



Belcourt School District 7
Turtle Mountain Community Schools
In-Person Instruction
&
Continuity of Services Plan

Board Approval Date: June 24, 2021



The following In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan is representative of the following schools known as Turtle Mountain Community Schools (TMCS):

- Turtle Mountain Community High School 701-477-6471
- Turtle Mountain Community Middle School 701-477-6471
- Turtle Mountain Community Elementary School 701-477-6471
- Turtle Mountain Tiny Turtles 701-477-6471
- Preschool Special Needs (PSN) 701-477-6471
- Ojibwa Indian School 701-477-3108
- Dunseith Indian Day School 701-263-4636
- St. Ann's Catholic School 701-477-5601





The purpose of this document is to outline Belcourt Schools' in-person instruction and continuity of services utilizing the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP ESSER) support allocated to Belcourt School District #7 (BSD7). The ARP ESSER Funds are to help schools safely reopen and address the impacts of COVID-19, such as students' academic, social, emotional and mental health needs.

Per requirements of ARP ESSER, an LEA that receives these funds must make publicly available on their website a plan for a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services.

On July 16, 2020, North Dakota School Districts were required to develop health and safety plans for their schools, through consultation with local public health units and providers, staff, families and students, and community and tribal leaders ([Executive Order 2020-38](#)). Belcourt Schools created a Smart Restart Plan, which was approved by the Belcourt School District Board on August 18, 2020. This plan was based on input from Tribal, County, State and Federal health organizations, education agencies, and government officials. Feedback was also solicited from parents, staff and community through online surveys. Belcourt School District implemented this plan throughout the entire school year.

Because of the concerted efforts of all entities and diligent implementation of mitigation strategies on the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Reservation, BSD7 and the Belcourt community drastically reduced the threat of COVID-19 not only in the school system, but throughout the reservation. Weekly Health & Safety meetings allowed administration, government officials, and health officials to monitor the mitigation measures. Additionally, cooperative efforts resulted in higher vaccination rates, providing an additional layer of safety to our Native American population.

This plan describes how BSD7 will maintain the health of students and staff during the return to brick and mortar learning. Any questions regarding this plan should be directed to Dr. Michelle Thomas at (701) 477-6471. The plan includes the following:

- I. BSD7 Focus Areas
- II. Assumptions & Assurances
- III. BSD7s Instruction Model
- IV. Virtual Academy
- V. Health and Safety Guidance
- VI. Continuity of Services
- VII. Activities
- VIII. Communication
- IX. School Meals
- X. Transportation
- XI. Student and Staff Services
- XII. Special Education
- XIII. Services for Children Ages 0-5
- XIV. Pandemic Measures



I. BSD7 Focus Areas

- An education for all students that is rigorous and comprehensive education for all students in all phases of the learning plan.
- Respect health guidance from IHS, Rolette County Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control, adopting reasonable practices to mitigate risks and minimize the spread of COVID-19.
- Be flexible, empathic and quick to respond to support students and their families as conditions change.
- Clearly and consistently communicate with students, staff, parents and all stakeholders.
- Ensure every student has an electronic device to use for learning, whether in the classroom or at home.
- Provide students, parents and staff training so they can effectively use technology resources.

II. Assumptions & Assurances

- Every student should have the opportunity to engage in learning, regardless of the spread of COVID-19 in our community.
- Schools have a vital role in providing safe environments for students, focusing on both social-emotional and physical health.
- By working together with educators, staff, health care professionals, parents, students, Tribal officials, and community members we can solve most challenges.
- Turtle Mountain Community Schools will make decisions based on the most current guidance from local, state, tribal, and national health care officials.
- Our School Board, the Bureau of Indian Education and the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa will ensure our plan meets the needs of our students, educators, staff and community.

III. BSD7's Instructional Model SY21-22

Students will receive face-to-face instruction in compliance with Tribal Mandates related to COVID-19.

Instructional model may be altered due to a substantial increase in COVID-19 cases that qualifies for a shift to another instructional model (Restart Plan). Such shift will require BSD7 Board action.

IV. Virtual Academy

BSD7 works with the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) through a cooperative agreement. At this time, BIE has not decided if virtual learning will be allowable. Therefore, BSD7 will apply for a virtual academy through the Office of School Approval & Opportunity in the event that BIE determines virtual academy is an option. The virtual academy will abide by federal and state regulations that brick and mortar schools do. A school board policy will be created/adopted to allow students to engage in virtual instruction. This virtual academy will only be implemented if it becomes allowable by the BIE as well.

V. Health and Safety Guidance

The district strives to provide a healthy and safe environment for all who occupy our schools. The following guidelines are intended to provide a framework for the district's response to COVID-19.

Despite taking every reasonable precaution, there is no guarantee that our school's will be without risk as it relates to COVID-19. The virus will be present on our buses, in our classrooms, and at our activities. In certain situations, social distancing is not possible in a school setting. Our actions, as outlined in this plan, will not eliminate the possibility of any student or staff member from being in contact with the virus

BSD7 has adopted policies and/or practices related to each of the following safety recommendations established by CDC and/or Tribal Health:

- Universal and correct wearing of masks



- Modification of facilities to ensure proper social distancing
- Handwashing etiquette
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities ([TMCS Cleaning Plan](#))
- Contact Tracing (onsite, tribal and state contact tracing)
- Diagnostic screening and testing
- BINAX Testing for staff and students
- Vaccination efforts in collaboration with tribal, state and federal health officials
- Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities unable to wear a mask
- Continued collaboration with tribal, state and federal health officials

VI. Continuity of Services

Academic Needs

BSD7 is taking steps to not only ensure continuity of services, but to address learning loss resulting from the pandemic. Additionally, students' and staff social, emotional, mental and health needs will be supported and addressed. With ARP ESSER funding, BSD7 is utilizing a variety of resources to identify and address learning gaps. The following activities/plans are being implemented for SY21-22 to close achievement gaps:

MTSS training has been and continues to be implemented PreK-12. The process is imperative to identification of at risk learners and what areas need to be addressed. BSD7 educators have received intensive training on literacy interventions PreK-12, training on Fastbridge (formative assessment tool chosen for universal screening and tier identification, progress monitoring). This tool will empower educators to deliver timely and targeted interventions to assist in learning recoupment.

BSD7 is utilizing many assessments to identify learners identified as at-risk. State and local assessments will assist in determining learning gaps of students. Along with the MTSS process, these assessments will assist in providing support, utilizing some of the following strategies:

- High Impact Tutoring—before/after school, Saturday Academy, holiday break support
- CTE Expansion
- Literacy Audit—implementation of recommendations
- District Strategic Planning

VII. Activities

[Activities Guidance](#)

VIII. Communication

Communication Services aims to inform, engage, and inspire all stakeholders and the community, no matter the environment. Whether functioning in a traditional school model, implementing distance learning or a hybrid plan, the TMHS will continue to keep TMHS's employees, its families and students, and the extended Turtle Mountain Community Schools informed about the work of the High School.



TMHS anticipates the need to deploy unique communications tactics to cater to multiple audiences and fluctuating conditions simultaneously. Where schools open with significant modifications to schedules, classes, or logistics, smooth transitions will require clear and consistent communication.

Regardless of the learning model, we relay critical and necessary information for all audiences, support crisis situations, fortify the district's brand, lead community relations and family engagement, and direct many other "business as usual" communications strategies. The platforms used will be:

- Infinite Campus Messenger
- TMCS Facebook page
- KEYA
- Braves Channel
- Turtle Mountain Times
- Turtle Mountain Star

IX. School Meals

Meals will be provided to all BSD7 students. Meals will be modified based on staffing and food availability

X. Transportation

School bus transportation will adhere to Tribal mandates in effect. When possible, social distancing will be enforced, and assigned seating will occur. When possible, windows will be open to increase air flow on the bus.

XI. Student and Staff Services

The Student Service department will continue to provide the TMHS with the protocols and training necessary to support the mental health needs of students. Through this practice they will find or establish a list of students that need a higher level of treatment and make appropriate referrals. One on one services are available to students during instructional days. Transportation is provided for students to and from school if needed.

Student Social Emotional Learning

Student Support Services will develop a comprehensive plan for supporting in-person learning that includes: providing training to staff (trauma informed classroom management, Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS), etc.), and supporting family-school partnerships that emphasize relationship building and engagement to enhance building a climate and culture.

Student Counseling Services

Counselors will work collaboratively with their teams and building administrators to determine when services will be provided.

Culture and Climate

Student Support Services will work with all schools to support staff best practices around trauma informed practices. A focus will be placed on supporting a positive climate and culture that acknowledges universal trauma care strategies for students. Best practice guidelines will be available in order to support students who may need more support. Student Support Services will provide ongoing consultation to staff.

Recognizing the need to assess the status of students' social-emotional health as they return to school, Student Support Services is working on developing protocols to administer a strengths-based screener at all schools that can be used to inform levels of support for students.



Staff Support

BSD7 is committed to providing mental health support for staff for the duration and beyond the stressors related to COVID-19. EAP, contracted mental health support services, and peer groups are a few of the strategies BSD7 will provide.

XII. Special Education

Special Education personnel will ensure that each student on an IEP will receive the services and accommodations they require and as outlined in the IEP. Should a student(s) be unable to attend school due to COVID 19 restrictions, the individual student's contingency plan would take effect immediately.

XIII. Services for Children Ages 0-5

Pre-K, Early Childhood Special Education classrooms will provide instruction at the same level as K-12.

XIV. Pandemic Measures

Operational changes could occur as the result of worsening pandemic conditions. The following levels represent different types of responses that could be implemented if deemed necessary by the Board action:

Level 1 – All Distance Learning (No Students in Schools)

Level 2 – Distance Learning with Limited Face-to-Face instruction for identified students

Level 3 – A combination of Distance Learning and Face-to-Face instruction for all students.

Level 4 – Face-to-Face Instruction for all students with Health and Safety Protocols

Level 5 – All Face-to-Face instruction for all students (No Masks Required)

The original Restart Plan approved by BSD7 Board of Education on August 18, 2020 can only be reactivated by BSD7 School Board action.

Resources

ND Department of Public Instruction - <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/parentscommunity/nddpi-updates-and-guidance-covid-19>

Indian Health Service (IHS) - <https://www.ihs.gov/>

ND Department of Health - <https://www.health.nd.gov/diseases-conditions/coronavirus>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa - <https://tmchippewa.com/>

QNBMHCF-Indian Health Service-Public Health- Georgia Artz (701) 477-6111

Rolette County Public Health District - Barbara Frydenlund or Sara Hendrickson (701) 477-5646 rcphd.com