



RETURN TO

»»» stability

»»» meals

»»» friendship

»»» support

»»» engagement

»»» excitement

»»» safety

»»» instruction



RETURN TO »»»» LEARN

A COMMUNITY CORNERSTONE

The Dubuque Community School District, along with public schools across the state and nation, is proud to have served as one of our community's cornerstone institutions when COVID-19 emerged in the United States and forced the closure of schools in March 2020.

We have provided meals, internet connectivity, educational resources and learning opportunities, support in multiple languages, and countless other touchpoints of support.

Now, as we work toward a return to instruction for the 2020-2021 school year, we remain equally committed to ensuring that each and every student in our community is afforded an outstanding educational experience.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Since March 2020, the COVID-19 situation has continued to develop and much has changed over that time. It also remains to be seen how the situation will continue to evolve as we approach the beginning of the school year.

Given this, the district Return-to-Learn Plan is based in a simple principle: **FLEXIBILITY**.

It is also grounded in the following principles:

- » Student and staff safety is at the forefront of our planning.
- » Students will return requiring both strong educational delivery and significant social-emotional-behavior support systems.
- » We will communicate transparently with families and staff as the situation evolves.
- » We will work to reduce barriers for students in traditionally underrepresented groups.

This plan is a fluid, guiding document that will continue to evolve and change as the situation around does. The district will communicate additional information about the return to learning in August as updates are available.

2020-2021 SCHOOL START DATE

Our primary goal is to prepare for learning to resume in August with students and teachers back in the classroom, bringing our schools to life once again. We want our community of learners together in person as soon as it's safe to do so!







With that as our goal, the Dubuque Board of Education approved moving **the first day of classes for grades K-12 to FRIDAY, AUGUST 14**, with orientation for grades Pre-K-5, 6 and 9 on **THURSDAY, AUGUST 13**.

It was our goal to add as many student attendance days as possible for next year and, thanks to great teamwork and collaboration among the district, our many bargaining units, and the district teacher quality committee, we are able to do so.



THREE EDUCATIONAL SCENARIOS

As a district, we have developed a model that allows us to have three required delivery options available depending on the status of the COVID-19 situation as the school year begins:

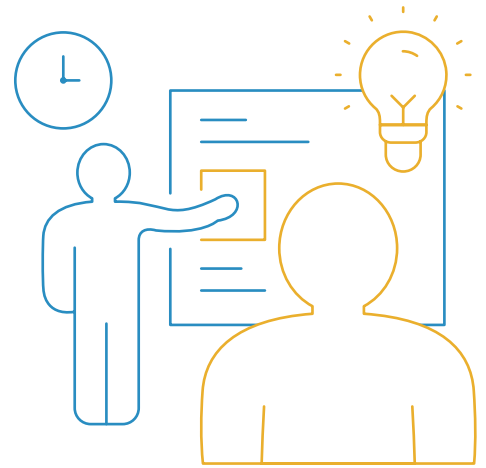
-  **1**  **FULLY IN-PERSON** EDUCATION
-  **2**  **FULLY ONLINE** EDUCATION
-  **3**  **HYBRID EDUCATION:** delivered as a combination of **IN-PERSON** and **ONLINE** education

Based on the current COVID-19 situation, the district will be prepared to select one of these three options as necessary.

OPTION 1 IN-PERSON LEARNING

The power of strong personal relationships is critical to providing an outstanding educational experience to be delivered to students. We know that we will never be able to replicate the educational experience delivered through in-person learning. That is why our first and foremost preference for returning to school is to do so with students and teachers together in classrooms.

The delivery of instruction and grading for in-person learning will be conducted as it has been in the past, with the addition of many safety and prevention measures in place to provide the safest possible learning experience for students and staff.



HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Health and safety of students is at the forefront of our work, and the Dubuque Community School District continues to utilize the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), and local health officials.

Recommendations for safety protocols are expected to be continuously evolving and the protocols below will be modified as needed based on current guidance, research and best practices.

PREVENTION PRACTICES

In alignment with guidelines from the CDC and the IDPH:

- » Students and staff who are ill or exhibiting any symptoms of illness should not come to school or work.
- » Staff and students who have been exposed to a person with confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 should follow current CDC recommendations to stay home and monitor their health. (Per CDC guidance, exposure is considered to be within six feet of the diagnosed individual for 15 minutes or greater.)
- » Students and staff will be educated on and reminded of proper prevention techniques, including:
 - » handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students and staff. (If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used.)
 - » covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue, throwing used tissues in the trash and washing hands immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

- » Signage will be posted throughout schools that promote everyday protective measures and describe how to stop the spread of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a face covering).
- » Students will be discouraged from sharing items that are difficult to clean or disinfect (including electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids) and classroom practices will be modified to minimize sharing.

SCHOOL SAFETY PRACTICES

- » During arrival and dismissal times, schools will use as many entry and exit points as possible to avoid large gatherings of students in one area.
- » Students and staff are expected to conduct a temperature screening each day at home prior to arriving at schools, and students/staff are not allowed to attend school if their temperature is 100.4 or above. **(NOTE: At this time, the district's plan to have students self-screen temperatures each day is a local decision based on consultation with**

local public health officials and legal counsel. THIS IS AN AREA OF CURRENTLY EVOLVING GUIDANCE. Plans for temperature screening will continue to be reviewed and modified based on current guidance, data and best practices as the school year approaches.)

- » The district anticipates that face coverings will be required some or all of the school day. **THIS, HOWEVER, THIS IS AN AREA OF CURRENTLY EVOLVING GUIDANCE and a final decision is expected on this topic in mid- to late- July.** The district is also continuing to explore the legality of doing so and anticipating further guidance from the Iowa Department of Public Health, the CDC and other health experts.
- » School health office protocols will create a separate space for the care of students who are ill, while having another space to serve the general health and medication needs of students.
- » Depending on student attendance rates, classroom setup will be modified to the extent possible to create as much physical distancing among students and staff as possible.

- » Alternate indoor spaces and outdoor areas will be used to the extent possible in order to enhance physical distancing.
- » Classes will minimize movement through the building, only moving when necessary to do so. Common areas will be reconfigured by spacing out or eliminating furniture to minimize crowding.
- » Visitor and volunteer protocols will be reviewed and adjusted to focus on essential visits.
- » Passing times will be staggered when possible in order to reduce the number of students in hallways.
- » While many steps will be taken to provide physical distancing, there is no way to guarantee it in all instances.

FACILITY CLEANING

- » Custodians will conduct a deep cleaning of each school nightly using hospital-grade disinfectant that can have a residual effect of up to a 24 hours.
- » Custodians will increase the frequency of daytime cleaning of common touch surfaces including handrails, door handles, etc., using hospital-grade disinfectant.
- » Custodians will increase the frequency of restroom checks to ensure hand soap and paper towels remain available.
- » Buildings and grounds staff will work to maintain adequate inventory of building cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment.
- » Regular inspections of ventilation and air handling systems will be conducted to ensure normal operation.

TRANSPORTATION

- » All buses will be deep cleaned each evening with hospital-grade disinfectant that carries an up to 24-hour residual effect.
- » Hand sanitizer will be available at the door to each school bus.
- » Students and staff on school buses will wear appropriate face coverings while on the bus.
- » Seating on school buses will be assigned.

FOOD SERVICE

- » All food service staff members will continue to meet personal protective and food safety guidelines required for food service operations.
- » At the elementary school level:
 - » Lunch menus will be modified to help speed service lines.
 - » Lunchroom capacity will be reduced to 50 percent and boxed meals will be provided as needed to allow for students to eat in classrooms or alternate locations.
 - » At breakfast meal sites, additional tables will be added to maximize space to allow for increased physical distancing.
 - » Schools with more than 100 students participating in breakfast will move to grab-and-go breakfast bags in the classroom in order to reduce the number of students in a cafeteria space.
- » At the middle level:
 - » The number of lunch periods will be increased (between 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.) to reduce the number of students in cafeterias to 50 percent capacity and allow for increased physical distancing, as needed.
 - » The number of serving lines will be increased to reduce the number of students using each line, as needed.
- » At the high school level:
 - » The number of serving lines will be increased to reduce the number of students using each line, as needed.
 - » Additional common spaces will be utilized for lunch to reduce the number of students in one area as possible.

STAFF TRAINING

- » District staff will participate in the state COVID-19 safety training module, which includes information on use of PPE, prevention measures and safety measures, and maintaining a healthy and safe classroom environment.

» YOU ALWAYS HAVE OPTIONS

We recognize that some students may be unable to attend school in-person due to either pre-existing medical conditions or out of personal family choice. We understand these decisions are difficult ones and families must make educational decisions that are best for their families.

If families are not comfortable sending their student to school, there will be an option to select a required online learning program for students to continue their education.

At the elementary school level, online education for families not wishing to attend in person will be delivered by district teachers following a model similar to the remote education model outlined later in this plan.

At the middle and high school level, online education for families not wishing to attend in person will be delivered via the Edgenuity online learning platform and supported by a district teacher.

In late July, if in-person learning will be underway for the start of the school year, those choosing to participate in the online learning option will be asked to commit to doing so. Elementary and middle school student will be asked to commit to remaining in the online learning format for the entire first trimester. High school students will be asked to commit to remaining in online learning for the entire first semester.

In both instances, the district will have an option for students choosing the online learning option to pick up meals provided by the district.

OPTION 2 ONLINE CONTINUOUS LEARNING

Should the COVID-19 situation force another disruption to in-person learning in the future, the district will move to deliver education to students via an online continuous learning model. The district has developed a high-quality plan for delivering online continuous learning should it be needed.

If the online continuous learning model is implemented, there will be some noticeable differences from the online learning that occurred in spring 2020:

- » Online continuous learning will now be **required**
- » **Attendance** will be taken by teachers
- » Coursework will be **graded and credits will be granted**

Online learning will consist of both synchronous (live) and asynchronous (on demand) learning.



TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Realizing that adequate technology resources are needed to effectively provide required remote learning, the district is procuring the technology necessary to ensure that each student has access to a high-quality digital device that meets the needs of today's learners.

At the **high school level**, over 3,300 student computers were already in the hands of students at Dubuque Senior High School, Hempstead High School and the Alta Vista Campus through our ongoing Anytime, Anywhere Learning Initiative in its third year. This means that every student at these schools has a district-issued laptop.

At the **middle school level**, the district has moved into a one:one model similar to the high schools, which will provide each middle school student with a laptop computer.

At the **elementary school level**, the district is purchasing 1,900 additional devices to ensure that in the event of a move to online continuous learning, the district could transition to deploying one device for each elementary student to take home. In grades PreK-1, the device use will be an Apple iPad. In grades 2-5, students will receive an HP laptop.

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

Access to the internet is critical to students – and yet many in our community are without adequate access needed in today's world. While this equity issue cannot be addressed by the district alone, we have taken significant steps to reduce this barrier for students and families:

The district currently has approximately 350 internet hotspots, purchased during the initial school closure in the spring, that are available for check out to families who do not have internet access. These hotspots provide wireless internet connections to 4-5 devices simultaneously, allowing students without internet access to have it available.

The district has also purchased and installed outdoor wireless access points at all 19 school buildings in the district. These access points provide community members with free internet access from Wi-Fi zones located in school parking lots between 6:30 a.m.-9 p.m. daily. Those utilizing a Wi-Fi zone are able to do so from their vehicle in order to reinforce appropriate physical distancing efforts.

TRANSITION TO ONLINE

If the decision is made to transition to online continuous learning, the district's goal is to move into the device and educational material distribution process within 72 hours.

All distributions will be conducted in a way that allows for appropriate physical distancing for the safety of students, families and staff.

For this distribution:

- » The district will prepare technology devices for at-home deployment.
- » The district will prepare internet hotspots for families needing internet access.
- » Schools will schedule and communicate pick-up procedures, locations and times.
- » Students will collect:
 - » All personal belongings from school
 - » District issued technology devices
 - » Textbooks, workbooks or other printed resources at the direction of the school or teacher

The framework that follows outlines the current plan for delivering fully online continuous learning, broken down by elementary, middle and high school levels. These plans will continue to evolve and be modified over the summer, and therefore are subject to change.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DELIVERY



For our youngest learners, we understand that guidance may be needed from home to support student learning in this model, and we are thankful for the support and flexibility that has been exhibited by families across the district.

The following framework will be used to guide elementary school learning in a fully online continuous learning model, utilizing a combination of synchronous (live) and asynchronous (on demand) learning. The goal is to ensure flexibility for students and families.

Note that this framework may include modifications or variations depending on grade level.

Primary Technology Tools

- » **Clever:** The online hub that provides access to district-supported electronic curriculum tools as well as resources provided by classroom teachers.
- » **Seesaw:** The learning management tool that houses student lessons and assignments from teachers, while also supporting communication between elementary students and their teachers, as well as communication between teachers and parents/guardians.
- » **Zoom:** The video conferencing tool used to support synchronous (live) class interactions and lessons.

Attendance

- » Students will be considered in attendance for the day if they have logged in to Clever before 3 p.m. on each school day.
- » Teachers will contact parents/guardians if the student has not logged in to Clever for two consecutive days.
- » If a student will be absent for the day, the parent should send a message to the teacher via Seesaw or email to inform them of the absence.

Grading

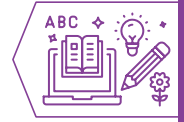
As they are in an in-person learning setting, students will be assessed by teachers in a variety of ways to determine the student's progress toward meeting the standards. These assessments will include:

- » Paper/pencil tasks completed through Seesaw
- » Individual observations through Zoom or in small groups if possible as students are ready, based on formative assessments
- » NOTE: Teachers will provide feedback on assignments in a timely manner

Weekly Check in Meeting

Each elementary school student will participate in a weekly 15-25 minute check-in meeting with an assigned staff member once a week, led by certified teaching staff.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMMING



Preschool classrooms in district schools will modify the elementary online continuous learning framework to accommodate the age and developmental stage of preschoolers. Partner preschool centers participating in the Statewide Free Voluntary Preschool Program will develop their own plans for delivering instruction. All preschool programs will be aligned to meet the Iowa Early Learning Standards and the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.

Daily Directions

Delivery of core curriculum is the primary goal during online continuous learning. To begin each school day, students will watch a daily recorded video announcement (approximately 10 minutes in length) posted to Seesaw, which will include:

- » A greeting
- » The reading standards for the day
- » The math standards for the day
- » The writing mini-lesson of the day

Literacy Instruction

Students will participate in scheduled 15-minute small-group activities each day aligned with daily Seesaw activities. Handouts and theme reader materials brought home from school will be supported with:

- » Imagine It reading instruction
- » LEAD 21 reading instruction and activities
- » "Must Do" and "May Do" activities from teachers aligned with small group work
- » Lexia online reading program, with time determined by the program

Math

Students will participate in 20 minutes of whole group math instruction each day, aligned to standards-based learning targets and assigned daily Seesaw activities. Math worksheets and take home materials will be supported with:

- » Bridges/Number Corner activities, provided live and recorded for students unable to participate in the Zoom session
- » Three 20 minute sessions of ST Math online math program each week (kindergarten and first grade)
- » Three 30 minute sessions of ST Math online math program each week (second through fifth grade)

Science/Social Studies/Health

Students will have access to recorded lessons each week, accompanied by Seesaw activities based on the standards that week and supported by take-home resources.

Specialists

Students will receive learning in specialist areas of art, music and wellness once per week.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ONLINE DELIVERY

As a district, we recognize that in an online continuous learning setting, middle school students may have responsibilities at home to support elementary school siblings. As such, much of the middle school learning delivery will be delivered in a largely asynchronous (on demand) format that allows students to complete school work at the time of the day it is most possible for students to achieve.



The following framework will be used to guide middle school learning in a fully online continuous learning model.

Primary Technology Tools

- » **Canvas:** The learning management system used at the secondary level to facilitate coursework, assignments and teacher interactions.
- » **Zoom:** The video conferencing tool used to support synchronous (live) class interactions and lessons.

Attendance

- » Students will be considered in attendance for the day if they have logged in to Canvas before 3 p.m. on each school day.
- » Teachers will contact parents/guardians if the student has not logged in to Canvas for two consecutive days.

Grading

- » As they would be in a classroom setting, students will be assessed in a variety of ways to determine a student's level of progress toward mastering standards. Teachers will provide feedback on assessments in a timely manner.

Tentative Class Schedule

- » On Mondays and Wednesdays, students will complete lessons in math, science and exploratory courses.
- » On Tuesdays and Thursdays, students will complete lessons in language arts, social studies and specialist (art, music, wellness) classes.
- » On Fridays, student will participate in a Zoom session with their home base class, engage in social-emotional learning lessons, and complete work from the week.
- » Students will have daily work to complete and teachers will provide guidance on when other assignments are due.

Teacher Support

- » On the day of their classes, teachers will post lessons on Canvas in the morning and hold office hours for students during the day for students with questions.
- » On non-class days, teachers will focus on providing student support and feedback, while preparing upcoming lessons.
- » On Fridays, teachers will continue to provide student support and feedback while also conducting house and content meetings, facilitating home base Zoom meetings and preparing lessons.

HIGH SCHOOL ONLINE DELIVERY

As a district, we recognize that in an online continuous learning setting, high school students may have responsibilities at home to support younger siblings. As such, much of the high school learning delivery will be delivered in a largely asynchronous (on demand) format that allows students to complete school work at the time of the day it is most possible for students to achieve.

The following framework will be used to guide high school learning in a fully online continuous learning model.

Primary Technology Tools

- » **Canvas:** The learning management system used at the secondary level to facilitate coursework, assignments and teacher interactions.
- » **Zoom:** The video conferencing tool used to support synchronous (live) class interactions and lessons.

Attendance

- » Students will be considered in attendance for the day if they have logged in the Canvas before 3 p.m. on each school day.
- » Teachers will contact parents/guardians if the student has not logged in to Canvas for two consecutive days.

Grading

- » As they would be in a classroom setting, students will be assessed in a variety of ways to determine a student's level of progress toward mastering standards. Teachers will provide feedback on assessments in a timely manner.

Tentative Class Schedule

- » On Mondays and Wednesdays, students will complete lessons in English, math, family health and consumer science, music, and wellness courses.
- » On Tuesdays and Thursdays, students will complete lessons in social studies, science, art, industrial education, business and wellness courses.
- » On Fridays, student will participate in an Advisory Live Zoom session, engage in social-emotional learning lessons, and utilize Intensive Intervention Time to receive support from teachers.
- » Students will have daily work to complete and teachers will provide guidance on when other assignments are due.

Teacher Support

- » On the day of their classes, teachers will post recorded instruction on Canvas in the morning.
- » Monday through Thursday, teachers will also hold Open Zoom sessions for answering student questions and reteaching material as needed.
- » Monday through Thursday, teachers will also hold Invite-Only Zoom sessions for students who need additional support based on assessments.
- » On Fridays, teachers will facilitate Zoom sessions with Advisory students, conduct Intensive Intervention with students and prepare additional lessons.



OPTION 3 HYBRID LEARNING

The district’s final learning option is to move into a hybrid learning model in which students attend school in person for some time during the week and participate in online learning on the days they are not in school in person. This would allow for a reduced number of students to be in buildings while providing a combination of onsite and online learning.



In a hybrid model, each primary household in the district would be assigned an A day or B day on which they would attend school in person. On opposite days, students would participate in online instruction. At the elementary school level, learning days not at school will include a combination of online learning, hands-on activities and project learning to support standards taught in the classroom.

This model will operate in a ten-day rotation during which each student in the same primary household would attend half of the school days in person and complete half online. **Here is an example of a sample two-week period:**

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|
| A | B | A | B | A |
| A | B | A | B | B |

NOTE: student attends in person on either A or B, depending on what they are assigned, and participates online on opposite day

Attendance

In-person days will follow the normal in-person attendance policy, while the online days will follow the same attendance policy as the online continuous learning model.

Instructional Delivery

In the hybrid model, instruction will be delivered using a combination of traditional in-person teaching methods and those described in the online continuous learning section of this plan. Technology tools used will also be consistent with those used in the other two instructional scenarios. On a student’s online day, they will work on asynchronous (on-demand) learning. Teaching practices will be modified to maximize a student’s in-classroom experience while focusing the at-home day on supporting instruction that occurs in the classroom.

TOGETHER.

WE inspire.

WE teach.

WE engage.

WE learn.

WE challenge.

WE empower.

WE live.

WE rise.

WE succeed.

Together, we shape a future of success.

FOR **ALL.**

OUR MISSION IS TO DEVELOP
world-class learners
 AND **citizens of character**
 IN A **safe and inclusive**
 LEARNING COMMUNITY

The Dubuque Community School District will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination.

Please direct inquiries about this statement to: Amy Hawkins, Dubuque Community Schools, 2300 Chaney Road, Dubuque, Iowa 52001-3095, ahawkins@dbqschools.org, 563/552-3000.





EQUITABLY MEETING THE NEEDS OF EACH AND EVERY STUDENT

In all learning scenarios, the district remains committed to meeting the needs of each and every student we serve. Even in an online learning setting, we will continue to provide services that meet the unique needs of our learners. In doing so, we will work to remove barriers, to foster success and to recognize the extra support needed to support online learners.

The services will include, but are not limited to:

- » **Special Education:** Special education teachers and teams will continue to provide specialized instruction and support in accordance with a student's individualized education plan (IEP). IEP teams will determine the appropriate supports needed and have protocols in place to support delivery of services in virtual ways if needed.
- » **English Language Learners (ELL):** ELL teachers will hold weekly check-in meetings with students and provide ongoing support and monitoring of student learning progress. These teachers will work to develop a plan that will meet the needs of individual students utilizing ELL services.
- » **Counselor Services:** Counselors will continue to be available to support students. At the elementary level, counselors will lead weekly check-in meetings, will provide video lessons about guidance topics, and will directly support families as needed.
- » **Gifted and Talented (GT):** GT teachers will support students with weekly check-in meetings and, at the elementary level, will deliver Most Advanced Mathematicians (MAM) instruction via Zoom. GT teachers will also communicate with classroom teachers to align instruction and offer differentiated extension opportunities for students.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Given the length of time students have been away from school, we expect to see significant student needs in the area of social-emotional learning and wellbeing. Over the summer, the district will survey families to more accurately determine the social-emotional needs of both student and staff. Additionally, school-based outreach to each student will allow the district to appropriately gauge the needs of our school community and provide resources to support social-emotional health.

The district intends to provide culturally responsive social-emotional resources in the following areas:

- » Food insecurity, clothing, and or homelessness/shelter assistance
- » Mental health services in the community for families
- » Managing stress and loss, coping and building resiliency
- » Health and safety needs to positively impact learning

