internet on off days. All staff will be utilizing our Canvas (LMS) Learning Management System in all three models to give students equitable access to daily assignments. Students that have connectivity problems may access the internet at school, in the school parking lot, McDonalds, Glen Store, Mille Lacs Electric, the Public Library, etc.

### Breakfast & Lunch: (In Plan)

In the high school the cafeteria will be opened, students that eat breakfast will be instructed to pick up their breakfast and move directly to their 1st hour classrooms. Lunch will be served in the cafeteria and students will be spread out into two commons areas and the cafeteria. Six feet social distancing will be followed when possible. Six feet Social Distancing will be required in the Hybrid model.

### Will students be required to wear masks?

All students are required to wear face coverings inside the building and on the school bus per Governor Walz's executive order. Students may remove their masks to eat/drink, during PE class when wearing them may cause an issue, when singing in Music class utilizing the 12 foot guidance from MDH. If students do not have masks on they must be spread out and all facing the same direction or be outdoors. Students who have documented health concerns may be exempted from having to wear face coverings.

Preschool students are encouraged to wear a face covering but it is not a requirement based on MDH guidelines.

**Will drinking fountains be available?**

Drinking fountains will not be available, however, fill stations connected to the drinking fountains will be available for students to fill their water bottles. Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school that they must take home and wash daily. The school is adding fill stations to accommodate the needs of the students and staff.

**What if a student becomes ill?**

The nurse will be notified and the student will be checked out in the examination/observation room. If it is necessary for the student to go home, they will remain in this room with an adult until a parent/guardian is able to pick them up. The examination/observation room is separate from the nurse's main office.

**What does transportation look like?**

As our number of confirmed cases change so will our educational programming. Our transportation will run like normal as of today. If Rippleside or Aitkin High School enter into the Hybrid Model our transportation will look different. We will run busses at 50% capacity. So on a typical 72 passenger bus, only 36 students can be transported, in order to keep at or below the 50% capacity. Our busses will be sanitized daily. Masks or face shields must be worn on the bus!

This document is just a snapshot of the most frequently asked questions. If we are forced to move into a Hybrid Model or full remote learning things will change and we will continue to communicate these changes. All of the decisions we make at Aitkin High School and at Rippleside Elementary are based on the guidance of the Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control.

If you have any further questions please look at our district website or contact me at 218-927-7113.

***For more information refer to Aitkin School District's Back to School Fall 2020 plan on the district website - [www.isd1.org](http://www.isd1.org)***

Paul Karelis  
Aitkin High School  
Principal

## **RES - Fall 2020 Plan**

Rippleside Elementary School will begin the 2020-21 school year in the In-Person or Scenario 1 Learning Model. This means that all students in grades K-6 will be at school in person each day. Preschool students will attend school on their regular schedule. At Rippleside we will be following guidelines from the following organizations: (Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control). Following the guidelines these agencies have set forth require us to make several changes so that we can keep our students and staff safe during these unprecedented times. Not all of these changes will be popular, but these changes are being made to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff members. These changes must be made and adhered to so that we are able to keep school open for as long as we can.

### **What will the start of the day look like?**

At Rippleside the start of our day will look a little bit different. Busses will now pull forward to the same area in which our students dismiss. All students in grades K - 3 will enter through the doors that are down by the Kindergarten rooms. Students that are in grades 4-6 will enter through our main entrance at Rippleside. Once students enter the building they will be expected to go directly to their locker and place their belongings in their lockers. After they put their items in their lockers they will go directly to their classrooms. We would like all students to arrive at school between 8:00-8:15. Parent drop off will be in front of Woock Field (Baseball Field). Parents will not be allowed to enter the building when dropping off students. They can walk their students to the entrances of our building. For our younger grades, Pre-K and K, there will be staff members ready for them when they enter the building. We will have staff members in front of the school helping students find their correct entrance.

### **Will Students get breakfast?**

Students will get breakfast. The students that elect to eat breakfast will walk down with a staff member and be able to get a “grab and go” style breakfast. The students will then be able to eat in their classrooms. Each classroom and grade level will have a time to go down and get their breakfast.

### **Will Students go to Specialists?**

Students will go to specialists. This means that to start our year students will go to PE, Media Center, STEM (Science), Music and Art during their assigned classroom and grade level times. It is encouraged that PE classes will be outside whenever possible.

### **Social Distancing while in class?**

Under the guidelines that have been set forth by the Minnesota Department of Health and the Minnesota Department of Education to conduct In-Person Learning, there is no requirement that students are kept 6 feet apart at all times. It is recommended that when we can, we adhere to the 6 foot social distancing guideline. We will do our best to make sure that we are keeping as much distance between students as possible.

**Are students required to wear masks?**

Students in Kindergarten through 6th grade are required to wear face coverings inside the building and on the school bus per Governor Walz's executive order. Students may remove their masks to eat/drink, during PE class, when wearing them causes an issue, while singing in Music class utilizing the 12 foot guidance from MDH. If students do not have masks on, they must be spread out and all facing the same direction or be outdoors. Students who have documented health concerns may be exempt from having to wear face coverings. Preschool students are encouraged to wear a face covering, but it is not a requirement based on MDH guidelines.

**Will students be able to use drinking fountains?**

Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school that they will take back and forth and wash daily. Students will be able to fill up their water bottles using the fill stations connected to our drinking fountains. The school is adding 2 additional fill stations to the ones we currently have in our building.

**Will handwashing be emphasized?**

Handwashing will be required and there will be an increased emphasis on handwashing. Soap and hand sanitizer will be available in classrooms. Hand washing will become an even more prevalent part of the school day. Students will be encouraged to wash their hands often especially after moving rooms and using materials.

**How will Lunch be done at Rippleside?**

The plan when we start school is to have students go through the line as they have in the past. We will practice social distancing (6ft) while standing in the lunch line. There will only be 1 grade level of students at a time in the cafeteria getting their lunch. Students' trays will be filled for them by the kitchen staff. Grades 1-6 will be eating in their individual classrooms while pre-school and kindergarten will be eating in the cafeteria. This will allow us the opportunity to spread students out. Tables will be cleaned and sanitized after each use.

**What does Recess look like?**

Students will get recess with their grade levels. It will be up to the grade levels to determine what time they will be having their recess. Grade levels are submitting their times to me so that we can make sure that there is only 1 grade level at a time on the playground. I am working on getting each grade level their own set of playground equipment to limit the amount of sharing that is happening. This equipment will be sanitized after each use. Students will be able to use

the climbing and other playground equipment during their recess time. The climbing equipment will be sanitized after usage.

**What happens if a student becomes ill?**

The nurse will be notified and the student will be checked out in the examination/observation room. If it is necessary for the student to go home, they will remain in this room with an adult until a parent/guardian is there to pick them up. The examination/observation room is separate from the Nurses main office.

**What does student pick up look like at the end of the day?**

Students that are not riding school district transportation will remain in their classrooms at the end of the day until the busses are gone. When the busses are gone students will be escorted out to the sidewalk where parents will be expected to pull up down towards the Kindergarten entrance. Students will then leave with their ride. Parents will not be allowed to come into the building and get their student or students at the end of the day. Staff will be escorting students out of school and helping them find their rides.

**Will volunteers or visitors be allowed in the building?**

For the protection of our students and staff visitors are not allowed unless there is a specific need that has been approved ahead of time.

**What does transportation look like?**

As of today, due to the COVID-19 data in Aitkin County, Rippleside is able to start in the In-Person Model. Our transportation will run like normal as of today. If Rippleside or Aitkin High School enter into the Hybrid Model our transportation will look different. We will run busses at 50% capacity. So on a typical 72 passenger bus, only 36 students can be transported in order to keep at or below the 50% capacity. Our busses will be sanitized daily. Masks must be worn on the bus!

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If you have any further questions, please look at our district website or contact me at [adokken@isd1.org](mailto:adokken@isd1.org)

Andrew Dokken  
Principal Rippleside Elementary School  
Aitkin Public Schools

"We are ISD 1"