

# West Central Education District 2020-2021 Back to School Plan



This plan will cover MDEs required elements for each of the 3 models primarily for the Beacon Program and the Area Learning Center

Updated November 9, 2020

# Info and Message from Laurie Fevig WCED Executive Director

West Central Education District (WCED) is a service organization with 4 member school districts including Albany, Melrose, Sauk Centre and Paynesville with the primary purpose of overseeing special education procedures.

Besides special education oversight, WCED operates 3 programs including Birth to 3 Early Intervention, Beacon Setting IV Behavioral Program and an Area Learning Center. The Beacon Program and ALC will follow all MDE and MDH requirements for safety protocols including wearing masks, 6 ft distancing, regular hand washing and implementing daily symptom screening.

WCED also employs staff who provide services to the students within the member district schools including: School Psychologists, School Social Workers, Motor Team of Occupational Therapists, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant and a Physical Therapist, Teachers for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Audiologist and a Vision Consultant. All staff will follow requirements from districts for screening and staying home when sick.

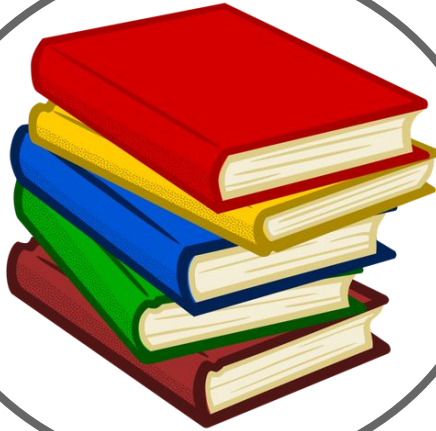
The 2020-2021 School Year will always be remembered due to the coronavirus, however, the WCED staff are also committed to it being a year of understanding, flexibility, grace, respect and patience! We will do our best to continue providing quality special education services to the students in our member districts.

~Laurie Fevig, August 2020~

# BACK TO SCHOOL FOCUS Areas



operations



instruction



culture

# MN safe Learning Plan: Learning Model Parameters

Localized, data driven approach (Number of positive COVID-19 cases in a county is a guide for moving learning to a different model)

- Number of cases per 10,000 people over a 14 day period within a county
  - Band 1: 0 to less than 10 ---> in person Beacon and ALC
  - Band 2: 10 to less than 20 ---> in person Beacon, hybrid ALC
  - Band 3: 20 to less than 30 ---> in person Beacon, hybrid ALC
  - Band 4: 30 to less than 50 ---> in person Beacon and distance learning for ALC
  - Band 5: 50 or more ---> distance learning for all students

The county case rate is 1 factor used in making decisions to move to a different learning model. Community and program data is equally, if not more, important in making Learning Model decisions.

**Please know, if we have a number of students/staff “exposed” to someone testing positive with COVID-19 or a number of staff unable to come on site to work, we will be going into distance learning. Changing models will be communicated to students and guardians via Remind.**

# MN Safe Learning Plan: Learning Model Parameters

MDE's Safe Learning Plan states: "***After the initial selection of a learning model for school opening, the decision to shift to an alternative learning model should center on the impact of COVID-19 at the school level, while maintaining awareness of changes in viral activity in the community through continued review of the biweekly county-level case data.***" This means that school districts and charter schools will need to take into account not only the county-level case data when determining learning models, but also the number of confirmed cases, quarantines, and close contacts in your school community, each school building within your district, and other data such as individuals with influenza-like illness.

West Central Education District's Incident Command Team meets regularly to review county, community and program data to make decisions regarding Learning Models. The primary goal is to maintain in person instruction in a safe and healthy environment.

If it is determined a program needs to move to a different Learning Model, parents will be notified as soon as possible to allow time for planning. If the model change is due to the number of staff with symptoms, the learning model may require a very quick change.

# BIRTH TO 3: Based on guidance from MN Department of Health & MN Safe Learning Plan



Services will continue to be provided the same number of times a month as the current IFSP indicates.

Home visits will be conducted through video options such as google meet or facetime if families have the technology and access or through phone calls. B to 3 families will also be able to receive some of their visits in person at the school or church within the community. Families will continue to have access to service coordinators and service providers through the same format as previously used: email, texting, or phone calls.

Materials such as toys, packets, activities may be dropped off at families homes with coordination and permission from families. Staff are not allowed to be in the home and are encouraged to drop off items at the doorstep. All items will be wiped off prior to dropping off for the family and once picked up from the family, materials will be cleaned and handled based on MDH guidelines.



Staff will continue to provide information to families for any mental health supports requested.

# Beacon Program & Area Learning Center

## Beacon Program

- Setting IV Special Education Behavioral Program
- Located in Sauk Centre Secondary Building
- Current enrollment is students in grades K-7
- Focused on increasing self regulation and social skills in interpersonal relationships and academic situations.

## Area Learning Center

- Located in the Community Services Building in Melrose, MN
- Current enrollment is students in grades 6-12
- Focused on self management, interpersonal relationships, and college/career readiness

**We believe positive relationship skills with students and families is critical in the academic and social development of individuals.**



# OPERATIONS



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

## Arranging Spaces to Maximize Physical Distancing

- Classroom furniture will be reduced to essential items.
- Hybrid: classroom spaces will be set up to support 50% fire code capacity and 6 feet physical distancing between student/staff work spaces.
  - ALC: students will be assigned a classroom to work in, staff will rotate to rooms.
  - Beacon: will prioritize students working in designated spaces

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Increased classroom cleaning and disinfecting throughout the school day by program staff and custodial staff. Enhanced bathroom cleaning.
- Additional cleaning in the case of a known or suspected COVID-19 cases
- Increased opportunities for students and staff to wash hands throughout the school day.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers; to be used as entering rooms
- Toys/items will be cleaned between use





# OPERATIONS



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

## Screening Expectations:

- Staff are expected to self screen prior to coming to school (including taking temperature)
  - Students will have temps taken upon arrival to school or school transportation
- Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms need to contact the school nurse and administrator prior to coming to school or work.
  - Cough (new onset or worsening)
  - Shortness of breath
  - Fever over 100.4 or higher
  - Chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Sore throat
  - Loss of sense of smell or taste
  - Gastrointestinal symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea
  - Had a direct household contact with person who tested positive for COVID-19 or who is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19



# OPERATIONS



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

## Isolation Rooms

When students/staff are on campus and showing signs of COVID-19, the school nurse will be notified and the individual will be monitored in a designated isolation room until they are able to be picked up by a guardian. Beacon will access Sauk Centre isolation room and ALC will access Room 22.

**Student or staff exposed to someone testing positive for COVID-19: stay home for 14 days on distance learning**

## Communicating Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

- WCED requests parents/guardians and staff to self report if they or their student have COVID-19 symptoms, a positive test, or have been in close contact with someone that has COVID-19.
- Cases confirmed on campus will be communicated with staff and families via Remind.
- CDC revised Close Contact guidelines to include being within about 6 ft for 15 cumulative minutes throughout the day.



# OPERATIONS



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

## Individual Supplies and Equipment

- To minimize community materials, teachers will provide specific supplies needed by students
- WCED will issue a chromebook to each student; chromebooks must remain in school issued case. All devices are monitored for appropriate school use. Violations may result in confiscation of device and alternative learning materials will be provided.

## Visitors

- To reduce mitigating factors, visitors are not allowed without permission

## Face/Mask Coverings:

- Face/Mask coverings are required when indoors (visual reminders)
- Students having medical reasons to struggle with wearing a mask, contact teacher/principal.



# OPERATIONS



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

## Transportation

- Districts will provide transportation based on WCED program calendar.
- Students experiencing “illness” during the school day will need alternative transportation home.

## Meal Expectation/Drinking Fountains

- When students are attending on site, assigned spaces will be set to optimize physical distancing and minimizing changes in groups of people.
- When students are attending virtually, lunches are available through resident districts. Contact resident district to confirm plan and delivery specifics.
- Drinking Fountains are turned off, bottle fillers will remain open. Please send refillable bottles to help stay hydrated.



# OPERATIONS



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

## School Athletics, Extra Curricular

Check with member districts regarding opportunities and procedures

## Posters/Visual Reminders

- Wear a mask
- Good hand washing practices
- Physical Distancing
- Screening Procedures



# OPERATIONS



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

### Staff:

- WCED 2020-2021 Plan
- Currently known facts about COVID-19
- Overview of Custodial Cleaning
- Staff member cleaning responsibilities
- Self screening requirements
- Identifying symptomatic students
- Face coverings
- Protocols for sending/receiving items from homes
- Cross-Training and Absence Planning

### Parent/Guardian:

- WCED 2020-2021 Plan
- Transferring items between home and school
- Scheduling changes (including internet and food)
- Face coverings
- How to Screen/What to Screen For
- Use of Technology



# INSTRUCTION



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

- 0-under 10 Case rate in Stearns County; except for students who have chosen distance learning.
  - If circumstances change for a student, administrative conference is required.
- Face covering (mask or face shield) is required.
- Opportunities to teach/learn formats that will be needed to be successful in distant learning (google classroom, joining and accessing features in google meet)
- Maximizing physical distancing (up to 6 feet when possible)
- Promoting healthy habits (hand washing)
- Limit sharing of items; assigned seating
- Cleaning spaces between use



# INSTRUCTION



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

- Face Covering (mask or face shield) is required
- Limit sharing of spaces/items; assigned seating
- Promoting health habits (hand washing)
- Teach/practices routines that will increase independence participating in distance learning
  
- Beacon:
  - Due to the size of the Beacon program and the enrollment, “hybrid” for Beacon will look the same as in person.
  
- ALC
  - 10-under 20 case rate in Stearns County
  - Students have scheduled time on campus on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and/or Friday
    - All classes are synchronous (8:30-2:30)
  - Wednesday is distance learning for all students following a “2 hour late start schedule”
  - All classes are synchronous (10:30-2:30)





# INSTRUCTION



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

Beacon and ALC will accommodate the needs of students who are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19. This includes honoring requests of parents who may elect to continue distance learning due to an underlying medical condition of the student or others in the home. Contact Tara McLellan if you want to discuss further; 320-256-7836

- Students attend virtually each class period
- Classroom teachers will provide live instruction as well as be available to students throughout the class period.
- Google Classroom; Google Suite is the main platform
- No State Testing

Beacon Schedule:

- Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri Schedule: 8:30-3:00, Wed: 8:30-1:00

ALC Schedule:

- Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 8:30-3:00, Wed 10:30-3:00 (2:30-3:00 individual support)



# INSTRUCTION



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN Safe Learning Plan

## Prioritizing In Person Instruction

According to Executive Order 20-82, if the district makes the decision to move to Distance Learning for all grades or specific grades, districts may continue to prioritize in person instruction for students with disabilities, English learners, students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care and students struggling academically.

Decisions will be made by administrators, IEP Teams and general education teachers based on each student's individual needs. The plan will be communicated with parents through their teacher or case manager. Expectations for staff providing instruction and services are to adhere to all health and safety protocols set forth from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH).



# INSTRUCTION



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN State Learning Plan

## Beacon and ALC

- Students will earn letter grades unless otherwise determined by the team. Students and guardians have access to grades through JMC; grades are updated weekly, report cards sent home quarterly
- Students are “in attendance” when attending on campus or joining live instruction during distance learning. Submission of assigned task and reciprocal communication with teacher is also considered “in attendance”.
- Attendance is reported daily at Beacon and each period at ALC.

## Technology

WCED will issue chromebooks to each student. Chromebooks going to and from school need to come to school fully charged. We will work with member districts to access internet for families in need. Chromebooks are for school use. Students will be taught appropriate use/care of the device to promote good use. Concerns/issues with device need to be reported immediately to ensure possible replacement. Misuse may result in confiscation.



# INSTRUCTION



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN State Learning Plan

- All Due Process guidelines will be provided in all 3 models.
- When programs are providing instruction in person, team meetings will be encouraged to be virtual
- When programs are in hybrid or distant learning, team meetings will be virtual.
- Virtual meetings will be set up using Google Meet. Please find a quiet place with a good connection to maximize participation. For safety reasons, do not participate or join while in a moving vehicle.
- Due Process documentation requiring signatures will be sent home with students, mailed, or emailed. Parent/guardian can respond with approval via email when actual signature is not possible.

# CULTURE



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN State Learning Plan



## Social Emotional Learning

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) will be prioritized. Not only will the programs have a specific time for explicit teaching, but will also embed this learning and support throughout our school day. Strategies and resources for home and community will be shared with students and families. Contact school and ask for the school social worker for specific SEL needs.

SEL focuses on:

- Self Awareness
- Self Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision Making Skills



# CULTURE



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN State Learning Plan

Communication is critical to support the learning and development of students. We are committed to keeping you informed and encourage you to reach out with any questions you may have. Phone calls, emails, virtual meetings, and or using “Remind” are all great options to stay connected.

“Remind” will be our school-wide messaging system. Announcement such as but not limited to:

- changes in our delivery of instruction (in person, hybrid, distance for all)
- confirmed COVID case among our students, staff, and/or community in which our programs are located
- weather that may impact school
- updates in our schedule



# CULTURE



Based on guidance from  
MN Department of Health  
& MN State Learning Plan

MN Positive Behavior Support Network:  
<https://mnpbs.org/mnpbs/>