



North Union Community School District ***Return to Learn*** *The Warrior Way!*

Mission: *Educating with excellence to build a foundation for lifelong learning.*

Vision: *We collaborate to provide consistent standards of practice with high expectations for all learners.*

RETURN **TO** LEARN

THINK DIFFERENTLY. TEACH DIFFERENTLY. LEARN DIFFERENTLY.



ON-SITE
LEARNING



REQUIRED
CONTINUOUS
LEARNING



HYBRID
LEARNING

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Developed by the Blended Learning Task Force

Committee Members

Travis Schueller - Superintendent

Robert Zotz - NUHS Principal

Julie Runksmeier - Swea City Elementary/MS Principal

Katie Black - Fenton Elementary Principal

Anita Helmich - Director of Teaching and Learning

Amber Henderson - NU School Nurse

Iowa Department of Education Stated Return to Learn Planning Goals.

- *Ensuring that remote learning options are available for all students;*
- *Planning to help students catch-up for the learning they may have missed during school closures;*
- *Integrating public health strategies into Iowa's schools;*
- *Enabling schools to move between on-site and remote learning as needed; and*
- *Helping the Department and our partners at Iowa's area education agencies (AEAs) understand how best to support schools.*

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1 - Leadership and Infrastructure

Overview

The North Union Community School District will leverage leadership structures and teams that are already in place. These teams will address changing needs in a COVID-19 world. We recognize the need to plan, review, modify, train, and implement on a continuous cycle as we venture through the challenging time.

1.1 Operations

- School Board
 - Locally elected At-Large & Member Board
 - Oversees all operations of the School District
- District Leadership Team
 - The District Leadership Team is made up of a Superintendent, Building Administrators, and Teacher Reps.
 - The DLT sets District goals, reviews District performance data, reviews BLT action planning progress, recommends the school calendar to the School Board, and will review and revise all parts of this plan.
- Building Leadership and Instructional Team
 - NUCSD has three Building Leadership Teams: High School, Swea City Elementary/Middle School, and Fenton Elementary. Representatives are selected by building leadership to represent the comprehensive needs of the building.
 - They are charged with creating Action Plans to carry out the specific goals of the District Leadership Team.
 - Provide curriculum-based resources and coaching to teachers to complete BLT and PLC Goals
- Professional Learning Communities
 - Made up of Grade Level or Content Level Teams
 - The teams are charged with creating action plans to carry out the goals of the Building Leadership Teams they serve under.
- Instructional Leadership Team
 - Made up of all district administrators and TLC Coaches
 - Provide curriculum-based resources and coaching to teachers to complete BLT and PLC Goals
- Management Team
 - Made up of all Administrators
 - Oversee all district employees and the daily management functions for the district
 - Central Office Personal

1.2 Organization and School Calendar

- [North Union Schools 2022-2023 School Calendar](#)
- Utilization of the 20/80/80 Model
 - The First 20 Days will be utilized to accomplish three major functions
 - Recover - Staff will spend time building relationships with students, evaluating their behavioral health, letting them become comfortable with their peers again, and telling their stories of this historic event.
 - Assess - Teachers will use Historical Data, new Universal Screeners, and District created assessments to pre-assess where students are entering the school year with their learning.
 - Onboarding - There are new digital expectations and requirements of our students. We will utilize this time to practice new procedures, learn from home in a digital environment, communicate using digital platforms, and prepare to learn from a Learning Management System.
 - 80 and 80 - The rest of the year will be made up into two semesters comprising of 80 days apiece. This will slightly reduce the traditional content that is taught in a year. Teachers are working to accelerate student learning and remove unnecessary units or lessons.
- Hybrid Learning Schedule (**See Section 3 for more information*)
 - *Only Utilized if Needed to meet social distancing requirements*
 - Students will be scheduled into ½ of their traditional classes and the other ½ of their learning will be completed remotely online.
 - Students will be placed into a Cohort Group - A or B schedule.
 - A Schedules - Meet in person on Mondays and Thursdays. These students will be learning from home on Tuesdays and Fridays.
 - B Schedules - Meet in person on Tuesdays and Fridays. These students will be learning from home on Mondays and Thursdays.
 - Wednesdays will be digital learning for all students. This day will give us a chance to clean the buildings, plan for digital instruction, and assist students where it is needed.
 - ****If a week is impeded by a scheduled no school day or a holiday the "Wednesday Schedule will be omitted and the other days adjusted to accommodate.**

Regular Hybrid Model

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cohort A	Attend School	Digital Learning	Digital Learning	Attend School	Digital Learning
Cohort B	Digital Learning	Attend School	Digital Learning	Digital Learning	Attend School

Potential 4 Day Week Model

	Holiday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cohort A	No School	Attend School	Digital Learning	Attend School	Digital Learning
Cohort B	No School	Digital Learning	Attend School	Digital Learning	Attend School

*Childcare Needs - We know that in a Hybrid Model, childcare becomes a major concern. We are actively working to provide childcare options for school aged children in a safe and nurturing environment.

1.3 Technology

- 1:1 Technology - Each student will be provided an iPad or Chromebook to take home with them on a daily basis.
- Home Internet - If students are unable to access the internet in the home a task force will be deployed to support getting that student the internet resources they need. We will work with a three-phase system to work with local providers and overcome any obstacles that may arise.
- Infrastructure and WIFI - OCSD has built a robust system of access points and switches, connected through a Fiber backbone to create a single Network across multiple campuses. We are currently working to improve our signal strength to our outdoor areas and parking lots with strong outdoor Wifi Access Points.
- Mobile Access - Through surveys and infrastructure audits it has been determined that providing mobile Wifi locations is not ideal for student learning or economic purposes for the district. Other resources will be deployed across our communities to support local and in-home internet access when needed.

- Ongoing Technology Support will be provided through our technology team and student-run SWAT Team. A “help desk” system will be deployed to troubleshoot technology problems with remote computer access and extended office hours.
- Learning Management System - OCSD has purchased licensing agreements to utilize two LMS systems within the district: Canvas in the secondary and Seesaw in the primary grades. Google Classroom may also be utilized for some classes.

1.4 Communications

- NUSD will utilize 5 methods to regularly communicate with families, students, and the community:
 - Student E-mail
 - SIS push messaging
 - Social Media Posts
 - District website
 - Print Media.
- Three main areas that we will regularly communicate:
 - Changes to District Policy of Procedure
 - Changes to Educational Delivery
 - Health and Safety Updates.

1.5 Professional Development

- All staff will complete required Mitigation Training - August 2020
- All staff will complete required Health and Safety training - August 2020
- All future professional development for staff will be delivered in a Blended Learning environment and will be warehoused on our Campus Website for posterity.
- Specific Courses will be developed to address: Teacher Orientation, Teacher Mentoring, Standards-Referenced Grading, Blended Learning, Suicide Prevention, Health, and Safety Protocols, and SEBH related to COVID-19

Additional References & Resources

2 - Health and Safety

Overview

We have reviewed recommendations and mandates from the CDC ([LINK](#)) and Iowa Department of Public Health ([IDPH link](#)) to build our own policies and guidance in the areas of health and safety. This is a top priority of the school district and one that we must hold ourselves accountable to.

2.1 Public Health

- Identify additional mitigation needs across the district to determine the number of PPE and cleaning supplies each school has access to and needs in order to ensure the health and safety of teachers/staff, students, and their families
- Determine essential staff for essential functions who may need to meet on school grounds
- Create a Health and Safety team:
 - Coordinates with the district/school emergency operations planning team
 - Identifies and works with local public health contacts
 - Reviews and addresses school nurse's PPE supply needs
 - Reviews and addresses custodial staff's PPE and appropriate cleaning supply needs for ongoing environmental surface cleaning
- If meetings occur on school grounds, ensure environmental surface cleaning occurs where individuals have frequented. For example, high touch surfaces such as tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, water fountains, etc.
- Staff will be provided professional development on best practices around effective mitigation strategies.

2.2 Student Health and Wellness

- Reviews and supports identified students with chronic health conditions placing them at risk
- Support personal protective measures such as frequent handwashing, coughing/sneezing etiquette, and keeping hands away from the face
 - Reviews and addresses encounter data results related to health office visits
 - where students were returned back to class
 - those who were sent home
 - students who were sent home
 - students who required emergency services related to student health needs
- The structure of the health office includes:

- One space for healthy students coming for routine needs, medication, diabetic checks, asthma management, first aid/injury assessment, etc.
- School nurses have the PPE needed to provide health services safely.
- Second space for students and/or staff who are ill or need to be evaluated for possible infection
- Appropriate ventilation
- Foot traffic is appropriately managed.
- Practice appropriate social distancing
 - Attempts will be made to have students remain 6 feet apart
 - no more than 10 individuals or a number determined by the department of public health or state emergency command center for safety

2.3 Employee Health and Safety

- Custodial staff have the personal protective equipment and appropriate cleaning supplies needed for ongoing environmental surfaces cleaning
- Custodial staff have ongoing education on how to appropriately use PPE and cleaning supplies
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children from inhaling fumes
- Facilities are routinely cleaned to maintain the health and safety of teachers, staff, students, and the community
- Buses are cleaned between routes and prior to and after transport
- Reducing the load on common areas through altered scheduling
- Increasing space among students during in-person instruction
- Community building use outside of school hours and custodial needs
- Building access points of delivery and receiving for schools to reduce outside traffic in the school building
- Support personal protective measures such as frequent handwashing, coughing/sneezing etiquette, and keeping hands away from the face
- Consider the use of personal protective measures as a supported culture of prevention encouraged throughout school buildings and district office for all staff and visitors
- Ensure personal protective equipment (PPE) is available - where needed
- Provide education to [Faculty](#) and Students

References & Resources

3 - Iowa Academics

Overview

We consider ourselves to be leaders in unique and innovative educational practices. The Acceleration Modeling the Iowa Dept of Education is currently advocating in this environment has been a part of our PLC and Proficiency Scale work for 5 Years. In 2015 OHS and OMS became 1:1 environment and 2017 we were 1:1 PK-12. We feel we are more than prepared to tackle the unique challenges of educating in a COVID-19 environment.

3.1 Programs and Services

- Resources on distance learning
- Training for teachers/staff
- Access to and use of different technology and distance learning options
- Engaging learners in distance learning options (LMS Parent Lessons)
- Privacy and FERPA in online learning
- Transitioning materials to an online format
- Support for families in supporting their children in online learning
 - Family training resources
 - The North Union School District will create, position, and train staff to become Family Educational Coaches.
 - These individuals will support families in the educational needs of at-home education.

3.2 Curriculum Planning and Updates

- Protocols are in place to review missed learning opportunities. Utilization of vertically aligned curriculum will ensure instruction is aligned to needed skills. Teachers can pre-teach emerging skills and accelerate student learning as students show progress.
- We are using data to start prioritizing needs–i.e., students who had math and reading intervention
- Three weeks of summer school in July (face-to-face session) to jump-start academic learning for targeted students

3.3 Delivering Education

North Union School District will be able to deliver 3 Models of Education to meet the needs of All Students in the North Union School District.

Onsite - Blended Learning (General Enrollment)

- This will look very similar to a traditional approach to an educational schedule and calendar.
- Students will be enrolled in a traditional class schedule.
- All students will be issued an iPad or Chromebook.

- Students will be enrolled in a Learning Management System to support the blended learning environment.

Hybrid - Blended Learning (General Enrollment)

- Students will be required to attend 50% of their regular class schedule in person, while the other 50% is completed in a digital environment.
- Students will be scheduled into an alternating day schedule.
- A systemic and fair approach will be derived to build schedules that support families with multiple students in the district receiving complementary schedules.
- Students will be required to complete work on their non-school days to meet compulsory attendance requirements.
- The same amount of content will still be delivered in this model.

Online - Blended Learning (General Enrollment)

- In the event of quarantine or temporary shutdown due to COVID-19 outbreaks, we will be able to provide continued educational opportunities in a digital environment.
- Students will take technology devices home and will be able to connect with the teachers and course work through the use of a Learning Management System.
- This model may also be used in the event a teacher or student may need to temporarily quarantine.

Special Programs

- North Union will continue to provide access for High School students to enroll in courses with Iowa Lakes for those students that qualify.

Innovative Ideas

- Our staff is innovative - We will reserve the right to let them try new and innovative ideas to meet the challenging needs of the times. There will be problems we have not thought about and solutions we think will work that don't. Supporting our staff in their own innovation is a core value we will continue to support.

4 - Social Emotional Behavioral Health

Overview

We want all staff and students to be Happy, Healthy, and Awesome. Two years ago we started the Student Services Team made up of all of our mental health staff members and School Counselors. This team has been foundational in our PBIS work and ensuring that the SEBH needs of our students are being met. They will continue to take a leadership role in this Return to Learn process to help us recover from these traumatic experiences and to accelerate forward with new learning opportunities.

4.1 Supporting Teacher/Staff SEBH

- We have already started to begin looking at teacher/staff data to determine social-emotional-behavioral needs and will continue to monitor and evaluate staff needs within the first weeks of the school year.
- Our District Management Team will assess this data and adjust resources when necessary to provide additional support to staff when and where it is needed.

4.2 Supporting Student SEBH

- We have already started to begin looking at students to determine social-emotional-behavioral needs and will continue to monitor and evaluate students' needs within the first weeks of the school year.
- Each building has a PBIS team - they will create new activities to build relationships, comradery, and review building expectations. There will also be new building level expectations that need to be taught and practiced that will be COVID-19 related.

4.3 Continuous support for families

- We have already started to begin looking at families to determine social-emotional-behavioral needs and will continue to monitor and evaluate family needs within the first weeks of the school year.
- Teachers and Staff will keep a connection log to track progress and family connections. Results will be shared and evaluated by each BLT.

References & Resources

[Staying Connected While Practicing Social Distancing](#)
[COVID-19 Guidance: Family School Engagement Resources, Best Practices, and Considerations](#)

5 - Equity

Overview

Creating equitable learning opportunities is of the utmost importance to North Union's educators and families. We recognize families are at different places in their capacity to provide distance learning. Equity in this context is focused on ensuring all students:

- Have access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE),
- Are able to access our support, content, and teaching, and
- Have the support needed to progress in their learning.

5.1 Ensuring all students have support

- All students will be provided with technology resources
- All students will have access to age and ability appropriate educational resources and support.
- When appropriate, accommodations will be provided to individual students to meet their needs.
- Staff will be made available to support students that may not be ready to access their education in a blended environment.

5.2 Special Education

- All renewed IEPs during the 2020-21 School Year will specifically address learning in a virtual environment.
- If scheduled school days and seat time restrictions are put in place we will reach out to families to schedule IEPs meetings to adjust delivery of minutes to be representative of the new expectations and guidelines. (If Gen. Ed students are expected to learn digitally for 2 hours a day - it would be unfair to continue to meet SDI requirements beyond those limits)
- NUCSD Administrators and Special Education Staff will identify students and families needing additional supports to ensure access to FAPE. IEP meetings will be held if the student's educational plan needs to be modified.
- Staff will reach out to each family of a student with an IEP to survey if plans need to be adjusted to meet the needs of a blended learning environment.

5.3 504s

- School Administrators will identify students and families needing additional 504 supports.
- Staff will reach out to each family of a student with a qualified 504 to initiate a meeting to adjust plans to meet the needs of a blended learning environment.

5.4 ELL

- School Administrators will identify students and families needing additional language support.

- Provide instructional materials in appropriate languages.
- NUCSD will make interpretive and translation services available when necessary.

5.5 At-risk

- School Administrators and At-Risk coordinators will identify students and families needing additional school support.
- NUCSD will utilize resources and structures within the McKinney-Vento Act to identify students in need and connect them with district coordinators to ensure equitable access to learning resources and support.

5.6 Gifted and Talented

- School Administrators and the TAG coordinator will identify students and families needing additional school support.
- Meetings will be conducted to update and coordinate additional learning resources needed to help accelerate learning for our talented and gifted students.

6 - Data

Overview

NUCSD has been utilizing data to make decisions for years and will continue to leverage the systems already in place to evaluate the successful implementation of our plan, Social and Emotional Health, Equity, Health, and the delivery of the Iowa Core.

6.1 Data Collection

Attendance

- Consider metrics other than present/absent to confirm school participation
- Use engagement and/or time on task with online tools to validate attendance
- Progress through online content can be used as a proxy for attendance
- Consider unique family and student circumstances and accommodate needs
- Ensure local attendance policies are consistent with the *Return-to-Learn* plan

6.2 Standardized Assessments

Grading

- Reframe thinking on grades so they reflect learning relative to course standards and competencies rather than seat time.
- Adjust current policies to reflect changes in the delivery model.
 - For example, some may have a local attendance policy that has language about automatic drops for not attending school which should be revised to support a more flexible and supportive attendance policy.
- Use formative assessments to gauge progress in content and course competencies and summative assessments to measure performance on content and course competencies.
- Establish a system of credits and grades based on [competency](#).
- Bundle standards that connect current course and grade-level expectations with prerequisite expectations to address potential learning gaps.
- Think about consequences for high school students—GPA, Regent Admission Index (RAI) scores, extracurricular eligibility.
- Allow cross-curricular and field learning experiences to validate course competencies in CTE and other pertinent classes for credit.
- Find creative ways to deliver curriculum, based on staff strengths, in a synchronous setting (retaining teacher of record with appropriate endorsements).
 - For example, there may be one teacher in the science department who would be designated as the online teacher who provides instruction to students who are unable to attend at the physical location.