**NMFA SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON LEARNING**

**\*Revised 1/30/2023**

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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 (\****Students will be provided face masks if requested. Students and teachers are not required to wear face masks, as the Governor’s Executive Order has been lifted.)***

• Social distancing of 3 ft whenever possible, and maintain grade cohorts/pods

(***The school is not requiring social distancing anymore, however lunch that is served in the cafeteria is still done by classroom cohorts/pods, while classrooms are staggered during the lunch time period.)***

• Screen for COVID 19 symptoms

• Practice good hygiene protocols including hand washing, cleaning and disinfecting

• Quarantine guidelines

• 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.

(\*Students that are feeling sick and displaying COVID symptoms will get a call home to see if a parent can come pick them up. The school is following updated recommendations from the MN Department of Health regarding COVID contact tracing and quarantine procedures.

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, Erika Sixl Licensed School Nurse, Jessaca Karg Office Manager/COVID Coordinator, Dave Isaacson Special Education Coordinator. Jessaca Karg 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. Jessaca 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, Jessaca Karg, 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/>
* Smore Weekly Family Newsletters
* 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.

 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 (jkarg@nmfamn.org). 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

**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: Jessaca Karg, Office Manager

Jessaca Karg Office Manager: Chelsea Smieja, Operations Manager

Dave Isaacson, Special Education Coordinator: Chelsea Smieja, Operations Manager

Jessaca, COVID-19 Coordinator: Chelsea Smieja, Operations Manager

**Screenings**: students, staff and visitors are no longer required to get a daily screening upon entering the building.

**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. (\*This is no longer a requirement but is still highly recommended).

***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.

**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.

• If it is determined that the person needs 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**

The school is following MDE and MDH guidelines regarding testing protocols. Presently the school will still distribute testing kits to families that request them if available.

 **Quarantine**

The school will follow a shortened quarantine period of 5 days for students and staff that are vaccinated. Upon receiving a first positive COVID result, individuals need to wear a mask for up to 10 days if they are asymptomatic. If students are still symptomatic during the quarantine period, they may return to school on Day 11.