

PANDEMIC PLAN

The mission of the Westside Community School District, as an innovative educational system, is to ensure academic excellence and to serve the unique needs of all learners.

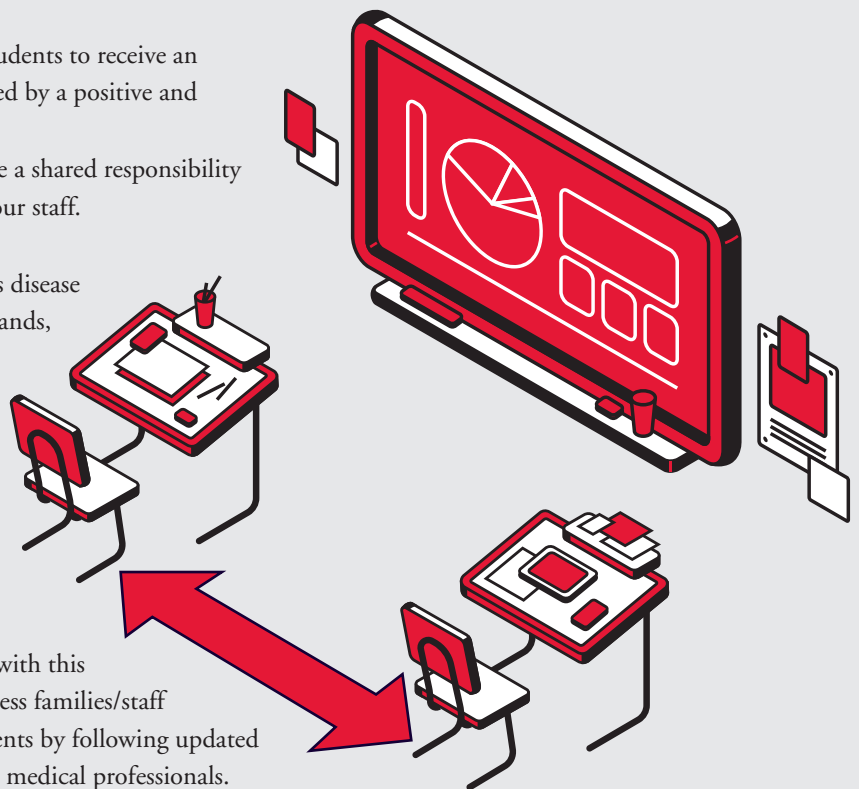
Westside Community Schools will relentlessly pursue innovative educational ideals and promise to personalize learning for every student. We invite the challenge of developing a community of learners who embrace a broader, richer definition of success.

Belief Statements:

- We believe in doing all we can to provide a high-quality educational experience to all students regardless of the circumstances.
 - This includes academic, social-emotional, and school activity experiences.
- We believe it is a top priority to do all we can to keep our students and staff safe.
- We believe that schools, by following all of the guidelines and strategies below, are safe learning and working environments.
- We believe that being proactive in planning and preparation is critical in order to effectively respond to challenging situations.
- We believe that it is important to share with our Westside staff, parents, students, and community stakeholders the “why” behind our thought processes and decisions.
- We believe that “being in school” is the best place for students to receive an education, interact socially with peers, and to be enriched by a positive and consistent routine.
- Our ability to re-open and keep our schools open will be a shared responsibility that depends on all of our students, their families, and our staff.
This has to be a community-wide effort.
 - You can do your part to protect yourself and stop this disease in the community by wearing masks, washing your hands, and maintaining social distancing.

Important Info:

- As of July 29, 2020, Westside Community Schools will start the 20/21 school year on August 18th in YELLOW status, meaning only a portion of our students will physically attend school each day, and learn online and at home when not on campus.
- We intend to make/publish decisions every few weeks, with this initial status only extending through September 4th unless families/staff are otherwise notified. We will make necessary adjustments by following updated DHMs and recommendations from local and state level medical professionals. We are making decisions based on information we have available.



Social-Distancing

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STUDENT OPTIONS BEING PURSUED

Ultimately, decisions as to what school will look like this fall and beyond will be made by local school districts with directives and input from the Governor's Office, the Douglas County Health Department, the Nebraska Department of Education, and local medical experts. Please note: there may be scenarios in which K-6th is in GREEN while 7th-12th is in YELLOW. We have to make decisions as an organization that serves the needs of 6,000+ students and approximately 1,000 staff members. We know that we won't be able to make everyone happy with the numerous decisions that have to be made. We look forward to continuing to promote social-emotional learning and providing support for students and staff as we move forward regardless of what status we are in.

GREEN STATUS

100% of students back in school using close to traditional school-day and school-year calendar with numerous social-distancing guidelines and safety measures in place.

YELLOW STATUS

Less than 100% of students back in school using close to traditional school-day and school-year calendar with numerous social-distancing guidelines and safety measures in place. This plan is about de-densifying our buildings.

- For August 18 through September 4, we will start with no more than 50% of students at the K-6th grade level and no more than 25% of students at the 7th-12th grade level.
- Our students in Group A or Group B, based on last names, will alternate days they are physically in school. This approach is about being as consistent as possible so families can better plan for days their children are not physically in school. We feel it could help families to know that their children will physically be in school on a fairly consistent schedule.
 - We cannot accommodate half day learning every day for each group. This would double our transportation costs, make school meal access inequitable, and would not de-densify our buildings.
- As time allows, outside of in-person instruction, the at-home/extended campus days of learning will provide more direct, video instruction and social interaction than this past spring. We are thankful all of our students will be with their teacher in-person on a weekly basis to start the school year. We are trying to keep things as simple as possible for our families for week-to-week childcare scheduling, etc.
 - Children in the same family, with or without last names, would have the opportunity to be on the same schedule.
- Depending on their IEP, students with disabilities will be eligible to receive more frequent in-person instruction than the two days mentioned in YELLOW mode.

RED STATUS

NO students are on campus. Staff will likely be required to be on campus.

- We will provide study center supervision for staff's K-8th grade students, regardless of where they attend school.
- Extended Campus Learning takes place for all students. The at-home/extended campus days will provide more direct, video instruction and social interaction than this past Spring.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

The Douglas County Health Department uses eight indicators to determine the risk of COVID-19 spread. The most recent information is updated and available on the Douglas County Health website <https://www.douglascounty-ne.gov/covid-19-latest-updates>.

- Overall Douglas County COVID-19 testing positive rate
- Per/Week Douglas County COVID-19 testing positive rate
- Percent change in the number of Douglas County COVID-19 cases from previous week
- Average number of hospitalized COVID-19 patients in the Omaha Metro area for the week
- Average number of COVID-19 patients on ventilators in the Omaha Metro area for the week
- COVID-19 testing availability in Douglas County
- Weekly percentage of direct contacts to confirmed Douglas County COVID-19 cases who are notified within 24 hours



Initial safety protocols will include the 3 W's approach, supported by local medical experts.

- WEAR a mask over your nose and mouth
- WATCH your distance from others
- WASH your hands or use hand sanitizer

Protocols will be implemented through September 30. Adjustments may be made for October and beyond based on DHMs recommendations from medical professionals.



HAND WASHING/HAND SANITIZING

- Students and staff will sanitize their hands upon entering the building and in classrooms, hallways, and common spaces throughout the day as sanitizer pumps will be readily available throughout all facilities (70% alcohol solution).

MASKS BOARD POLICY #2230

- Please understand that we receive “DHMs” (Directed Health Measures) and “recommendations” from the Douglas County Health Department. We are legally obligated to follow all DHMs. A “recommendation” is not legally binding but obviously viewed as best practice. School systems do not write DHMs but must follow them. We also follow “recommendations” as they come from the medical experts that we rely on and are backed by scientific studies.
- In order to follow expert medical advice available to us today, we will require masks for students and staff as school begins in August because safety is our primary and most important objective. We will continue to follow DHMs and recommendations from medical leaders. We anticipate requiring masks through at least September 30th but will make necessary adjustments to follow expert medical advice. If it changes, so too will our protocols.
 - Exceptions could include those with documented medical, behavioral, or developmental issues that could be impaired by masks.
- By requiring masks, it allows us to keep our students AND staff in a safer environment and to better avoid large-scale shutdowns if/when confirmed cases occur throughout the district.
 - We will follow “contact tracing protocol” from the Douglas County Health Department if/when we have a confirmed case. Those that have been around a confirmed case, if they’ve been wearing a mask and adhering to our social-distancing protocols, have a much better chance to avoid infection and/or self-quarantine.
 - Our Board adopted a formal policy that allows for disciplinary action of students or staff members who refuse to wear approved face coverings. We will not suspend a 1st grader, for example, whose mask slips off for 10 seconds and they need to readjust it. This policy is in place to address willful disobedience of those who refuse to wear a face covering.
 - Since we are offering at-home learning options for students, we can/will require masks of all students and staff members. Again this plan is meant to get us through September 30th. We will make adjustments as our medical experts continue to provide updated recommendations.
- We will take hourly mask breaks in social-distant settings
 - We know mask cleanliness will pose challenges, it is more age appropriate for some more than others, etc. It’s a very complicated issue.
 - All students will be provided with 3 reusable neoprene/cloth masks but may also elect to use their own. Masks will be subject to dress-code compliance... no offensive, vulgar, or inappropriate images/messaging will be allowed.
 - Students may also elect to wear face shields they provide on their own or other eye protection they provide on their own as long as they also wear a mask. Face shields are not a replacement for masks.
 - All staff will be provided with at least 2 reusable neoprene/cloth masks but may also elect to use their own.
 - Each staff member will also be given a face shield.
 - Masks might not be required in PE and Music classes as long as we can sufficiently social-distance and de-densify.
 - Daily disposable masks will also be readily available as needed.
 - NO bandanas or gaiters will be allowed to substitute as masks.

For those with additional questions about masks, the CDC has created the following resources:

- **How to Safely Wear and Take Off a Cloth Face Covering** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-covering.pdf>
- **How to Wash a Cloth Face Covering** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wash-cloth-face-coverings.html>

MASKS/FACIAL COVERINGS BOARD POLICY

Students and Visitors

K-12th grade students will be required to wear cloth, neoprene, or multi-layer disposable face coverings while in any District facility, and as directed by the Superintendent at any outdoor facility, beginning immediately upon Board adoption of this policy to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and until such a time as this directive is removed by the Superintendent. An appropriate fitting mask must fully cover the student's nose, mouth, and chin. The school district will provide each student with three appropriate masks that are reusable and washable, but students may also elect to use their own mask provided it meets the criteria provided herein. Students whose own masks do not comply with this policy and all other District policies will not be able to wear them and will be provided a mask from the school district. Bandanas and gaiters will not be allowed as face masks. Face shields may be worn but only together with masks.

Masks and shields will be subject to all District policies and rules, including but not limited to Policy 5350 and the Student-Parent Warrior Handbook, and any other policies and rules establishing that no offensive, vulgar, or other prohibited images/messaging will be allowed.

Failure to wear a mask as required in this policy may result in disciplinary consequences up to and including emergency exclusion, short- or long-term suspension, or expulsion under the terms of Policy 5300 - Code of Conduct.

This policy is in effect for all students at indoor school activities, as well for all visitors, spectators, and non-student participants while in any District facility, and as directed by the Superintendent at any outdoor facility or event. Visitors, spectators, and non-student participants who do not comply with this policy may be asked to leave the premises.

Exceptions will be granted as required by written medical exemptions and the law. Mask usage is required unless removal has been authorized by building leadership, such as while students are seated and eating during approved meal times, during approved mask breaks, or as directed by the Superintendent or designee.

Any visitor, spectator, or non-student participant wanting such an exemption must contact the building principal at least three days prior to the requested indoor activity for the school district's consideration of the request. Additional information must be provided upon request as permitted by law.

Employees

All school district employees will be required to wear cloth, neoprene, or multi-layer disposable face coverings while in any District facility, and as directed by the Superintendent at any outdoor facility, beginning immediately upon Board adoption of this policy to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and until such a time as this directive is removed by the Superintendent. An appropriate fitting mask must fully cover the nose, mouth, and chin. The school district will provide each staff member with two or more appropriate masks that are reusable and washable, and one face shield. Staff may also elect to use their own mask or shield provided it meets the criteria provided herein. Face shields must be worn together with a mask. Bandanas and gaiters will not be allowed as face masks.

Staff must wear masks as directed above. Exceptions will be granted as required by written medical exemptions and the law. Mask usage is required unless removal has been authorized by building leadership, such as while staff is seated and eating during approved meal times, during approved mask breaks, or as directed by the Superintendent or designee.

Failure to wear a mask as required by this policy may result in disciplinary consequences up to and including termination of employment.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY #2230

POLICY ADOPTED: JULY 27, 2020

POLICY REVISED: AUGUST 17, 2020

TOUCH SURFACE CLEANING

- Desks, door handles, and restrooms will be cleaned/disinfected on a very frequent basis.
 - Employees are responsible for all cleaning protocols. No student responsibilities for cleaning.

SOCIAL-DISTANCING AND MORE SOCIAL-DISTANCING

- Maintain physical distance whenever possible when there is no physical barrier between individuals (such as classrooms, hallways, etc.).
- Use tape, plexiglass barriers, and other measures to ensure distance and designation of applicable areas.
- We have added, and will continue to add, much more easy-to-install and take-down plexiglass throughout our facilities.
 - Lower elementary reading tables, study halls, etc.
 - Eating areas and other densely populated areas.
- We have purchased social-distancing signage and floor stickers like you see in many stores to help us all keep a safe distance when/where possible.
- Limit the number of people in a hallway or entryway at one time.
 - Staggered bell times at WMS and WHS, for example, when in green mode.
 - One-way traffic in hallways/stairwells when/where applicable.
 - ‘The Landing’ at WHS will be monitored at all times and restricted due to social distancing and de-densifying efforts.
- Classroom desks/tables will be spread apart as much as possible.
 - We know we can’t get 6-feet in between desks/tables in all classrooms – this is another reason why masks are mandatory.
 - We will continue to analyze our classroom furniture setups in each classroom and adjust as needed with more/less tables, more/less chairs, as needed in each individual setting.
- Will reduce wall coverings to a minimum with no fabric allowed at this time.
- Band and Music classes will be conducted outside as often as possible and in smaller groups inside when applicable to de-densify traditional music classroom space.
- Many classes might take place outside on a regular basis depending on the weather and many other factors.
- ALL Westside employees have a responsibility to model appropriate social-distancing measures while also ensuring that students do the same.
- District administrators, building principals, Board of Education members, and building services staff members have toured all buildings and looked at different classroom setups. Non essential-classroom furniture is being put into storage to allow for more spacing between students in classrooms.

STAFF TRAININGS

- Our school nurses, health aides, and front office administrative assistants are participating in COVID-19 trainings with Children’s Hospital experts.
- We are looking to increase our health aide staff and expand our partnership with Children’s Hospital.
- We will have mandatory trainings for sub-teachers and full-time subs that we are adding to our staff.



PRE-SCREENING FOR STUDENTS

During a meeting July 17th with a panel of medical experts, we were told once again NOT to conduct student screenings at school.

This was again verified by other medical experts on July 22nd and July 27th.

- Experts said this can provide a 'false sense of security' because a significant percentage of children do not exhibit many symptoms of COVID-19 and don't show a fever.
- They said some children run a little warm based on their activity leading up to the temperature check.
- They said many thermometers aren't reliable with such 'high stakes' readings on the line.

Parents screen children at home for the following symptoms:

- Cough
- Chills
- Fever
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle pains
- Loss of taste/smell
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Fever
- Contact with anyone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 3 weeks

Students do not report to school if symptomatic, call medical professional.

We are partnering with Children's Hospital and they will be providing our families and staff with a free, downloadable "COVID symptom" app... more info to come in the next few weeks.

Tele-Health options will also likely be added by August.

PRE-SCREENING FOR EMPLOYEES

All employees self-screen at home for the following symptoms:

- Cough
- Chills
- Fever
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle pains
- Loss of taste/smell
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Fever
- Contact with anyone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 3 weeks

Employees do not report to school if symptomatic, call medical professional.

We are partnering with Children's Hospital and they will be providing our families and staff with a free, downloadable "COVID symptom" app... more info to come in the next few weeks.

Tele-Health options will also likely be added by August.



BUSSING

- Students are assigned seats (same seat each day for all routes) and required to wear masks due to close proximity others.
- Drivers are required to wear masks.
- Surfaces are wiped down between routes.

WATER FOUNTAINS

- No mouth drinking from fountains.
 - We are converting our water fountains to “water filling stations,” which is more eco-friendly and helps us work towards our goal of being more “green.”
- Students bring their own water bottles. Those that can't afford one will be provided with one.

CAFETERIA / MEALS

- Social-distancing to the best of our abilities utilizing traditional and non-traditional eating spaces and staggered eating schedules, to possibly include outside eating spaces if/when possible.
 - EXAMPLE: Lunchroom tables that sat 12-16 students in prior years will now sit 6-10 in many places so students can better spread out. Many alternate eating sites have been identified so tables can be further apart.
- No self-serve items or sharing of food.
- All food to be served by gloved and masked employees behind plexiglass.
- Students will be allowed to bring lunches from home.

RECESS

- We envision recess time being outside as much as possible and mask-free as much as possible when social-distancing and other important safety measures can be properly accommodated.

PASSING PERIODS

- Passing periods throughout the day will be adjusted as necessary to ensure enough time for touch-surface cleaning protocols to occur.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

As close to a traditional school calendar will be followed. School is scheduled to begin for students on Tuesday, August 18th.

- **Elementary start time is moved up with school beginning at 8:30 AM this year.**
- WMS and WHS will begin at 8:00 AM as in past years.
- Same Wednesday early-outs as past years.
- Same dismissal times as past years.



BUILDING ENGINEERING

- Create dedicated facility entry/exit points that are deep cleaned multiple times daily.
- Secure all facility entry/exit points as needed.
- We will work to increase air flow through facilities, where possible, while also maximizing clean air recirculation through appropriate filtering/sterilization methods.
- Really working to optimize the use of outside air, to include keeping as many windows as open as possible throughout our facilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND CLEANING POLICIES

- Provide necessary and ongoing training on best practices and approved materials so we can develop and maintain a highly trained environmental services workforce.
- Analyze on a regular basis our inventory of cleaning supplies, sanitizers, disinfectants, and applicable equipment so we don't run low.
- We have purchased some high-powered, Stera-mist Electrostatic Sprayers that can quickly disinfect areas in an efficient and safe manner.
- High-touch surfaces will be sanitized frequently, to include:
 - Door knobs and handles
 - Push plates and crash bars on doors
 - Automatic door openers
 - Overhead light and lamp switches
 - Hand rails and stairway doors
 - Elevator call and interior buttons
 - Drinking fountains
 - Vending machines and ATM's
 - Tables and chairs in commons areas
 - Refrigerators and microwaves
 - Surfaces and fixtures in kitchens and bathrooms
 - Others areas as identified by staff
- Make hand sanitizer dispensers available and functional throughout each facility, particularly at high traffic areas like entrances, exits, hallways, commons areas, lunchrooms, etc.
- Make sanitizing wipes and hand soap dispensers readily available.
- Ensure that deep cleaning of all common areas happens daily or nightly.
- Use no-touch handles, knobs, etc., when possible.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>



POSITIVE CASES/RESPONSE

Positive case (student or staff)

- Still working with the Douglas County Health Department on necessary updates on “contact tracing protocols.”
- Public health will receive the laboratory result and at that time will contact the positive case and do a contact investigation asking questions (i.e. who have you been around closer than 6 feet for longer than 10 minutes, most likely, that is the household and some classmates and/or colleagues). Those are contacts who then should quarantine at home for 14 days.
 - By requiring masks, it allows us to better avoid large-scale shutdowns if/when confirmed cases occur throughout the District.
 - Those that have been around a confirmed case, if they’ve been wearing a mask and adhering to our social-distancing protocols, have a much better chance to avoid infection and/or self-quarantine. This will be driven by medical experts at the Douglas County Health Department.
- The health department may ask the school to help out in identifying classmates sitting close by the positive dependent on the class set-up. Those students in closer contact will be contacted by the health department or in collaboration with the school. We will follow the lead of the Douglas County Health Department.
- A “secondary health room” will be designated in each building to isolate students/staff with COVID-19 symptoms while they wait to leave.
- A classroom, group of classrooms, and/or building could be closed for a minimum of 24-48 hours and deep cleaned with a report of a student testing positive for COVID-19 that has been in a school facility.
 - **Parents/Staff need to know that there might be times throughout the year that their child’s school is closed down for 1-2 days with very limited notice.**
- Communication to families will be similar to that of MRSA and Whooping Cough.
- Infected individuals can return to school 10 days after the symptoms started, 3 of those days have to be fever-free without fever-reducing medicine and the symptoms must have significantly improved. Quarantine persons can return to school 14 days after they had last contact with the positive case.
 - Will be supported by our extended campus/at-home learning model.
- Communication with environmental services to facilitate rapid cleaning and disinfecting surfaces to immediately limit exposure to others.
- Develop, implement, and communicate a “return to school” policy in coordination with local health experts for all recovering individuals, those returning from caring for an infected individual, and those returning to the community from high-risk locations.
- See COVID SCREENING FLOW CHART from Douglas County Health Department.

RESPONSE TO SICK STUDENTS IN SCHOOL BUILDING (any sickness, not just specific to COVID-19)

- The student will be sent home and all classroom families will be contacted. Standard email communication provided to building secretaries to send out within 2-4 hours of the illness. Classroom will be deep-cleaned.
- By requiring masks, it allows us to better avoid large-scale shutdowns if/when confirmed cases occur throughout the District.
 - We will follow “contact tracing protocol” from the Douglas County Health Department if/when we have a confirmed case. Those that have been around a confirmed case, if they’ve been wearing a mask and adhering to our social-distancing protocols, have a much better chance to avoid infection and/or self-quarantine. This will be driven by medical experts at Douglas County Health Department.



FACILITY USAGE BY OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

- Daycares and before/after school programming that operate in school facilities will follow state directed health measures.
- We reserve the right to limit or eliminate usage to other outside groups like youth sports, rentals, etc., as necessary for cleaning, etc.
 - We are not taking any rental reservations for the use of our inside facilities at this time.

COMMON SPACE USE (HALLWAYS, RESTROOMS, CAFETERIAS, GYMS, PLAYGROUNDS)

- Will follow as much social-distancing as possible with methodical and frequent cleaning throughout the day.

PICK-UP / DROP-OFF OF STUDENTS

- No congregating at entrance or exit areas.
- Social-distancing practices should be followed.
- Parents are encouraged to stay in their vehicle during pick-up and drop-off.
- All visitors, to include family members, will be restricted except for special meetings like IEP's, disciplinary hearings, etc.
 - Masks will be required of all visitors that do enter our buildings for IEP's, disciplinary hearings, etc.
- Unfortunately, as we begin the school year, we will not be able to accommodate "lunch guests" and other special drop-in guests like we used to and always enjoyed.
- WMS and WHS students will need to leave campus, unless involved with an authorized school activity, when school is dismissed.

STAFF TRAVEL

- No professional travel outside of Nebraska is authorized at this time.

COMMUNICATION

- Post ample signage throughout each facility directing risk-minimizing behaviors.
 - The importance of handwashing and surface sanitizing procedures.
 - COVID-19 symptoms, what to look for, and how to respond and stop the spread.
 - Importance of staying home when sick.
 - Screening and testing access, process, and requirements.



INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SITUATIONS

- Intent to Participate in Extended Campus Learning forms have been emailed to families throughout the District.
 - Those families that choose to keep their children at home will be supported.
- We will go quarter by quarter, as we are committed to providing high quality in-person and at-home educational offerings.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Each facility, in its health office area(s), will have multiple non-contact thermometers that are designed to provide quick/concise body temperature readings.
- Alternate ways to conduct Sneak-a-Peek, Curriculum Nights, etc.
 - We will have Virtual Sneak-A-Peek nights because we are trying to limit the number of non-students we have in our buildings at this time.
- Classroom parties and celebrations, as we've had them in the past, will likely be modified.
- Movie Nights, Ice Cream Socials, and Fundraisers will likely be modified/limited.
- Large pep rallies and school assemblies, as we've had them in the past, seem doubtful this year.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences will be conducted via email, phone, and/or video chat this year due to altered school calendar, limiting of visitors, etc.

WRAP-UP

- We will continue to work and fine-tune details on our end.
- We intend to make/publish decisions for 4-6 week periods at a time as this could be an ever-changing situation. What we do in October might be different than what we do in August. March might look different than November.
- We have an additional community forum on July 30th for more updates.
- This is our plan as of TODAY with the information and medical expertise we have access to at this point in time. Things could change in the coming weeks.

RESOURCES

[Return to School Roadmap](#)
[Launch Nebraska](#)
[School Resource Hub](#)
[NCAA Sport Science Institute](#)
[National Federation of State High School Associations](#)
[Education Next](#)
[National Association of Independent Schools](#)
[Protecting the Rights of Students With Disabilities as You Reopen Schools](#)

