

# Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan



## New Auburn School District

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# Introduction

On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plans (ARP) Act was signed into law. In it, the U.S. Department of Education is providing an additional \$121.9 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III Fund). This legislation will award grants to state educational agencies (SEAs) for providing local educational agencies (LEAs) with emergency relief funds to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools across the nation.

Wisconsin will receive \$1,540,784,854 in ESSER III funds from the Act, with 90 percent being awarded to school districts with amounts determined in proportion to the amount of Title I, Part A funds they received in summer 2020 from funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The remaining funds will be used for state-level activities to address issues caused by COVID-19.

This plan describes how the LEA or district will provide a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools, including those that have already returned to in-person instruction.

# Maintaining Health and Safety

## Overview

### Description on maintaining the safety of staff and students

The School District of New Auburn will begin the 2021-22 school year with a five-day per week, face-to-face instructional model and adhere to the following health protocols. Accordingly, the District will:

- publish the COVID-19 Back to School Plan and strongly encourage students and staff members to utilize the checklist before entering a school facility,
- encourage staff members and students to stay home or go home if they are showing COVID-19 symptoms or if they have tested positive for COVID-19,
- encourage students, staff and visitors to space themselves at least three feet apart if possible,
- provide sanitizing stations throughout the building.

### Description to continue to provide services regardless of the mode of instruction (for example, health and food services if the LEA must pivot to virtual or hybrid instruction)

The School District of New Auburn will offer in-person learning five days a week according to the Board adopted 2021-2022 Academic Year Calendar. The school district has also provided families the option to enroll their students in virtual learning. In the event of school closure due to the pandemic, the district purchased Chromebooks for all students to continue virtual learning.

Regardless of the mode of instruction, the School District of New Auburn will continue to provide meals under the community provision as long as USDA continues the allowance. Meals will be provided for summer school attendees as well as all eligible youth during the school year. If school is closed due to a pandemic, the district will assess its ability to distribute meals.

The New Auburn School District employs:

- One part-time school nurse who will continue to offer health services in-person or virtually.
- One full-time counselor to address student needs and support mental health for students and families.
- One at-risk assessment coordinator/teacher to provide academic support services to all students.

## Mitigation Measures

### Universal and correct wearing of masks

All students and adults riding the school busses will be masked at all times, per federal mandate. The School District of New Auburn School Board adopted thresholds to determine when students, staff, and visitors will be required to wear masks and when mask wearing will be optional. These thresholds are based on COVID activity in individual classrooms or schools, the level of COVID transmission within the district's geographic boundaries, and in Chippewa County. Details about these thresholds can be found on the district website. Currently, Face Masks are presumed optional unless the spacing of an activity proves masks necessary, or athletics at a competitor's facility require them.

### Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (for example, the use of cohorts and podding)

All students and adults are expected to socially distance at least three feet from each other whenever possible. Mitigation measures such as proper signage in multiple languages, the installation of floor decals and water bottle filling stations, and the promotion of social distancing have been implemented. Extended and/or staggered meal service will be implemented to support social distancing while ensuring adequate time for students to consume their meals. Individual schools will determine the cafeteria service that best suits the needs of their students. Food Service Staff will load each student's plate and hand it to the students. Transportation will comply with CDC guidelines regarding capacity that are in effect during the 2021-22 school year.

### Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Students and adults who are present in or on school grounds or school transportation are asked to be extra vigilant with washing their hands or using hand sanitizer often. The virus lives around us and it is still very much a health concern to all. These school reopening guidelines are an attempt to recommend safety precautions and still carry on normal school operations as long as we can.

### Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Enhanced sanitation procedures have been implemented and continue at all schools focusing on high-touch surfaces. The District uses cleaning solutions that are rated to kill the SARS virus. In addition to daily cleaning, all rooms and surfaces may be treated with a nano-technology barrier solution on an as needed basis. This solution is rated to last 30 days on surfaces. The District constantly monitors all air intake ventilation units, both manually and electronically. These ventilation units function at all times.

### **Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments**

The School District of New Auburn will not be continuing contact tracing and transparent reporting to the public of COVID-19 cases and staff quarantines within the District. The District is following the Chippewa County action of doing what it can to provide transparent reporting for our stakeholders, but does not guarantee that every case will be traced or communicated. The parents will have the ultimate choice of when their student returns to the classroom as long as their student is returning at least 5 days after a positive test with an additional 5 days of wearing a mask in the school building.

The School District of New Auburn will guide parents/students, employees, and contractors on screening protocols for the daily pre-screening process, which all parties should complete before entering the campus/building. The school will continue to provide current health information to staff, students, and families about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, when they should stay home, and when they can return to school. Procedures for contact tracing can be found on the district website.

### **Diagnostic and screening testing**

The School District of New Auburn recommends students and staff get tested for COVID by their medical provider or a local pharmacy. Currently, the District is not providing any form of testing and will not make test kits available to students or families.

### **Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible**

All eligible staff employed in 2020-2021 were provided the opportunity to be vaccinated. Parents and students are responsible for their own vaccinations or choice to remain unvaccinated for Covid-19. New staff will be given access to vaccinations by working with local healthcare providers and/or County Public Health.

### **Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies and practices**

When circumstances require specific policies or procedures designed to protect the health and safety of students, 504 and IEP teams will determine if modifications and/or reasonable accommodations are needed for individual students with disability-related issues.

### **Coordination with state and local health officials**

The CDC recommends that all decisions about implementing school-based strategies should be made locally, collaborating with local health officials who can help determine the level of transmission in the community. The School District of New Auburn continues to work with the Chippewa County Public Health to implement mitigating strategies for the safety of students and staff.

# Continuity of Services

## Overview

The School District of New Auburn will provide for continuity of services as follows:

### **Student Academic Needs**

The School District of New Auburn plans to continue full-time, in-person instruction beginning the fall of 2021, with limited exception. The School District of New Auburn has employed a full time At-Risk Coordinator/Teacher that will assess and assist all K-12 students showing need for any academic recovery in core curriculum areas. This specialist will work in partnership with classroom instructors, and will be available during the instructional day and possibly for before and after-school tutoring programs throughout the year and during Summer School 2022 if the need arises.

### **Student Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs**

Counseling staff is in place to address the students' mental health including any social and emotional learning needs.

### **Other Student Needs (which may include student health and food services)**

Food services will continue to provide meals under the community provision as long as USDA continues the allowance. Meals will be provided for summer school attendees as well as all eligible youth during the school year. Summer meals will be provided for summer school and all children age 18 and under through at least June 30, 2022.

### **Staff Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs**

The District has provided staff with opportunities for social and emotional supports through post-school hour meetings with the counseling staff and nursing staff. The staffs social, emotional, and mental health needs may also be addressed through the Employee Assistance Program provided through the District insurance program.

### **Other Staff Needs**

The District will follow national, state, and local governing agencies' laws and directives concerning staff employment and benefits.

# Periodic Review

## Overview

### District response on ensuring periodic updates to its plan

The School District of New Auburn will review its Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Plan monthly and revise the plan as needed. The plan is required to be reviewed at least every six months through September 30, 2023.

Currently, the School District of New Auburn School Board and Administration will seek and take into account public input during the review process of the plan, which will occur each month, as the plan review is a standing agenda item for each Board of Education regular monthly meeting. Public input is encouraged and welcome during any Special Board of Education meeting held to address any immediate or emergency need to amend the Plan.

Plan revisions will address updated CDC and County Public Health guidance on safely reopening schools if any are issued.

## Public Input

### Overview

The School District of New Auburn has taken the following steps to make its plan available to the public:

- The plan is posted at <http://www.newauburn.k12.wi.us>.
- The plan is available in multiple languages from the District Office as needed.
- The plan was sent to parents, students, and employees via our messaging systems.
- The plan was shared at the regular monthly School District of New Auburn Board of Education meetings. An opportunity for public comment is available during the Board meetings.
- Upon request, a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA may be provided with the plan in an alternative format accessible by contacting our district office.