



Heron Lake- Okabena School District # 330

Heron Lake – Okabena 2021-2022 Safe Return to School Plan

Heron Lake – Okabena Public School is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for our staff and students. To ensure we have a safe and healthy workplace, we have developed the following Safe Return to School Plan in response to the ongoing COVID-19 health concerns.

Administrators/Supervisors and workers are all responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces and that requires full cooperation among our staff, students and administrators. Only through this cooperative effort, can we establish and maintain the safety and health of our workers and workplaces.

We are transitioning from state required safety restrictions to health recommendations. COVID still exists and we need to have plans to mitigate the effect of COVID on our staff and students during our summer programs and our safe return to in-person learning in the fall.

Administrators/Supervisors and workers are responsible for implementing and complying with all aspects of this Safe Return to School Plan. Our workers are our most important assets. We are serious about safety and health and keeping our workers working at Heron Lake-Okabena. Our Safe Return to School Plan follows best practice recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines.

Screening and policies for employees exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19

Workers have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess workers' health status prior to entering the workplace and for workers to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

All staff will be asked to assess how they are feeling each day they come to a school site by reviewing the MDH health screening checklist. If they feel ill or have symptoms identified with COVID-19, they are asked to stay home and self-monitor. As soon as practical, they should seek to have a test completed to determine their status. If staying home, they will communicate with their main office staff and administration. If at work an employee becomes ill, or experiences any of the symptoms of COVID-19, they will communicate with the office and immediately leave the building, keeping space from others. In their call to the office, they will include who they have worked with in the past 48 hours and locations in the building they have been.

Heron Lake-Okabena has implemented leave policies that promote workers staying at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when required by a health care provider to isolate or

quarantine themselves or a member of their household. Employees will follow their contracts for applicable leave options. The district will follow federal and state law regarding authorized leaves.

Heron Lake-Okabena will follow CDC/MDH guidelines on contacting staff who may have been exposed and ask them to self-monitor for any symptoms. As guidelines are updated, we will notify employees. The district will ask employees who may have been in contact with someone testing positive to schedule for a COVID test as soon as practical.

Heron Lake-Okabena will follow all Federal, State Laws and district policies regarding the privacy of employee health records and release of information. The school district does not have a roster of staff or students who have been vaccinated. Each building has a designated administrator who will oversee this plan and respond to positive cases or quarantine cases.

Handwashing

Basic infection prevention measures have been implemented at our workplaces at all times. All staff and students are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially when working with shared items, prior to any mealtimes and after using the toilet. Hand-sanitizer dispensers are at entrances and locations in the buildings so they can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled. Our custodial teams will check the status of the hand sanitizers throughout the day.

Respiratory etiquette - Cover your cough or sneeze

Staff, students, and visitors are being instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. They should dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on posters and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available in each classroom and by restrooms.

Social distancing

Social distancing continues to be recommended. At the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year there will be staff and students who may not have been vaccinated. Please social distance to the extent possible between staff, students and visitors in the school buildings.

The following guidelines will remain in our school buildings during summer and as we return next school year:

- Water bottle filling stations remain operable and recommended to refill water bottles.
- The number of people in a classroom will follow recommendations from MDE and MDH. This guidance is reviewed and updated. As this guidance changes, we will update our plans.
- PPE will be available (masks, gloves, shields, gowns) at each building.
- Appropriate PPE will be worn when staff are working in close proximity of students for education, toileting, transporting, responding to behaviors.

- Staff will limit the sharing of equipment and instructional supplies outside of their classrooms/offices.
- Shared spaces will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day. Disinfectant and cleaning supplies will be provided in each office to clean shared items throughout the day (phone, copier, printers, etc). Staff will use gloves when cleaning with disinfectant. Building lead custodians will provide the necessary cleaning items and provide training on how to use them.

Face Coverings

Face coverings are no longer required in school buildings for employees. Employees may choose to wear a face covering as a precaution this summer and next school year. Many of the students you work with will not have received their vaccination as summer programs begin. Guidance on face coverings will be updated throughout the summer months and as we approach the 2021-2022 school year. It is recommended staff and students wear a face-covering while indoors, but it is not required. Outdoor activities do not require a face covering.

Types of allowable face coverings include:

- Paper or disposable mask
- Cloth face mask
- Clear face shield

The covering should cover the nose and mouth completely, should not be overly tight or restrictive, and should feel comfortable to wear. Face coverings should not be placed on anyone under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance, or anyone who cannot tolerate a face covering due to a developmental, medical, or behavioral health condition.

Cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation

Regular housekeeping practices are being implemented, including routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces and areas in the work environment, including classrooms, offices, restrooms, break rooms, lunch rooms, and meeting rooms. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted in high-touch areas, such as phones, keyboards, touch screens, controls, door handles, elevator panels, railings and copy machines. Building custodians will perform the scheduled cleaning using CDC/MDH approved disinfecting/cleaning products.

Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfectant supplies have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product. Supplies for disinfecting hard surfaces will be provided by custodians upon request and then monitored by them for refilling as necessary. Spray bottles and wipes can be used for larger spaces, like countertops, desks and tables. For smaller workstations and personal items, disposable wipes will be provided as available. Gloves should be worn when using either of these products and care should be taken when spraying so as to not spray in the direction of other people's faces. Surfaces should be allowed to air dry for maximum effectiveness

of the disinfectant. The maximum amount of fresh air is being brought into the workplace, air recirculation is being limited and ventilation systems are being properly used and maintained. Steps are also being taken to minimize air flow blowing across people. Our building ventilation systems have been reprogrammed to increase the amount of outside air brought into each space in the building. This increased air is then tempered to provide comfort for building occupants.

Communication and Training

This Safe Return to School Plan will be communicated via email to staff, posted in our school offices, staff workrooms, and on the district website by August 2021. Administrative/Supervisors are to monitor how effective the program has been implemented. Administrators/Supervisors and workers are to work through this health safety program together and update the training as necessary.

Paul Bang

Superintendent of Schools