



**READY.  
SET.  
START.**

**2021-2022 BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN**

*PROPOSED FOR BOARD ACTION ON AUGUST 23, 2021*

# MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Lori Simon



Dear Families,

We are planning for a return to normal (to the extent possible) for the 2021-2022 school year. Here are a few highlights of our Ready. Set. Start. Back to School Plan:

- ***The return to a 5-day school week***
- ***No mask mandate***
- ***Normal visitor protocols***
- ***Enhanced hygiene protocols***

The 2020-2021 school year required flexibility, new and creative strategies, and a lot of patience of all of us. While there are some protocols that we are excited to leave behind, there are other routines that our staff members have decided will be beneficial regardless of whether there is a worldwide pandemic. From enhanced sanitizing practices to putting all classwork in an online learning management system – we have learned a lot and plan to continue some things.

The following plan outlines what we will do to continue to keep staff and students safe, while supporting students as they learn and grow in the upcoming school year. With the Delta variant and other unknowns that may arise, recommendations for revisions to the Back to School Plan may be brought to the Board of Education for action as deemed important.

We look forward to welcoming our students back in the fall and will continue to communicate any important updates with you in a timely manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori".

Dr. Lori J. Simon

*If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's school or Community Relations Manager, Katy Urban*

*(Katy.Urban@k12.sd.us)*

***The Ready. Set. Start. Back to School Plan is subject to change based on updated SD Department of Health and CDC guidelines and COVID-19 trends in our District and community. Any recommendation for a return to strict safety protocols deemed necessary will be brought to the Board for action and communicated to staff and families.***



# ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS WITH QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS PLAN  
CAN UTILIZE THE LANGUAGE LINE  
School Facility Codes available [here](#)

## Quick Reference Guide

**LanguageLine**  
Solutions®

### Rapid City Area School District TO ACCESS AN INTERPRETER

1. DIAL: **1-866-874-3972**
2. PROVIDE CLIENT ID#: **5 2 5 2 6 3**
3. INDICATE LANGUAGE:  
**1 - FOR SPANISH**  
**2 - FOR OTHERS AND CLEARLY STATE THE LANGUAGE**  
**0 - IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE LANGUAGE YOU NEED**
4. ENTER INFO WHEN PROMPTED : **3-Digit Facility ID followed by the pound sign**

Document the interpreter name and ID number for reference.  
Brief the interpreter and give any special instructions.

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#### IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

**WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER** – At the beginning of the call, briefly tell the interpreter the nature of the call. Speak directly to the limited English proficient individual, not to the interpreter, and pause at the end of a complete thought. Please note, to ensure accuracy, your interpreter may sometimes ask for clarification or repetition.

**3-WAY CALL** – Use the conference feature on your phone, and follow the instructions above to connect to an interpreter. If you are initiating the call, get the interpreter on the line first, then call the limited English proficient individual. If you are receiving a call, ask the caller to "Please Hold," and then conference in the interpreter.

**LANGUAGELINE DUAL HANDSET PHONE** – If you have a LanguageLine Dual handset phone, lift the handset and press the pre-programmed button to dial, then follow the prompts. Once connected to an interpreter, give the second handset to the limited English proficient individual.

**CUSTOMER SERVICE** – To provide feedback, commend an interpreter, or report any service concerns, call 1-800-752-6096 or go to [www.LanguageLine.com](http://www.LanguageLine.com) and click on the "Customer Service" tab, scroll to "Provide Feedback" and complete a "Voice of the Customer" form.



# MASKS

- Masks are not required; however, they are recommended as part of all students' school supplies
- If there is a quick rise in the number of COVID-19 cases in our schools, administration may send an alert to families and staff notifying them of the situation, strongly recommending that masks be worn
- If there is a significant rise in the number of COVID-19 cases, administration may ask the Board of Education to approve a temporary mask requirement
- Note: Regardless of whether students and staff choose to wear a mask or not, bullying will not be tolerated, per District Policies **JGC** and **GBGB**

# HEALTH SCREENINGS

- Daily health screenings will not be required
- As always, please keep your child home if they are sick



# HEALTH PROTOCOLS

- Teach and reinforce **proper hygiene measures** such as hand washing and respiratory etiquette
- Staff and students will **wash hands and/or use sanitizer** regularly
- **Hand sanitizer** will be available in each classroom and throughout RCAS buildings
- Train staff on all **safety protocols**
- Post **signs in highly visible locations** that promote everyday protective measures and how to stop the spread of germs
- **Clean and disinfect** frequently touched surfaces
- Create **distance** between students and staff, when possible
- Maintain the current **physical barriers** in high traffic areas
- Personal school supplies will not be shared

\*Appropriate accommodations will be made for students with disabilities in respect to health and safety policies. Please contact your child's case manager if you need assistance.

## BUILDING VISITATION & FACILITY USE

- Masks will be voluntary for visitors
- Visitors will be required to make an appointment to meet with RCAS staff members
- Parent/teacher conferences, family nights, etc. may be offered both via Zoom and in person to minimize the number of people in the building
- All facilities will be available for outside organization use, subject to availability

# TRANSPORTATION & BUSING

- Normal bus routes
- Masks recommended
- Increased cleaning of frequently touched surfaces
- Sanitation wipes and/or hand sanitizer provided in each bus
- Will open windows and roof vents, when practical, to improve ventilation

## STUDENT MEALS

- Follow safe food handling procedures when handling, preparing, or serving food
- Clean cafeterias and high-touch surfaces throughout the school day
- Encourage physical distance among students in serving and dining areas
- Implement alternative seating arrangements and/or locations to decrease the number of students dining together during each serving session, when able
- Hand sanitizer station set up in service line for student to sanitize before and after meals



# CLEANING/MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

- Adequate supplies provided to support healthy hygiene behavior
- Normal daily cleaning and disinfecting
- Sanitizing stations at school entrances, classrooms, administrative areas, activities areas and common areas
- Normal maintenance operations
- HVAC systems will utilize outside air whenever possible to achieve fresh air flushes
- HVAC System filters will be upgraded in compatible systems
- Drinking fountains taken out of service, utilize water bottle fillers only

## QUARANTINE

- The District will continue to follow District policy, SD Department of Health (DOH) and CDC guidelines regarding COVID-19 exposures. Per the SD DOH, vaccinated staff and students will not be required to quarantine. Please see Appendix D for more information.



# INSTRUCTION

## ON CAMPUS LEARNING

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*5 days a week*

- RCAS will return to a 5-day school week
- Students will still be able to access school work on their Learning Management System (LMS) A.K.A Canvas, Google Classroom, etc.
- Students will be assigned a computer

## ONLINE LEARNING PILOT

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*By application  
only*

- RCAS will be offering a limited number of spots in our online learning pilot at the Elementary, Middle and High School levels
- More information about programming and how to apply will be forthcoming

## LEARNING LOSS

- Additional summer school and credit recovery support
- New technology to improve access
- Additional Mental Health Support

# ACTIVITIES

The activities programs in the Rapid City Area School District will begin the 2021-2022 as normal. This decision will be monitored and assessed closely by Superintendent in consultation with the Board of Education and some COVID-19 protocols may be reimplemented at any time, to ensure the District stays in traditional learning through the end of the school year.

## Positive Cases

Any activities participant or staff member who has tested positive must satisfy the following requirements prior to returning to activities:

- 10 days have passed since onset of symptoms, or if asymptomatic, 10 days from the date of the positive COVID-19 test and must be fever free for 24 hours and overall symptom improvement.
- SDHSAA Return to Play form must be completed by an approved health care provider (MD/DO/PAC/ARNP) and on file in respective school activities office.
- The approved health care provider completing the Return to Play form has the option to:
  - Clear the individual for an immediate return to activity on date specified by the health care provider, or
  - Deny clearance to return to activity.



# ACTIVITIES

## Masks

- Student and staff masks are recommended; however, they are voluntary.
- Students may choose to use bell coverings for instruments.

## Busses

- Student and staff masks are recommended; however, they are voluntary.
- Sanitation wipes and/or hand sanitizer provided in each bus.
- Will open windows and roof vents, when practical, to improve ventilation.

## Cleaning

- Normal daily cleaning and disinfecting will continue.
- Normal maintenance operations.
- Drinking fountains taken out of service, utilize water bottle fillers only.

## Practice Good Hygiene

- Do not go to work, school, practice, or competition if you do not feel well.
- Athletes, coaches, officials, and staff should wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces. Individuals should wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with warm water and soap before touching any surfaces or participating.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow. Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.
- Appropriate clothing/shoes should always be worn in all activity environments to minimize sweat and respiratory droplets from transmitting onto equipment/surfaces.

## Forms

- The SDHSAA COVID Return to Play document can be found [here](#).

# HOW TO CONNECT WITH US

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## 1) SKYWARD FAMILY ACCESS

Make sure your contact information is up to date! Login to Skyward Family Access and click MY ACCOUNT to update phone numbers, email addresses, addresses, etc.

Use the email address you entered when you registered your child for school as the login and then click FORGOT YOUR LOGIN/PASSWORD to setup your account.

*Need a Skyward Family Access Account?  
Simply click this [link](#) to create an account.*

## 2) SCHOOL MESSENGER

Opt-in to receive text messages from RCAS. Simply send a text message of “Y” or “YES” to our District’s short code number, 67587. **Download the School Messenger app on your phone today!**



## 3) SOCIAL MEDIA, NEWSLETTER, & WEBSITE

You can also stay connected by following us on social media (primarily Facebook and Instagram), reading our monthly district newsletter The Reporter, and checking out our website **rcas.org**.



# APPENDIX



# STUDENT SYMPTOM SCREENING CHECKLIST

*Has your child had close contact (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) with a confirmed case of COVID-19?*

*Does your child have new or worsening shortness of breath?*

*Does your child have new or worsening cough?*

*Does your child have a fever of 100.4 or greater?*

*Does your child have chills?*

*Does your child have diarrhea?*

*Does your child have unexplained muscle pain?*

*Does your child have a headache (not related to a known health condition i.e. migraines)?*

*Does your child have a sore throat?*

*Does your child have a new loss of taste or smell?*

*Has your child been vomiting or is experiencing nausea?*



If **YES** to ANY of the questions **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL**. Please seek guidance from your medical provider. Contact your school to inform them of your child's symptoms. You may also contact the South Dakota Department of Health at 1-800-592-1861 with questions.



If **NO** to ALL questions go to school.

# AIR PURIFICATION PROJECT AND BUILDING VENTILATION

## Air Purification Project

- This project will install electronic air cleaning equipment within existing air handling equipment to help reduce contaminants such as Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), mold, bacteria, and viruses including SARS-COV-2, which causes COVID-19
- The RFQ will be open to multiple equipment vendors and technologies with the intent of utilizing the existing HVAC equipment fans as the driving motive force for the air cleaning
- We also anticipate a requirement for some stand-alone air cleaning equipment in areas of facilities where no HVAC equipment is present
- All 23 schools will receive air purification systems

## Building Ventilation

Rapid City Area Schools operates a complex facility network with 23 school sites with over 50 different buildings, all of which have a variety of Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems that vary in age, style, and operating principles. It is important to note that the district has a lot of older (30 plus years old) mechanical systems, which limits its ability to make necessary modifications. Individual differences and needs in all buildings will be taken into consideration as the District determines its plan to maximize indoor air quality.

# AIR PURIFICATION PROJECT AND BUILDING VENTILATION

## Building Ventilation Continued...

The two primary HVAC systems providing fresh air, and/or recycled air, are Air Handlers and Unit Ventilators. The district also has many radiators that do not move air in the older schools in common areas and office spaces. HVAC Control Systems (Digital and Pneumatic), control the amount of fresh air. The energy plant will utilize the outside air based on the temperature and air quality to provide a fresh air flush whenever possible.

One of the District's primary strategies in improving air quality during this time, will be an upgrade to the type of air filter used in the air handlers and unit ventilators. Currently, the District uses a MERV 8 Filter (3 microns). The District will now upgrade to a MERV 13 filter (0.3 microns) where applicable.

# RESOURCE GUIDE FOR STAFF & FAMILIES

## Screening/Testing for COVID-19

Our nursing team will continue to offer COVID-19 testing to staff and students once school begins. Simply click [here](#) to schedule a test. Additionally, this year, the state of South Dakota is offering COVID-19 take home tests. A limited number of those tests will be available. Please speak with your building nurse for more information.

## Vaccine Opportunities

If you have a child who is 12 years old or older and you're interested in having them receive the Covid-19 vaccine, the following options are available:

### Monument Health

Call the Covid Triage Line at 755-1350 and press option 1 to schedule an appointment. If you already have a MyChart established for the child, you can schedule via MyChart.

Only the Pfizer vaccine is available for kids 12-18 and a parent or guardian must be with the child at the time the vaccine is administered.

You can also [schedule an appointment online](#).

### Walgreens

[Schedule an appointment online](#)

### Walmart and SAMs Pharmacy

[Schedule an appointment online](#)

### Oyate Health Center

Lacrosse Street OHC is currently taking walk-in vaccinations at 725 N Lacrosse Street or call (605) 718-5095 to schedule an appointment or ask questions

# RESOURCE GUIDE FOR STAFF & FAMILIES

Here is a list of helpful resources related to school closure, mental health, COVID-19 and more.

YMCA Childcare Options

A Guide to Supporting Employee and Student Social-Emotional Health, Mental Health, and Wellbeing

Staff Wellness Guide

# PROPOSED QUARANTINE PROTOCOL

## RESOLUTION FOR STUDENT AND STAFF QUARANTINE REQUIREMENTS

\_\_\_\_\_ moved and \_\_\_\_\_ seconded to approve the Resolution for Student and Staff Quarantine Requirements. VOTE.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

#### Definitions

**Quarantine** - **Quarantine** is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. **Quarantine** helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms.

**Isolation** - **Isolation** separates and restricts the movement of sick people so they can't spread disease. **Isolation** in a home means separating yourself from others in the household.

This resolution will update protocols related to quarantining students and staff. It will be effective for the 2021-2022 school year. The Ready. Set. Start. Plan will be updated as follows:

#### For Staff and Students:

- A. RCAS Nursing Staff will not be identifying close contacts in the school setting. Close contact tracing will be determined by the South Dakota Department of Health (SD DOH).
- B. Students or staff will be placed in quarantine if deemed a close contact by the SD DOH. RCAS will uphold DOH close contact tracing findings and exclude the person per DOH recommendations.
- C. Per the SD DOH, quarantine will last 10 days after last contact (noted as day zero) with the person who tested positive, returning to school on the 11<sup>th</sup> day if asymptomatic OR
- D. Per the SD DOH, quarantine will last 7 days after last contact (noted as day zero) with the person who tested positive if the following criteria are met:
  - 1) a test is performed on Day 5 or later of quarantine and the result is negative,
  - 2) no signs symptoms of COVID-19 develop during the 7-day quarantine.
- E. Symptomatic students and staff are advised to seek COVID testing.
  - 1) COVID Testing Options:
    - a. Testing will be available free of charge from the school nurses.
      - Abbott BinaxNOW or QuickVue
    - b. Contact your health care provider.
  - 2) Pending tests – Any student or staff with pending COVID-19 test due to symptoms or close contact will be excluded pending results.
- F. Isolation related to positive cases as identified by DOH:
  - 1) Positive cases must be excluded for 10 days from symptom onset, or 10 days



# PROPOSED QUARANTINE PROTOCOL CONTINUED

from the test date if asymptomatic.

- 2) The DOH will update RCAS Nursing Staff with the positive case info, and symptom onset date.
  - 3) RCAS Nursing Staff will notify DOH when they have learned of a positive case (Rapid Testing results).
- G. Per the SD DOH, it is recommended, but voluntary that fully vaccinated people who have come into close contact with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 be tested 3-5 days after exposure, and should wear a mask for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result.
- H. Any athletic participant with a Department of Health verified positive case must satisfy the following requirements prior to returning to activities:
- 1) Ten (10) days have passed since onset of symptoms, or if asymptomatic, 10 days from the date of the positive COVID-19 test.
  - 2) SDHSAA Return to Play form must be completed by an approved health care provider (MD/DO/PAC/ARNP) and on file in respective school activities office.
  - 3) The approved health care provider completing the Return to Play form has the option to:
    - a. Clear the individual for an immediate return to activity.
    - b. Clear the student pending a Graduated Return to Play - Progression due to moderate or severe symptoms, or
    - c. Deny clearance to return to activity.

## ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve to adopt the Resolution for the Student and Staff Quarantine Requirements in the District.

# LOOKING FOR MORE INFO?

CONTACT KATY URBAN AT  
[KATY.URBAN@K12.SD.US](mailto:KATY.URBAN@K12.SD.US)

