



BENTON-STEARN'S Education District 6383

517 2nd Street South, P.O.Box 299, Sartell, Minnesota 56377-0299 (320)-252-8427 FAX (320) 252-1316

Erin Dohrmann, Executive Director

Kandice Voigt, Assistant Director

2021-2022 Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan *for* Independent School District #6383 July 2021

Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan and ESSER III Application:

Benton Stearns Education District (BSED) has developed a plan meeting the statutory requirements of Section 2001(i)(1) and (2) of the ARP Act. This revised document is meant to address all of the new requirements in paragraph (a) and (b). The document is written in an understandable and uniform format, and to the extent practicable, in a language that can be understood. If any individual is in need of an alternative format, please contact Erin Dohrmann, Executive Director, at 320-257-7348 or edohrmann@bentonstearns.k12.mn.us.

BSED is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our staff, students, guests, and visitors. To ensure we have a safe and healthy workplace, BSED has developed the following COVID-19 Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. All BSED employees are responsible for the implementation of this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our workplaces and communities, and that requires full cooperation among our employees. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons in our workplaces.

The COVID-19 Plan is administered by the Executive Director of Special Education or her designee, who maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, all employees are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. BSED Administrators, Case Managers, and Support Staff have the District's full support in enforcing the provisions of this plan.

Our students and employees are the District's most important assets. BSED cares about safety and health and protecting its stakeholders. Public engagement is essential in developing and implementing a successful plan. We have involved stakeholders in the development and implementation of our plan, and continue to solicit and welcome public input. BSED's COVID-19 Plan follows the industry guidance developed by the state of Minnesota, which aligns with guidance and information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19, Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards, and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders. The industry guidance addresses:

- ensuring sick employees and students stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- ensuring employees are afforded their appropriate regulatory rights under federal and state laws;
- social distancing – employees and students are encouraged to remain at least three to six feet apart;



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- employee and student hygiene and source controls;
- workplace building and ventilation protocol;
- workplace cleaning and disinfection protocol; and
- communications and training practices and protocol.

Protocols are updated as new guidance is provided by the CDC, MDH, MDE and OSHA standards related to COVID-19.

BSED has reviewed and incorporated the industry guidance applicable to our business provided by the state of Minnesota for the development of this plan, including the following MDH and MDE guidance related to school openings. Other conditions and circumstances included in the industry guidance and addressed in the plan that are specific to our business include:

- protocols for guests and visitors;
- additional protections and protocols for personal protective equipment (PPE);
- additional protections and protocol for access and assignment;
- additional protections and protocol for sanitation and hygiene;
- additional protections and protocols for work clothes and handwashing;
- additional protections and protocol for distancing and barriers;

Ensure sick employees and students stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons

Employees and students have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Procedures described below have and will continue to be communicated and implemented to assess employee and students' health status prior to entering the workplace and for workers to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms.

BSED uses the [decision tree](#) based on CDC and MDH guidance related COVID-19 Symptoms. As guidance is revised, the decision tree will be updated accordingly. The Executive Director will coordinate the notification of the appropriate agencies, students, visitors, and/or employees if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19. BSED works closely with local Public Health agencies to identify, communicate, and support students, families, and staff who are considered close contacts of a positive COVID-19 case.

In addition, BSED adheres to all federal and state regulations and laws to protect the privacy of employee and student health status and health information.

Employees

1. A [self-assessment](#) is encouraged to be used by each employee before entering school grounds
2. Employees who are experiencing symptoms as described in the self-assessment or for whom a temperature screen indicates a needed response must contact their Supervisor immediately, and should not report to work until cleared to do so.
3. Staff notifications of confirmed COVID-19 case exposure will follow MDH guidance.



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BSED has implemented leave policies that promote employees staying at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when required by a health care provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household in accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”) and the Americans with Disabilities Act. (“ADA”). Accommodations for employees with underlying medical conditions, or those who have household members with underlying health conditions, have been implemented in accordance with the ADA.

Students

1. A [self-assessment](#) is encouraged to be used for each student before entering school grounds or school transportation by the student, parent or caregiver.
2. Students exhibiting symptoms outlined in the decision tree must be absent from school until symptoms meet the return to school standards of the decision tree.
3. Parents of students who test positive for COVID-19 must contact the school office immediately upon learning of the test results.
4. Parents must contact their school immediately to report absences for students who are experiencing symptoms as described in the self-assessment.
5. Student notifications of confirmed COVID-19 case exposure will follow MDH guidance.

Visitors

1. A [self-assessment](#) is encouraged to be used for each visitor entering school grounds.
2. Visitors who are experiencing symptoms as described in the self-assessment are not to enter a BSED building and should contact their medical professional for further direction.

Face Coverings

All employees, students and visitors are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings. Universal and correct wearing of masks will be communicated, promoted and available. Employees who serve districts, on-site who require the use of face coverings, will follow specific district guidelines.

Social Distancing

Social distancing will be encouraged between employees, students and visitors in the workplace through administrative controls noted below.

Classrooms

1. Classroom seating will be configured with maximum allowable space between students.
2. Instructional plans will be created to limit the sharing of digital materials, limit shared equipment and maintain appropriate social distancing as possible.

Hallways

1. Drinking fountain access may be limited based on guidelines. Bottle-filling stations will be accessible and students will be encouraged to bring refillable bottles to school.



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Common Spaces

1. Where appropriate, visual cues to encourage traffic flow and spacing will be implemented throughout the building.

Outdoor Recess

1. Students will be encouraged to wash or sanitize their hands before and after using playground equipment.

Employee, student and visitor hygiene and source controls

Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at our workplaces at all times. Employees are encouraged to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their shift, prior to any mealtimes and after using the restroom. All employees, students and visitors to a District building are asked to wash or sanitize their hands prior to or immediately upon entering the facility. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) are at entrances and locations in the BSED buildings so they can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled. Source controls are available in all District buildings.

Employees, students and visitors are encouraged to wear masks at all times. Employees, students and visitors are being instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and to avoid touching their face, particularly their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. Employees, students and visitors are expected to dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on posters and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available to all workers and other persons entering the workplace.

- Employee and student work stations will be cleaned on a regular basis.
- Employees, students and visitors will have access to hand sanitizer either through self-administration or adult supervisor for younger individuals.
- The borrowing or sharing of any items will be discouraged.
- The use of reusable water bottles will be encouraged.
- The District's food service department will implement processes as recommended by MDH, FDA and MDE.

Workplace building and ventilation protocol

Operation of the building in which employees and students are located, includes necessary sanitation, assessment and maintenance of building systems, including water, plumbing, electrical, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

- Outside recess is encouraged for elementary students
- Outside gym time is encouraged for elementary and secondary students



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Workplace cleaning and disinfection protocol

Regular practices of cleaning and disinfecting have been implemented, including a schedule for routine cleaning and disinfecting of work surfaces, equipment, tools and machinery, vehicles and areas in the work environment, including restrooms, offices, break rooms, lunch rooms, meeting rooms, classrooms, locker rooms, and drop-off and pick-up locations. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting is being conducted of high-touch areas, including phones, keyboards, touch screens, controls, door handles, elevator panels, railings, copy machines, credit card readers, delivery equipment, etc. Appropriate and effective cleaning and disinfecting supplies have been purchased and are available for use in accordance with product labels, safety data sheets and manufacturer specifications, and are being used with required personal protective equipment for the product. Increased daily cleaning protocols will be instituted at all facilities with an emphasis on repeated cleaning of high-touch/high-traffic areas.

- Disinfectant is available so that cleaning can occur throughout the day.
- Procedures have been developed for cleaning and sanitizing shared objects and equipment. Any contaminated area will be closed until proper cleaning and disinfection has been completed according to CDC and OSHA guidelines.

Materials/Meals

District food service and purchasing departments have established material and food procedures that meet the requirements of MDH, FDA and social distancing guidelines.

Appropriate Accommodations

Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies have been provided. To learn more, parents/guardians should contact his/her child's case manager.

Vaccinations

Vaccination information provided by the Minnesota Department of Health and local public health officials will be communicated to families.

Coordination with State / Local Public Health

BSED Officials will continue to coordinate and implement plans with State and local public health officials.

Communications and training practices and protocol

The COVID-19 Plan, as well as changes to the plan, have been and remain posted on the [BSED Website](#) for all stakeholders to review and provide feedback. Training related to COVID-19 is continuous and delivered by



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individual departments based on guidance from the CDC, MDH, FDA and MDE. Additional communication and training will be ongoing by utilizing the District email system to all employees and students.

Additional information will be communicated to all employees, students and visitors, about protections and protocols, including: 1) social distancing protocols and practices; 2) material / meals; 3) practices for hygiene and respiratory etiquette; and 4) recommendations or requirements regarding the use of masks, face-coverings and/or face-shields.

Employees, students and visitors will also be advised not to enter the workplace if they are experiencing symptoms or have recently tested positive for COVID-19. Administrators, managers and supervisors are expected to monitor how effective the program has been implemented and report discrepancies to the Executive Director. All Administrators, case managers, supervisors and support staff are to take an active role and collaborate in carrying out the various aspects of this plan, and update the protections, protocols, work-practices and training as necessary.

ESSER III Application Information and Plan :

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act includes money for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER). The third round is known as ESSER III. These funds are used for such things as efforts to address the academic impact of lost instructional time during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school year and for COVID-19 pandemic response purposes.

Part A: Contact Information

District: Independent School District 6383

Name: Benton Stearns Education District

Contact Name: Erin Dohrmann, Executive Director
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320-2577348

Michelle Evenson, Business Manager
mevenson@bentonstearns.k12.mn.us
320-257-7392

Part B: Identifying Assets and Needs

Section 1: Asset Mapping

The District will coordinate with local community organizations in order to assess what services are available for our students and staff.

BSED staff participated in numerous meetings throughout the 2020-21 school year between school districts and community leaders, which included representatives from:



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- Surrounding School Districts
- Regional Support Team
- Updates provided by the Minnesota Departments of Education and Health

During these meetings, the District was able to:

- identify skills in the community, which supported BSED activities
- partner with organizations to share facilities
- identify and share financial resources to best support students and families (i.e. mental health, access to technology, meals, etc.).

Assets that became available included, but were not limited to:

- meal service and food opportunities
- mental health support
- vaccination support
- increased access to technology

Section 2: Needs Assessment

The District will look for opportunities to assist in supporting the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of our students and how they have been impacted due to loss of instructional time.

The District will work with each parent/guardian to identify any evidence of learning loss due to the impact of COVID-19. Appropriate interventions will be identified by individual student teams and coordinated with the support of member districts.

Section 3: Communication

The District will continue to look for opportunities to communicate with stakeholders regarding current updates and recommendations. Resources available to students, families, staff, and community members will be shared through the District website. Future changes to the District's Safe Learning Plan will be posted on the District website.

Certified by:

Erin Dohrmann

Executive Director

July 30, 2021