

**Neenah Joint School District
COVID Recovery Plan
2021-2022 School Year**



COVID Recovery Framework

The Neenah Joint School District COVID-19 Recovery Framework is intended to provide support and guidance to District and school leaders by adjusting plans to ensure safety of our students and staff members as the COVID-19 Pandemic evolves. Similar to the process used to create the Rocket Re-entry Framework, NJSD established five teams to (1) conduct an after-action study of the Rocket Re-entry process that would help to inform COVID recovery work and (2) establish practices and procedures to be implemented in the 2021-22 school year. In addition to these five teams, the Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD) assisted in developing the recovery framework. The Leadership Team accepted, discussed, and finalized the recommendations from the five subcommittees: safety, personnel/policy/finance, community engagement, learning, student services. The process each team used to develop this plan is linked [here](#).

NJSD Goals

Safety: The Neenah Joint School District continues to value the safety of our students, staff, and families. Plans to return to school have taken into consideration the variety of safety needs that will exist within our buildings and reflect input and guidance from the Winnebago County Health Department, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) .

Social and Emotional Well-being: We understand that the 2020-21 school year presented unique challenges for our students and staff. As a result, the overall emotional health and well-being of our students and staff will remain at the forefront of all planning efforts. In coordination with the District's Mental Health Coordinator, a continued focus will be placed on building a positive and supportive culture among students and staff.

Instruction: The Neenah Joint School District understands the importance of meeting our students where they are and aims to provide instructional methods that will continue advancing the learning of all students. As individual barriers to learning are met, methods will be differentiated so as to address gaps in learning that may have become more pronounced over the last year.

Flexibility: The Neenah Joint School District will return to school for in-person learning on September 1, 2021. With that in mind, we understand the importance of flexibility in being able to shift our plans and methods of instruction should the need arise. The Neenah Joint School District is prepared for virtual learning, should this become necessary, and has an established framework in place to provide digital instruction via the use of our Learning Management Systems, Schoology and SeeSaw.

Administrative Oversight

Given the fluid nature of the COVID-19 virus and corresponding effects, it is necessary for NJSD Administration to have oversight to ensure students experience in-person learning while at the same time being in a safe learning environment. As we have in the past, the administration will work in collaboration with local health officials to make necessary decisions to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 virus in our schools based on collective conclusions related to guidance from the CDC, AAP, and other health organizations. When interpreting this guidance, the administration will make decisions based on all available data. Data points when making may include but are not limited to:

- COVID-19 prevalence and/or incidence in our classroom(s), school(s) and/or District
- COVID-19 prevalence and/or incidence in our community
- Evidence of COVID-19 transmission in our classroom(s), school(s) and/or District

Note: Prevalence refers to the portion of the population that has already been infected while incidence refers to the portion of the population currently infected.

In order to determine mitigation procedures, the administration established guidelines included in this section. This process represents a collaborative effort between NJSD and local health officials to use all available information to determine mitigation steps that can be taken at the classroom, school, or district level. The mitigation process can be found [here](#).

~~At this time, no new decision-making progression has been created to determine transitions that might take place. Administration will work with WCHD to establish what this might look like for the 2021-22 school year. In the absence of this, the administration will consider the thresholds of incidence established last year. You can refer to those metrics [here](#).~~

COVID-19 Recovery: Staff and Students

SAFETY

Masking

Masks will be optional for all students, staff, and visitors during the 2021-22 school year as long as indicators of COVID-19 in the District remain low. Masking requirements apply to students, staff, and guests of the schools in NJSD. Masks may be required when incidence, prevalence, and/or transmission of COVID-19 in our classroom(s), school(s) or District are high. [More detailed guidelines for masking can be found in the mitigation process document linked above.](#)

COVID-19 Testing

On-site PCR testing will be available for all NJSD students and staff at no cost. Students and staff will have access to testing if consent is provided to the District. Further consent is required for NJSD to receive records and results of on-site tests. Students and staff are strongly encouraged to test for COVID-19 when symptoms are present. Unvaccinated students are strongly encouraged to test for COVID-19 when they are deemed a close contact to a positive case. COVID-19 tests are most effective 7 days after the most recent contact with a positive case. On-site testing is not available to family or household members of District employees.

NJSD may require testing in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 in classroom spaces. An outbreak of COVID-19 is defined as 2 or more positive cases in a single classroom. Unvaccinated students refusing a test in the event of an outbreak will be required to quarantine for 14 days consistent with state and local health department guidelines.

All students entering a school's health office with COVID-19 symptoms will be required to take a COVID-19 test. Unvaccinated students who refuse a COVID-19 test will be required to quarantine for 10 days. Unvaccinated siblings living in the same household will also be required to quarantine consistent with CDC, state, and local health guidelines. Vaccinated siblings who are symptom-free are able to remain in school.

Vaccinations

NJSD strongly encourages all eligible staff and students to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Keeping our schools open at full capacity is aided by high rates of vaccination among students and staff. The highest priority is for our students and staff to remain in school. Receiving a COVID-19 vaccine is the most effective way for staff and students to do so. NJSD will not, however, require students, staff, or visitors to be vaccinated. Students or staff deemed a close contact to a positive COVID-19 case will not require quarantine, provided they remain symptom free, and the community and District prevalence remain low. NJSD may ask for proof of vaccination in order to confirm excusal from quarantine. Vaccinated students are not required to participate in any required testing resulting from an outbreak of COVID-19 in classrooms.

Visitors

NJSD will welcome visitors into our schools. Though masking or proof of vaccination are not required at this time, NJSD administration may make changes throughout the course of the year depending upon the prevalence or incidence of COVID-19 in a classroom(s), school(s), District or community in order to ensure the safety of our staff and students.

Lunch

Lunch will be served in cafeterias or normal dining spaces. Administration will be provided latitude to shift lunch and other procedures when COVID-19 prevalence is high.

Bussing

Students riding busses have the option of wearing masks. Students will not be assigned seats but are encouraged to sit in the same seat as household members when possible. This may change based upon community prevalence.

Extracurricular Activities

NJSD will work with the WIAA to establish guidelines for extracurricular events and participation.

PERSONNEL AND PROCEDURES

Employee Vaccination

All NJSD employees are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID-19 though NJSD will not require its employees to be vaccinated.

Employee Exposure

NJSD employees who test positive for COVID-19 are to be isolated based on recommendation of the medical provider and/or WCHD recommendations.

Employees who are not vaccinated and are deemed a close contact to a positive COVID-19 case may be required to quarantine for 14 days from last exposure to a COVID-19 positive case or 10 days from symptom onset. District sick leave may apply, but it only applies for the illness of the employee or where necessary to care for a sick family member per the [Employee Policy Manual](#). As in the past, medical verification may be requested and necessary. Except in unique circumstances, employees will not be permitted to work from home during the period of quarantine. Employees will also be required to have two weeks of lesson plans prepared in advance in order to ensure continuous learning for students.

Employee Meetings

NJSD employee meetings will be held in-person unless otherwise indicated by meeting organizers.

General Operations and Health Precautions

The following general operating guidelines will be implemented in NJSD buildings:

- Hand sanitizer will remain available in all classroom and office spaces throughout NJSD to ensure adequate sanitizing.
- Social distancing will be observed in spaces where possible to ensure safety and health of our students.
- NJSD Maintenance and Operations staff members will continue to adhere to regular cleaning and sanitizing protocols. When heightened levels of cleaning and sanitizing is necessary, supplies will remain readily available.
- Hand-touch water fountains will be disabled. Touchless bottle fillers will remain active. Students are encouraged to bring a labeled water bottle to use while at school.
- Fans will be permitted in classrooms or spaces that are able to bring outside air into the classroom.
- In order to promote safe distancing in classrooms, staff members will not be permitted to bring in personal furniture items. This applies to all couches, chairs and tables. Carpets/rugs, bookshelves and lighting fixtures may remain in classrooms. Furniture items will be removed by the staff owner and disposed of, if needed, off of District property.
- Outside agencies will be permitted to use NJSD facilities provided a formal agreement for facility use has been established between the agency and NJSD.

STUDENT LEARNING

Plan for Accelerated Learning

During the 2020-21 school year, the Neenah Joint School District implemented an acceleration of learning strategy designed to teach grade level content while providing “just in time” instruction that supports unsecured learning or untaught content/skills. “Just in time” instruction is delivered when the related material is presented during the established scope and sequence of the grade level curriculum during the school year. As part of our 2021-22 learning plan, NJSD will continue to utilize this strategy to best support all students and embed the necessary planning into our building action planning process. The building action planning process focuses on goals set forth within the [Learning Acceleration Guide: Accelerating Learning in the 2020-21 School Year](#).

Systemic Plan to Accelerate Learning

- (1) Building level action plans will be created by building principals and building leadership teams.
- (2) Unfinished learning will be diagnosed for prerequisite skills and content knowledge
 - (a) Gather timely information on what students already know

- (i) NJSD Concepts About Print (CAP)
 - (ii) Grade 3 word study diagnostic
 - (iii) Grade 4 word study diagnostic
 - (iv) 5 Words Their Way diagnostic
 - (v) Grades K-5 Bridges unit screeners
 - (vi) Teacher created diagnostics on pre-requisite skills (just in time) grades 6-12
- (b) Conduct baseline assessments
- (i) Grades 1-8 iReady (Reading and Math)
 - (ii) 4K and Kindergarten PALS (October)
 - (iii) 4K Math Screener
 - (iv) Grades 9 - 10 ACT Aspire
 - (v) On-demand writing K-8
- (3) Pacing guides will reflect where additional support may be needed based on (1) and (2) above:
- (a) Select/create updated instructional materials to address prerequisite learning (1) and/or unfinished learning (2)
 - (b) All teachers use materials in courses for which they were designed
 - (c) Use diagnostic data to determine delivery method (whole group or small group)--teacher/class specific decision

In-Person Learning

All NJSD schools will return to full, in-person learning for the 2021-22 school year. While social distancing will occur when possible, we will fully utilize our facilities to promote student learning. This means students will move freely to physical education, music, art, and other spaces throughout the building without restriction. Teachers will be free to employ all necessary instructional approaches to promote learning for all students including small group instruction and individual student conferences.

Transition to Virtual Learning

The decision to transition to virtual learning, if necessary, will be done in conjunction with WCHD when the prevalence of COVID-19 in our District reaches a level where in-person learning is deemed unsafe for students and staff. Should it be necessary to initiate virtual learning for all students, guidelines for virtual learning included in the 2020-21 Rocket Re-entry plan will be instituted.

Teachers should be prepared for a transition to virtual learning by including two weeks of lesson plans in Schoology or Seesaw throughout the year to ensure a smooth transition to the virtual environment if necessary.

Absent Students

Students who are absent from school will have access to learning materials via the NJSD Learning Management System, Schoology or Seesaw. Activities are expected to be completed independently.

STUDENT SERVICES

The mental health of NJSD students is a high priority. Students in NJSD will be returning to fully in-person school with all of their peers for the first time since March of 2020. It is important for NJSD to create structures to support our students where they are when they return to school. To address the social and emotional needs of our students, the following will be implemented:

- A District-wide mental health team led by the Mental Health Coordinator and composed of school counselors, school psychologists, and social workers will meet bi-weekly to ensure students are able to access resources to support their social and emotional needs.
- Flowcharts created by the mental health team will be distributed to all classroom teachers to be used in classroom settings. The [elementary](#), [middle school](#), and [high school](#) flowcharts help to support our teachers in getting students connected to the resources they need.
- At least 15 minutes scheduled into each school day will be used to support the social and emotional well-being of students at all grade levels. As quoted from DPI's Education Forward: Safely and Successfully Reopening Wisconsin Schools, (DPI, p. 45), "Start each day with a welcoming activity and end with an optimistic closure." As part of that 15 minutes, teachers would:
 - Set the tone for respectful learning
 - Establish a climate of trust
 - Build connection with students and between students
 - Encourage collaboration
 - Support social, emotional and academic learning
 - Provide safety procedure updates

The structure of the 15 minutes, called Community Circles, would include

1. Acknowledging or greeting all students
2. Sharing in large or small groups (This allows peers to check in with one another and for the teacher to gauge how students are doing.)
3. Group Activity (e.g., [3 Signature Practices to support SEL Playbook](#) from CASEL and presented in DPI's re-entry recommendations; [Morning meetings](#), [Mindfulness](#), character education, team building exercises, brain breaks, physical exercises, etc.)
4. Announcements (This could include providing the day's schedule, informing students of any changes in routine or teaching/reteaching safety measures.)
5. Leveraging materials and processes from Sources of Strength at Neenah High

School to be incorporated into Advisory and/or AACP periods.

Lessons and ideas for Community Circles will be housed in a Schoology group, called COVID-19 Planning, for convenient access by staff.

- Each building will employ diagnostic tools to gather data on the mental health needs of students in order to identify students in need of support outside of the classroom and, at times, outside of school.
- Each building will develop a reorientation process for students returning from virtual learning. This reorientation process will include processes for family outreach in order to assess needs of students returning from virtual learning.