**NMFA's Strategy for Safe In-Person Learning** *Updated 8/25/23*

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**1. Background** In response to the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020 and the subsequent Governor’s Emergency Executive Order 20-02, North Metro Flex Academy (NMFA) transitioned to varied learning models: Distance Learning, Hybrid Learning, and On-Site Learning. As we plan for the upcoming academic year, we are aligned with guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

**2. Key Safety Measures**

* Masks are optional but available upon request.
* Social distancing is no longer mandated, yet grade-level cohorts will be maintained, especially during cafeteria lunchtimes.
* Regular COVID-19 symptom screenings are in place.
* Hygiene is emphasized, including hand-washing, cleaning, and disinfection.
* We observe quarantine guidelines and promote vaccination within our school community.

**3. Local Incident Team (LIT) and Roles** The NMFA has established a LIT to address and adapt to safety requirements. Key members include:

* Debbie Kranz - School Principal
* Chelsea Smieja – Operations and Office Manager
* Erika Sixl - Licensed School Nurse
* Kyle Johnson - COVID-19 Coordinator
* Dave Isaacson - Special Education Coordinator

**4. Communication Protocols** For consistent updates:

* School Website: <https://www.nmfamn.org/>
* Weekly Family Newsletters via Smore
* JMC messages for families and students
* School Email communication
* NMFA's Facebook page For inclusivity, a cultural liaison assists in translating school messages.

**5. Staff Training and Roles Backup** Our staff has been educated on:

* COVID-19 essentials
* Cleaning protocols
* Use of Personal Protection Equipment
* Symptom identification
* Health screenings and responses to illness

**Cross Training**: To ensure smooth operations, backup plans are:

* Debbie Kranz (Principal) -> Chelsea Smieja (Operations and Office Manager)
* Kyle Johnson (COVID-19 Coordinator) -> Chelsea Smieja (Operations and Office Manager)
* Dave Isaacson (Special Ed Coordinator) -> Chelsea Smieja (Operations and Office Manager)

**6. Building Hygiene and Infrastructure**

* Encouraged handwashing, backed by instructional posters and available sanitizers.
* Regular ventilation system checks.
* Classrooms equipped with air purifiers filtering particles over 0.1 Micron.
* HVAC system has advanced MERV-13 filters and UV light inserts in ducts.

**7. Protocols for Handling Suspected/Confirmed Cases** Upon suspicion or confirmation of a case:

* Isolate the individual in a designated area.
* Ensure supervised waiting for parent/guardian pick-up.
* Affected zones are thoroughly cleaned.
* Safe transportation is a must, with 911 on standby for emergencies.

**8. Testing Approach** In line with MDE and MDH, we distribute test kits to families upon request.

**9. Quarantine Protocols** Vaccinated individuals undergo a 5-day quarantine. Asymptomatic individuals are advised to wear masks for up to 10 days post-quarantine. If symptoms persist, returning to school is only allowed on Day 11.