



St. Croix Preparatory Academy
Board Meeting Agenda
January 26, 2021

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 - D. Special Board Meeting on February 11
6. Adjourn Meeting



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ANNUAL BOARD CALENDAR 2020-2021

July	Responsible	Notes/Status
No Meeting		

August	Responsible	Notes/Status
		Open
Retreat Planning		Completed
Status of School Opening		Completed
Vote on Board Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair Vice Chair Secretary/Board Clerk Treasurer 		Completed

September	Responsible	Notes/Status
Annual Report Approval for 2019-2020	J. Gutierrez	Completed
Seat New Board Members		Completed
Board Members Sign Conflict of Interest Forms		Completed (via Charter Assurances)
Review of MCA Test Scores	J. Gutierrez	N/A
Learning Model Review – Status	Principals	Completed
Q Comp Site Goals		Completed

October	Responsible	Notes/Status
File Charter Assurances with Friends	J. Gutierrez	Done
Board Retreat		Open
Review Strategic Plan		Open

November	Responsible	Notes/Status

Financial Statement Review		Completed
Audit Acceptance		Completed
World's Best Workforce Approval		Completed
MDE Assurance of Compliance		Completed

December	Responsible	Notes/Status
No Meeting		

January	Responsible	Notes/Status
Board Election Timeframe Discussion		
Approve School Calendar		Next Month

February	Responsible	Notes/Status
Financial Statement Review		
Board Election Timeframe Discussion		
Approve School Calendar		

March	Responsible	Notes/Status
Approve Open Enrollment Period for Next Year		
Approve Board Calendar for Next Year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings Election Retreat 		

April	Responsible	Notes/Status
Annual Budget Introduction		
Compensation Plan Introduction		
Succession Planning Update		

May	Responsible	Notes/Status
Q Comp Report Presentation		
Financial Statement Review		
Compensation Plan Approval		

Initial review of Employee Handbook		
Board Election		
Approve Annual Budget		

June	Responsible	Notes/Status
Advisory Board Presentations		
Technology Presentation		
Public Hearing on Fees - 2021		
New Board Member Training		
Q Comp Approval		
Executive Director Review		
Chief Operations Officer Review		
Read Well by Third Grade Approval		
Approval of Employee Handbook		
Introduction/approval of Family Handbook		
Annual Finance Designations for Next Year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified Official with Authority Official Newspaper Designation of Depository Account Signatories Collateralize Funds in Excess of FDIC Insurance Delegation of Authority to Make Electronic Funds Transfers 		



Members Present: C. Brown, K. Denzer, N. Donnay, J. Gottschalk, R. Hajlo, D. Keyes, A. Melendres (via Zoom)

Members Absent: S. Mueller

Board Advisors Present: J. Gutierrez, K. Gutierrez (via Zoom)

Call to Order

R. Hajlo called the board meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda includes the Board Minutes from November 17, the Executive Director's Report and the Board Calendar. The Executive Director's Report notes that the Informational webinar held on Wednesday night had 38 attendees, the 2021-2022 open enrollment closes Friday, January 8; and next Tuesday will be the lottery for the fall kindergarten classes and all grade waitlists.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda: J. Gottschalk

Second: D. Keyes

Approved: All

Board Structure/Appointment/2021 Board Election – N. Donnay

Current board structure consists of 8 members: 4 teacher board members, 3 parent board members and 1 community member. Our board is typically 4 teacher board members, 4 parent board members and 1 community member. If any board member resigns, the board can appoint a board member to serve out the remainder of the board term. Board practice has been to fill the board position with the candidate who was not elected in the previous board election however, this past May, Drew Melendres ran uncontested so there is no candidate to fill the vacancy. The other option is to fill the position by a board election. The election process requires we give voters 60 days to solicit potential candidates and then give 30 day notice for the election. Once elected, the board member will go through board training and then typically seated at the August board meeting.

Shane Mueller was a parent board member but stepped into Jim Markoe's community member seat when Shane's son graduated from Prep and Jim resigned his position. The board voted in November to transfer Jim Markoe's end term date to Shane Mueller (will end August 2022). In August 2021, we will have two board seats that are up for election – Kristen Denzer (parent seat) and Jake Gottschalk (teacher seat) in addition to the open parent seat.

The Governance Committee recommends that we will include the open parent member seat in May's board election, along with another parent member seat and a teacher seat rather than going through the process of appointing a parent by seeking potential candidates, publishing a Voter's Guide and holding a special election.

Report from School Re-Opening Board Committee – A. Melendres

The committee met on December 17. We discussed LS students returning to in-person, starting as early as January 18, and gradual rollout of three grades at a time with at least two transitional planning days. Recommendation is K-2 start back on January 25 allowing for three planning days at the end of the quarter. Two weeks later, add grades 3-4 starting on Monday, February 8.



Additional mitigation strategies include staff must wear masks and shields, specialist classes except for PE will be held in the classrooms, indoor PE require masks to be worn, optional staff Covid testing on site every other week, plastic barriers will be installed when 6' distancing cannot be maintained between students and teachers and at least 3' classroom distancing recommended at all times.

Grades 5-12 still subject to the MN Safe Learning Plan and the board approved learning model transition plan.

Next steps: facilities planning for classroom setup, bus transportation coordination, meal planning to accommodate extra deliveries to the classrooms, survey preparation to determine how many students will be returning, and staffing requirements.

Some of the MDE/MDH guidance has changed due to the Regional Support Team (RST) phone call yesterday, Wednesday, January 6. Confirmed that grades 5-12 can operate as a separate building if divisions can operate separate from each other.

Now shields are strongly recommended, not required. Masks are required for indoor PE and MSHSL sports. On site Covid-19 testing information, which will begin on January 25, has been sent out to staff.

Lower School is planning for the rollout of in-person learning, facilities/classrooms are being staged and bus transportation is being coordinated.

There was discussion with RST if we could more aggressively get more students into the building, more than the three grades at a time, if the grades could isolate and separate from each other. RST has communicated that they are allowing schools to assume more risk but don't want school to go back and forth between learning models.

There appears to be more concern about the mental health/concerns that are now affecting students and as well as the learning loss that is occurring. We are investigating creative solutions to accelerate student reentry to the classroom.

C. Westlund explained the revised quarantine options available to students/families and employees.

Questions that are still open:

- Lunch time – are students required to be 6' apart during this time? Can they eat in the cafeteria 3' apart?
- We can bring more than 3 grades if they separate/isolate – what does that look like? We need clarification on what this means? Separate entrances but what does that mean for our common areas: gym, atrium, cafeteria, etc. Will students have to stay in their wing? What does isolate mean?
- How does work with staffing because our staff overlap grades?

N. Donnay expressed thanks to the teachers, EAs, DL staff who are working with students who are currently coming into the building.

Case rate data is no longer the sole factor in evaluating learning model transitions.



In considering opening up additional grades, there is need to evaluate which are the next best grades should be. What are the ways we can do this that meets the needs of the kids? The Covid Response Team will discuss which grades should be considered next for an accelerated return to the classroom.

Next board meeting is Tuesday, January 26 – the Covid Response Team and the Return to School board committee will work together to bring to the board a strong recommendation for an aggressive plan to bring back additional grades.

There was further discussion.

Motion to approve the following – “In compliance with the updated MN Safe Learning Plan, I make a motion to divert from the board approved learning model transition plan and transition K-4 to in person model with grades K-2 beginning Monday, January 25 and grades 3-4 beginning Monday, February 8. In addition, I designate Wednesday, January 20 through Friday, January 22 will be designated learning transition days for Lower School staff and students.”

Second: N. Donnay

There was discussion.

K Denzer amended the motion to include that Lower School will be in-person five days a week.

Second: R. Hajlo

Approved: All

There was further discussion regarding making changes to the current Learning Model Transition Plan that has been board approved. A. Melendres will take a lead on drafting this with input from the Covid Response Team along with the Return to School board committee to bring to the board for the January 26 meeting.

Adjourn Meeting

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 pm: A. Melendres

Second: K. Denzer

Approved: All

Submitted by S. Peterson, St. Croix Preparatory Academy



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Executive Director's Report to the Board

Date of Report: January 21, 2021

Report Prepared By: Jon Gutierrez

Operational Items:

- Weekly meetings with administrative leadership and individual leadership team members – A. Sachariason, W. Renner, J. Karetov, K. Gutierrez, P. Rosell, B. Blotske, R. Dippel, C. Olson; and weekly administrative leadership meeting.
- Weekly meetings with Covid-19 Response team, MDE, and MDH, when appropriate.
- Conducted lottery for the 2021-2022 school year. Offer letters and waiting list communication being coordinated by appropriate office managers.
- Continued work with St. Croix Prep Foundation, including development of marketing materials, strategic launching of preliminary meetings, etc.
- Coordination and communication, with appropriate leadership team members, of vaccine availability to appropriate employees.
- Covid-19 employee testing training. First school employee Covid-19 testing event is January 25.
- Beginning the coordination and timing of Friends of Education annual site visit. This will be done virtually; and will occur in the month of March.

Professional Development: *See Attachment*



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J. Gutierrez
Professional Development Plan
2020-2021

Month	Category	Title	Description/Comments
July 2020	Code Switch Podcast – 24 minutes	The Undocumented Americans, NPR – Conversations about Race	
	Code Switch Podcast – 37 minutes	Can we talk about Whiteness, NPR – Conversations about Race	
	Code Switch Podcast – 21 minutes	Being “Outdoorsy” when you are Black or Brown, NPR – Conversations about Race	Representation, cultural heritage, cost of entry, National Park Service Statistics, This Land is Your Land (song)
	Course Hero Videos	Invisible Man – Summaries and Analysis	
August 2020	Code Switch Podcast – 49 minutes	The Fierce Debate Over High Standards, NPR – Conversations about Race	Ron Brown College Prep in DC
	Code Switch Podcast – 29 minutes	Why Now, White People, NPR – Conversations about Race	White people influencing white people, Trump language – Covid -19
	Book	White Fragility: Why It's so Hard for White People to Talk About Racism, by Robin Diangelo	
	Essay	White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack, by Peggy McIntosh	
	Video – 53 minutes	Money as an Instrument of Change -- Chamath Palihapitiya, CEO Social Capital	
	Book	Invisible Man, by Ralph Ellison	
	Code Switch Podcast – 23 minutes	A Decade of Watching Black People Die	
	Lecture – 59 minutes	Invisible to Whom? Ralph Ellison, Double Consciousness, and African American Identity Politics, by Pellom McDaniels, Emory University	
	Lecture – 2 hours 11 minutes	Ralph Ellison's “Invisible Man”, Revisited, Reapplied, and Repurposed – multiple scholars at NYU-Florence.	
	TED Lecture – 11 minutes	The Cost of Code Switching, by Chandra Arthur	
	Lecture – 1 hour 7 minutes	CIDRAP – Osterholm Update, Reopening Schools, Part 1	Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy
	Lecture – 1 hour 7 minutes	CIDRAP – Osterholm Update, Reopening Schools, Part 2	
	Conference Calls, MDE Planning Guides, Legal Counsel, Friends of Education Meetings	Covid-19 and School Opening Guidance	
	Podcast – 56 minutes	Bret Weinstein and John McWhorter: George Floyd Protests and Race in America	
	Video 9 minutes	John McWhorter, How Antiracism hurts Black People	
	Video 9 minutes	John McWhorter & Cornel West on reparations	

September 2020	Video 50 minutes	Glenn Loury & John McWhorter – the Unraveling, a review of White Fragility and related matters	
	Video 66 minutes	Glenn Loury & John McWhorter – A Critical Look at the 1619 Project	
	Podcast – 90 minutes	Jeff Wright (Odyssey) - Circe	
	Podcast – 72 minutes	Jeff Wright (Odyssey) – Odysseus in the Underworld	
	Podcast – 126 minutes	Jeff Wright (Odyssey) – Sirens, Scylla, Charybdis and some Cows	
October 2020	Podcast – 93 minutes	Jeff Wright (Odyssey) -- Calypso	
	Podcast – 94 minutes	Jeff Wright (Odyssey) -- Telemachus, Menelaus, and Helen of Troy	
	Book	The Odyssey, by Homer (I try to read The Iliad and The Odyssey once a year)	
	Book	Gilgamesh Epic	
	Lecture 1 – 50 minutes	Dr. Joseph Hughes (Missouri State University) – The Heroic Quest	
	Lecture 2 – 50 minutes	Dr. Joseph Hughes (Missouri State University) - Gilgamesh	
	Video Lecture – 22 minutes	Gilgamesh Epic, Part 1 -- Tim McGee	
	Video Lecture – 14 minutes	Gilgamesh Epic Part 2 – Tim McGee	
November 2020	Video Lecture – 15 minutes	Epic of Gilgamesh, Gilgamesh – Paul Joseph Krause	
	Video Lecture – 41 minutes	Epic of Gilgamesh, Enkidu – Paul Joseph Krause	
	Book – Poem	Inferno, Dante Alighieri	
	Video Lecture – 24 minutes	Epic of Gilgamesh, Humbaba and the Plant of Life – Paul Joseph Krause	
	Video Lecture – 89 minutes	The Epic of Gilgamesh – Andrew George	
	Video Lecture – 37 minutes	Noah's Flood and the Epic of Gilgamesh – Bruce Gore	
	Video Lecture – 50 minutes	Introduction to Inferno, Tim McGee	
	Book	The Prince – Niccolo Machiavelli	
December	Book	I Know Why The Caged Birds Sing, by Maya Angelou	
	Video Lecture – 73 minutes	The Biology of Humans at our Best and Worst – Robert Sapolsky	
	Book	Why We Sleep, Unlocking the Power of Sleep and Dreams, by Matthew Walker	
	Book	The Time Machine, H.G Wells	
	Book	Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World, by David Epstein	
	Video Training – 68 minutes	Covid 19 Saliva Test Training	
	Book	Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America, by John McWhorter	
	Webinar – 60 minutes	MDE – Learning Models, Planning Days,	

Board Election Update (2020-2021 school year)

The following is a summary of the board election update:

- The Board Election will be held on **May 18, 2021**.
- The Board Nomination Form will be included in the Parent Update on **February 11, 2021**
- The Board Nomination Form has been updated for the 20-21 year. Candidates must submit a Board Nomination Form by **April 8, 2021**.
- The candidates' names will be published in the Parent Update on **April 15, 2021**.
- Candidates will complete Voter's Guide questions by **April 22, 2021**.
- The Executive Committee will request a meeting with all candidates to review expectations, responsibilities, etc.
- The Voter's Guide will be distributed the last week of April. The Voter's Guide will be included in the Parent Update on **April 29, 2020**.
- A Voter's Forum will only be held if the number of candidates warrants it.
- All of the above dates will make St. Croix Prep in compliance with state statute and its bylaws.

"Board elections must be held during the school year but may not be conducted on days when the school is closed." (Minn. Stat. 124E.07 Subd. 2). "At least sixty (60) days prior to the Corporation's School Board election, the Board of Directors, or its committee, will solicit nominations from teachers, parents/legal guardians, and community members, for all of the Director positions that will be filled at the next election." (SCPA Bylaws – Article IV, Section 4). "A charter school must notify eligible voters of the school board election dates at least 30 days before the election." (Minn. Stat. 124E.07 Subd. 5).

Commented [1]: 3rd Tuesday of May

Commented [2]: Feb. 17th is 90 days. Goes in the PU the Friday before - Feb. 11th

Commented [3]: This date was picked to have 40 days in advance. This date is similar to the previous years to give enough time to get them back and have names ready to publish.

Send voter's guide email on this date so candidates can get working on the questions.

Commented [4]: This date was picked to have 40 days in advance. This date is similar to the previous years to give enough time to get them back and have names ready to publish.

Send voter's guide email on this date so candidates can get working on the questions.

Commented [5]: The 30 day date is April 18th.
Goes in the PU the Friday before.

Commented [6]: This is similar to the previous year in order to have one week before it goes out to the Parent Update.

Commented [7]: This is a similar date to previous years. There is no specific legal date on this one.

Typically, it's sent the first Friday of the month, but since May starts on a Sunday, we should send it out the Friday before. This is similar to past years so it's in the Parent Update three times. I changed the wording to say "last week of April" as it normally says "first week of May".



Learning Model Transition Plan (5-12) Summary

MN Safe Learning Plan (Updated December 21, page 10) - “Middle school and high schools will follow the same protocol and parameters listed in steps one through five of the Safe Learning Plan to determine their learning models.”

Primary in this model is the county case rate data over 14 days per 10,000 people as noted below:

County Case Rate	Learning Model
0-9	In person learning for all students
10-19	In person learning for elementary students; hybrid learning for secondary students
20-29	Hybrid learning for all students
30-49	Hybrid learning for elementary students; distance learning for secondary students
50+	Distance learning for all students

MN Safe Learning Plan (Updated December 21, page 10) - “Middle and high schools must either follow the plans they have shared with families about their learning model, or they can choose a more restrictive model.”

Model approved by the Board on November 12, 2020

MDE/MDH case number trends and thresholds to guide transition in Learning Models*			
<i>More Restrictive</i>		<i>Less Restrictive</i>	
In-person to Hybrid	Hybrid to Distance	Distance to Hybrid	Hybrid to In-person
Two or more prior weeks of consecutive material increases in case rate numbers with at least one week above the corresponding MDE/MDH case rate threshold <u>OR</u> Three consecutive weeks above the corresponding MDE/MDH case rate threshold	Two or more prior weeks of consecutive material increases in case rate numbers with at least one week above the corresponding MDE/MDH case rate threshold <u>OR</u> Three consecutive weeks above the corresponding MDE/MDH case rate threshold	Two or more prior weeks of consecutive material decreases in case rate numbers with at least one week below the corresponding MDE/MDH case rate threshold <u>OR</u> Three consecutive weeks or more below the corresponding MDE/MDH case rate threshold	Two or more prior weeks of consecutive material decreases in case rate numbers with at least one week below the corresponding MDE/MDH case rate threshold <u>OR</u> Three consecutive weeks below the corresponding MDE/MDH case rate threshold

*All Learning Model transitions are done in consultation with MDE/MDE Regional Support Team and with consideration of case rates within the SCPA community and SCPA’s ability to staff each learning model.



Recommended Next Step is to approve a New Transition Model:

- Discussion of new transition model with criteria other than county case rate data (e.g. staff/student Covid-19 rates, state regulations and restrictions, safety protocols, county case rates, etc.).
- Note: Committee decided they preferred a quantitative model vs. a qualitative model
- Example will be discussed at board meeting.
- Next steps to finalization in order to receive feedback from RST (February 10)

DRAFT



Proposed Amended -Learning Model Transition Guidelines

Since August of 2020, scientist and community leaders have learned much more about COVID-19. Minnesota leaders have updated their guidance based upon the new learnings. Last fall, St. Croix Prep implemented a Learning Model Transition Plan that relied nearly 100% on county case rate data. Now, with the new guidance from Governor Walz, MDH, MDE, and our Regional Support Team and with no evidence of spread with St. Croix Prep, it is time to update our decision-making model.

After researching other public schools, and consulting with MDH, we are now in need of a model that relies more heavily on the safety measures that St. Croix Prep has in place and the actual COVID-19 rates within our facility. Please refer to the Learning Model graphic for the types of data that the St. Croix Prep Incident Team will review each Thursday to determine the appropriate Learning Model. This model only includes grades 6th through 12th as the k-5 grades decision making model has already been discussed. Learning Model data points, listed below in order of importance, will serve as a general guideline:

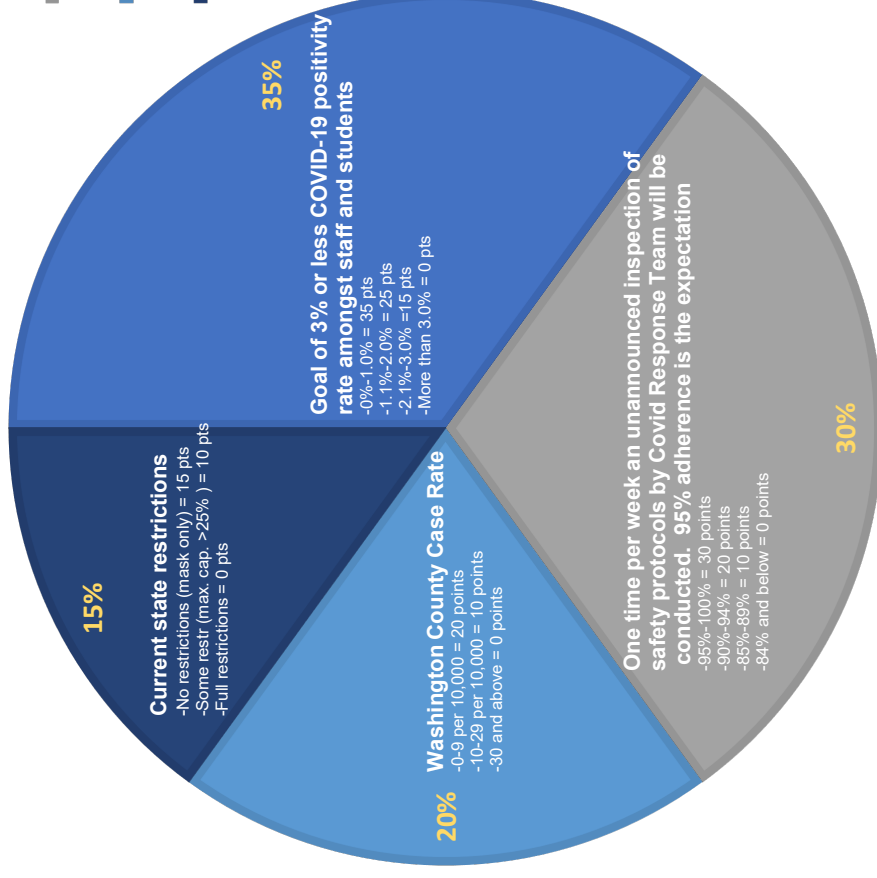
- **SCPA Staff and Student COVID-19 Rates (35 points):** Goal of 3% or fewer current positive COVID-19 amongst staff and students.
 - 0%-1.0% = 35 points
 - 1.1%-2.0% = 25 points
 - 2.1%-3.0% = 15 points
 - More than 3.0% = 0 points
- **Safety Protocols (30 points):** One time per week an unannounced inspection of safety protocols by our safety consultant will be conducted. 95% adherence is the expectation.
 - 95%-100% = 30 points
 - 90%-94% = 20 points
 - 85%-89% = 10 points
 - 84% and below = 0 points
- **Washington County Case Rates (20 points):**
 - 0-9 per 10,000 = 20 points
 - 10-29 per 10,000 = 10 points
 - 30 and above = 0 points
- **State Regulations and Restriction (15 points):** The current state restrictions will factor into the decision-making process.
 - No restrictions (mask only) = 15 points
 - Some restrictions (max. cap. 25% or higher) = 10 points
 - Full restrictions = 0 points

With 100 points possible, the following are Learning Model options and their corresponding point values:

- In-Person (both cohorts attend daily 5 days/week): 80-100 points.
- Hybrid (cohorts separated, Friday-Distance Learning for all): 65-79 points.
- Distance: 0-64 points

LEARNING MODEL DECISION MEASURES

- SPCA Staff and Student COVID Rates
- Safety Protocols
- Washington County Case Rate Data
- State Regulations and Restrictions





FALL 2020 DATA APPLIED TO AMENDED LEARNING MODEL TRANSITION PLAN

Week Ending	Student Cases	Staff Cases	Total Student/Staff **	School Population	% of School Population	(#1) Covid Rates (35 pts)	(#2) Safety Protocols (30 pts)	#3 County Case Rates (20 pts)	(#4) State Regulations/Restrictions (15 pts)	Total Points (100 pts)
Sep 5			0	1085	0.00	35	20	10	10	75
Sep 12			0	1085	0.00	35	20	10	10	75
Sep 19			0	1085	0.00	35	20	10	10	75
Sep 26			0	1085	0.00	35	20	10	10	75
Oct 3			0	1085	0.00	35	20	10	10	75
Oct 10			0	1085	0.00	35	20	10	10	75
Oct 17			0	1085	0.00	35	20	0	10	65
Oct 24		2	2	1085	0.18	35	20	0	10	65
Oct 31	6	1	7	1085	0.65	35	20	0	10	65
Nov 7	4		4	1085	0.37	35	20	0	10	65
Nov 14	7	3	10	1085	0.92	35	20	0	10	65
Nov 21	12	4	16	1085	1.47	25	20	0	10	55
Nov 28	3	0	3	1085	0.28	35	20	0	0	55
Dec 5*		1	1	1085	0.09	35	20	0	0	55
Dec 12*			0	1085	0.00	35	20	0	0	55
Dec 19*			0	1085	0.00	35	20	0	0	55
Dec 26*			0	1085	0.00	35	20	0	0	55
Jan 2*			0	1085	0.00	35	20	0	0	55
Jan 9*			0	1085	0.00	35	20	0	10	65
Jan 16*			0	1085	0.00	35	20	0	10	65
*data incomplete due to DL										
**Fall 2020 In-School Population										
Hybrid Enrollment (assumes 24% DL)										
Staff										
915										
170										
Total In-School Population										
1085										



COMPARISON: FALL 2020 ADOPTED LEARNING MODEL, APPROVED AND AMENDED LEARNING MODEL TRANSITION PLAN

Week Ending	Actual Learning Model Implemented	Per Adopted LMTP County Case Rates	Per Proposed LMTP (100 pts)
=In-Person		<10	80-100
=Hybrid		<30	65-79
=Distance		>30	0-64
Sep 5	Hybrid	12.47	75
Sep 12	Hybrid	12.47	75
Sep 19	Hybrid	14.45	75
Sep 26	Hybrid	14.45	75
Oct 3	Hybrid	20.65	75
Oct 10	Hybrid	23.57	75
Oct 17	Hybrid	27.9	65
Oct 24	Hybrid	35.77	65
Oct 31	Hybrid	38.91	65
Nov 7	Hybrid	59.98	65
Nov 14	Hybrid	105.19	65
Nov 21	Distance	146.37	55
Nov 28	Distance	159.01	55
Dec 5*	Distance	134.02	55
Dec 12*	Distance	118.82	55
Dec 19*	Distance	102.16	55
Dec 26*	Distance	68.69	55
Jan 2*	Distance	44.49	55
Jan 9*	Distance	37.94	65
Jan 16*	Distance	50.25	65
Observations:			
1. Modified LMTP aligns with actual LM implemented last Fall			
2. Modified LMTP would support transitioning to Hybrid			

Prioritizing In-Person Learning for Young Learners

Based on Minnesota's evolving knowledge and understanding of the virus, the Safe Learning Plan has been updated so that early learning and elementary schools reduce the use of county data as a singular determining point when considering their learning models, and mitigation strategies are increased to help get students back in classrooms while keeping students, families, educators and staff safe.

Starting on January 18, 2021, every early learning program and elementary school across the state may choose to operate an in-person or hybrid learning model as long as they are able to implement the additional mitigation strategies listed below including a rolling start process in which students will gradually be brought back in the building. Early learning programs and elementary schools that are not currently in an in-person or hybrid learning model, or have not already announced their plans to implement their in-person or hybrid learning model prior to January 18, 2021 cannot move to in-person or hybrid before January 18, 2021.

1 Middle school and high schools will follow the same protocol and parameters listed in steps one through five of the Safe Learning Plan to determine their learning models. Middle and high schools must either follow the plans they have shared with families about their learning model, or they can choose a more restrictive model.

If a middle school or high school is considering dialing forward to a less restrictive learning model than what is required under the Safe Learning Model guidance, it must consult with its Regional Support Team. Consults for middle and high schools seriously considering transitioning to hybrid or in-person learning will begin on a first-come-first serve basis (with priority given based on desired start date) on January 4, 2021. Middle and high schools requiring a consult to move to hybrid or in-person learning cannot implement their new learning plan before January 18, 2021.

Starting on January 18, 2021, any school – elementary, middle, or high school – that is in-person learning or hybrid learning must implement the mitigation strategies listed below.

[UPDATED 12/21/20]: Implement a Rolling Start

In order to safely transition to an in-person or hybrid learning model, the Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota Department of Education require schools to implement a rolling start process in which students will gradually be brought back in the building.

For an acceptable rolling start strategy, no more than three additional grade bands can be introduced into the building in a two-week time period when implementing an in-person or hybrid learning model for the entire school building. This includes schools transitioning from hybrid learning or distance learning to in-person learning, and schools transitioning from distance learning to hybrid learning. Note: early learning and prekindergarten programs must be included in the grade band maximum when implementing a rolling start if the students interact with elementary grade students during the school day. They do not count toward the grade band maximum if they are self-contained in one area of an elementary building, or in their own building.

If a school can ensure all in-person and hybrid health and safety protocols are being implemented, a school operating a hybrid model can continue with hybrid learning while implementing a rolling start to in-person learning.

Example 1:

- January 18-29 (K-2 in-person learning; Grades 3-5 distance learning)
- February 1-15 (K-5 in-person learning)

Example 2:

- January 18 – 29 (K-1 in-person; Grades 2-6 hybrid learning)
- February 1 – 15 (K-3 in person; Grades 4-6 hybrid learning)
- February 22 – March 4 (K-6 in person)

A rolling start does not need to be implemented if a school had already communicated a change in learning plan to their families prior to December 16, 2020, regardless of the plan's effective date.

Additional Required Mitigation Strategies and Tools Schools Must Implement for Any In-Person or Hybrid Learning Model Beginning January 18, 2020:

- Implement a rolling start process for students to be brought back to the building.
- Execute COVID-19 testing program (training and saliva test kits provided by the State; optional for school staff) every other week for all school staff, beginning January 4, 2021.
- **[UPDATED 12/21/20]:** Face masks and face shields must be worn together by school staff at all times.
 - When staff are serving students in settings where seeing a person's lips is necessary, staff are strongly encouraged to wear a clear face mask in addition to the required face shield. If they do not have access to a clear face mask, they can choose to only wear the required face shield.
 - When staff are providing direct services that require close, physical, and prolonged contact, schools should follow MDH's [Guidance for Delivering Direct Student Support Services: Staff Protective Equipment](#).
- When educators cannot be six feet from students (small group and individual instruction), when possible add a clear barrier between the adult and student.
- Face coverings must be worn when engaging in indoor physical activity (e.g., during indoor recess, indoor physical education class, or when exercising in a gym).
- **[UPDATED 12/21/20]:** For early learning and elementary schools only: All special lessons must be held in the classroom or outside (weather permitting).
 - Physical education classes that cannot operate in the classroom may continue to be held indoors outside of individual classrooms so long as students and staff are wearing face coverings.
 - Arts classes that cannot operate in the classroom may continue to be held indoors outside of individual classrooms if they are able to follow the [Music Activities Guidance](#) and the health and safety measures laid out for art classes in the [2020-21 Planning Guide for Schools](#). If the guidance cannot be followed, arts classes must be held in the classroom or outside (weather permitting).
 - Student support programs such as special education, EL, gifted and talented and counseling may continue to pull students from their primary classrooms in order to provide these essential support services. Additional groups should be kept as small as possible and as consistent as possible from day to day, and as much physical distance as possible should be maintained between group members.
- Student meal times should be held in the classroom if six feet of physical distancing between students cannot be accommodated in the cafeteria and cohorts cannot be clearly separated within the cafeteria.
 - If meal times need to be held in the classroom, schools may have meals delivered to the classroom or have students bring food from the cafeteria back to their classrooms to eat.
- For in-person only: three feet of physical distancing or more is strongly recommended.

② Transition Time

As always, school leaders must meet with their Incident Command Team prior to determining a learning model transition.

[UPDATED 12/21/20]: School districts and charter schools that have not yet implemented full in-person during the 2020-21 school year must use at least two previously scheduled instructional days for planning as permitted by Executive Order 20-82 for staff to come back into the building and prepare for students transitioning into in-person or hybrid learning with the additional mitigation measures. If a district or charter school has already used their five

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transition days, you must notify MDE and additional planning days may be allocated. Staff must use the designated planning days to plan for the change in instructional delivery including but not limited to curriculum prep, to follow the updated mitigation strategies of pods, classroom meals, for staff orientation, family/teacher conferences, etc.

Returning to School Protocols

School districts and charter schools that have been in distance learning for the entirety of the 2020-21 school year should follow first day of school processes to ensure students and families feel welcome returning to school. This may even include holding “back to school” family conferences. Additionally, schools should consider implementing practices laid out in the Supporting Students and Families section of MDE’s 2020-21 Planning Guidance for Minnesota Public Schools, such as:

- Continue prioritizing relationships and well-being
- Teach behavior expectations and incorporate social and emotional learning
- Ensure the mental health needs of students and staff are being addressed

Planning Scenarios for Moving Between Learning Models

It is not possible to account for every scenario that schools may encounter over the course of a school year. The scope and duration of transitions between learning models will depend on many factors, and will be made using the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 and the specific cases in the community during the consultative process. Included below are brief narrative descriptions of the general assumptions that would support each learning model, including the impact on the school community, staffing, the ability to trace and isolate close contacts, testing capacity, extracurricular activities, and staffing levels. The narratives are accompanied by planning scenarios, which can help inform a decision to shift between learning models.

These learning models apply to each individual school and recommendations based on health parameters vary by grade. This is because the risk of COVID-19 transmission is lower for younger students, and public health strategies, like consistent groupings or cohorting commonly practiced in elementary schools, are demonstrated to mitigate and prevent transmission. Further, in-person learning is more critical at younger ages due to child development.

Scenario 1: In-person learning for all students

Previously issued planning requirements and recommendations for Scenario 1 assume that minimal to moderate community spread is occurring, but the impact on the school community in terms of confirmed cases among students and staff is relatively small. Sporadic cases may be occurring, but in general, each confirmed case can be traced to a likely source of exposure and where all or most close contacts can be identified and excluded in the school setting. Staffing is assumed to be sufficient to continue in-person instruction. This planning scenario also assumes that contact tracing can be completed quickly and that all or most close contacts can be notified and excluded within 24 hours of being notified of the confirmed case. Most extracurricular activities may be held, provided they follow current public health guidance.

What situations under Scenario 1 may not necessitate a transition to a hybrid or distance learning model?

- Single, standalone cases are confirmed, but close contacts in the school setting can be quickly identified and are limited to individual classrooms or areas in the school. In this case, temporary distance learning could be implemented for the affected classroom(s) and space(s), rather than shifting the learning model for the entire school or school community.
- Multiple cases are identified, but can be linked to a specific classroom or individual activity with minimal impact or exposures to other classrooms/activities in the school setting. All close contacts can be quickly identified and



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Covid Response Team & Board School Opening Committee Meeting Dates: January 13, January 20

Attendees: Joann Karetov, Amy Kleinboehl, Andrew Sachariason, Wanda Renner, Candace Westlund, Hannah Sislo, Kelly Gutierrez, Susan Peterson, Drew Melendres, Kristen Denzer, Nicole Donnay, Jake Gottschalk, Jon Gutierrez

Learning Model Definitions:

- Distance Learning: Students receive instruction remotely all day, every day.
- Hybrid: Students receive at least the equivalent of one instructional day in distance learning during the week.
- In-Person: Students receive instruction in the school building all day, every day.
- Note: Students/families always have the option of choosing distance learning.

Important Safe Learning Plan Guidelines (updated on December 21, 2020 – and relevant pages included in board packet)

- Elementary Schools may open an in-person or hybrid learning model, as long as additional mitigation strategies are implemented. Note: On January 7, the Board unanimously approved the in-person learning model for K-4, with entry dates of January 25 and February 8. Transition days approved were January 20, 21, and 22.
- Implement a rolling start – no more than three additional grade bands can be introduced into the building in a two week period.
- Middle school and high schools will follow the same protocol and parameters listed in steps one through five of the Safe Learning Plan to determine their learning models. Middle and high schools must either follow the plans they have shared with families about their learning model, or they can choose a more restrictive model. (See separate document).

Important Information Communicated in our Regional Support Team (RST) call on January 6. In our RST call on January 6, H. Hirsch stated that we would have additional flexibility in bringing additional grades back, if we treated each division as if it were in its own building. Brief comments are:

- School districts with multiple buildings can easily bringing back additional grades along with their elementary schools since they occupy separate buildings.
- We are in one physical building and treating each division as a separate building requires detailed analysis/segmenting of all of our common spaces (e.g. atrium, cafeteria, gym, Aux gym, PAC, etc.). There are many scheduling conflicts that are currently being resolved. Note: In some cases, students will have to walk outside to transition between classes due to our inability to share spaces.
- The following proposed option treats divisions as separate buildings.

Learning Model Transition Timeframes (Proposed)

	January 25	February 8	February 22	2 ¹ March 8	March 22	April 5	April 19
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Proposed Option	Grades K-2 In-Person (+220 daily) (+1 division)	Grades 3-4 In-Person (+140 daily) (+1 division)	Grades 5-6 Grades 9-10 Hybrid (+140 daily) (+2 division)	Grades 7-8 Grades 11-12 Hybrid (+140 daily) (+2 division)	Grades 5-8 In-person or Hybrid (4 days/wk)	Grades 9-12 In-person or Hybrid (4 days/wk)

Covid Response Team & Board Committee Recommendation:

- Strong majority (all but one or two members) favor the entire rollout,
- One or two members desire additional grade rollout on February 8
- One member wants the February 22 and March 8 rollout to be In-person or Hybrid (4 days per week) vs. Blue/Gold schedule.
- The rollout is subject to case rate data not spiking, the ability to staff based on quarantine/isolation requirements, approval of revised Learning Model Transition Plan by the Board, and approval of Regional Support Team (RST) on February 10.

Comments January 25 and February 8 Rollout

- Unanimous board approval on January 7
- Adheres to Governor's emphasis on getting our Lower School into the classroom with the most assurance of success (staggered rollout with two week interval).
- Although not recommended, due to staffing, additional grade rollout on February 8 would have to be US grades; MS needs to wait until February 22

Comments on February 22 ff. Rollout

- Treats MS/US as separate buildings; four grades/two week interval
- The most significant operational risk still relates to the quarantine/isolation rules (albeit potentially shorter).
- Challenges. The schedule/space conflicts of lunch, recess, gym, specialists, are not easy to resolve, especially as our guidance has been to maintain a strong sense of "isolation" during the two week implementation of new student groups into the building.

Recommended Next Steps:

- Approve Proposed Transition Timeframes as a framework.
- Board approve a new Learning Model Transition Plan; new concepts are being introduced at the January 26 board meeting.
- Evaluate rollout of K-2 on January 25
- Evaluate rollout of 3-4 on February 8
- Monitor Positive School Covid-19 cases, quarantine/isolation impact on operations, county case rate data, etc.
- Regional Support Team (RST) on February 10. In this meeting, we will



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- Review the above items
- Ask for consultation on what approach we may proceed with on February 22
- Board meeting on February 11 to authorize next transition for February 22.
- Board meeting on February 11 will also approve transition planning days for MS and US (potential days are February 17, 18, 19).

DRAFT