

Colfax-Mingo

Community Schools



Aug 18, 2021

Tigerhawk Family:

I am writing to share with you our [2021-22 Return to Learn Plan](#). There are strong, varying opinions on how schools should open this fall. We have state requirements and guidance to follow and difficult decisions to make beyond that. Our CMCS D School Board has once again navigated through some difficult decisions and varying guidance from federal, state, and public health. Thank you to our Directors for their continued dedication to our kids! And thank you to our families and community for your continued support for our district. These difficult times can cause rifts in community-school relationships. I am proud of our communities, students, and staff for their dedication to each other and our kids.

This plan summarizes our response as a school district to the ongoing COVID pandemic. Some points to highlight:

- Per Iowa Code [Iowa HF 847](#), face masks and coverings cannot be mandated. At CMCS D masks and shields are optional. *Any student or staff who engages in any activity (written or verbal) that aims to ridicule or harass a student or staff member who chooses to wear a face covering or not to wear a face covering may be subject to disciplinary action.*
- A [CDC order](#) states that masks are required on public transportation, which includes school buses. CMCS D's legal advice is that the CDC order does not supersede Iowa Code which specifically states that schools are not allowed to mandate masks. On Friday August 13, the Iowa Department of Education verbally shared that the DE and Iowa DOT expect schools to follow the CDC order. ****We are asking families and students to comply with the federal order from the CDC.****
Please note: this can change based on any written guidance received from the Department of Education, Iowa Department of Transportation, or other legal entity.
- Distance learning is an option for CMCS D students.
 - Kindergarten through 6th grade families can request to the building principal for distance learning.
 - Junior/Senior High students must have a medical exemption from a doctor and can then request to the building principal for distance learning.

While available, CMCS D does not believe providing simultaneous on-site and virtual instruction is in the best interest of students or teachers. Students in a remote learning format will follow a virtual curriculum that is similar to the on-site curricular standards. A CMCS D teacher will check in on progress. *Students on distance learning will be expected to make appropriate progress or may be required to return to in-person learning.*

- Contact tracing and quarantining are no longer required by the Iowa Department of Public Health. Please see in our Return to Learn plan how we will address illnesses.
- Free Internet devices are still available for families for student use at home. Contact the central office for more information.

Colfax-Mingo Community School District's mission is to ensure a community that fosters life-long learners, independent thinkers, and productive citizens of character!

Thank you for your grace and support as we again navigate through difficult times in education and this pandemic. We continue to be focused on supporting our learners academically as well as their social-emotional health.

This is a new year and a great opportunity to start fresh for all of us. We will have a successful year for our kids, together.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Take care.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Erik".

Erik