



FALL 2023

**VERMILLION SCHOOL DISTRICT
RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN**

CLASSES RESUME AUGUST 17th

1001 E Main St | 605-677-7000

Board Approved June 12, 2023



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Vermillion School District Return to School Plan

Dear Patrons of Vermillion School District:

First, our staff are extremely excited to welcome your children back to school this fall and are working to provide a safe and nurturing experience. While our school may look a little different the expectation remains strong that we will offer a high-quality education experience, either by traditional in-person model or the remote model. Building principals have details if you still have questions.

Please take a moment to walk through our Vermillion School District Return to School Plan and familiarize yourself with protocols and procedures we will follow this school term. Please contact a building administrator if you have any questions. Our plan has taken guidance from many professional resources to accommodate a healthy return to school. Those resources include: SD Dept of Health, Center for Disease Control, SD Dept of Education, American Academy of Pediatrics, US Dept of Education, Federal and State elected officials, local health organizations and local stake holders.

This document is the District's plan for a safe return to instruction for the **2023-2024** school year based on the best information available at this time. Modifications to this plan are anticipated and should be expected based on the new information as it becomes available.

Guiding Principles for Reopening our School

- Our school will provide instruction throughout the 2023-2024 school year.
- COVID- 19 and its variants will continue to be present during the next school year.
- Schools can take practical steps to mitigate the spread of the virus while continuing to focus on student learning.
- Our district will make decisions based on the scientific information at the time, current status of virus spread in and around the school community, and what is in the best interests of staff, students, and families.
- As with any virus, the potential for exposure at some points in time may be extremely high.
- District plans are subject to immediate change, or modification, as the circumstances and recommendations from state and federal agencies changes.
- The World Health Organization declared an end to the emergency provisions of the pandemic on May 5, 2023.

I would like to thank all the patrons of VSD, our staff, school board and community in general for their patience and questions during this time. The efforts of all of you gives us confidence at the school that everything will work out as we work through this challenge together. I will remind you that the RTSP is a flexible document that will be constantly reviewed and updated. The latest version will be placed on the school website at www.vermillion.k12.sd.us.

I wish you many blessings as summer concludes and school begins. Please reach out to the school district if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Damon R. Alvey, Superintendent



Vermillion School District Return to School Plan

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Orientation Conferences will be held on the following dates with small groups of parents/guardians. Classes lists will be completed Thursday, August 11th. Parents will be sent a link to sign up for orientation.

- **EARLY CHILDHOOD,**
 - Open House will be Friday, August 18th.
 - First Day of School for Early Childhood will be Monday, August 21st.
- **PRESCHOOL,**
 - Orientation will be Wednesday, August 16th and Thursday August 17th.
 - First Day of School for Preschool will be Monday, August 21st.
- **JK, KINDERGARTEN**
 - Orientation will be Wednesday, August 16th and Thursday August 17th.
 - First Day of School for JK, & KINDERGARTEN will be Friday, August 18th.
- **1st GRADE**
 - Orientation will be Wednesday, August 16th 10:00am – 6:00pm
 - First Day of School will be Thursday, August 17th.

JOLLEY – Wednesday, August 16th

- Orientation Conferences will be held on Wednesday, August 16th, in 15-minute intervals, between 10:00am – 6:00pm. Class lists will be finalized Thursday, August 11th. Parents will be sent a link to sign up for a conference time.
- Three sets of parents/guardians will be able to sign up for each interval. If that day does not work, an alternative time with the classroom teacher can be scheduled. This conference can also take place remotely. Parents will be given information regarding changes and have an opportunity to ask questions. An overview of online learning will be reviewed (Clever Badges, Curriculum Codes, etc....)

MIDDLE SCHOOL – Wednesday, August 16th

6TH GRADE:

- 1:00pm** Parents and students arrive, pick up schedules. Parents will go to the gym to discuss protocols and school year plan with Mr. O'Boyle. Students to lockers and advisement group room.
- 1:30pm** Dress Code / Before School information
- 1:40pm** Students will travel thru their schedule spending 10 minutes in each classroom. Topics covered will be lockers/backpacks, Agendas, Infinite Campus, Accessing Assignment Page on website-Chromebooks, Google Classroom
- 2:55pm** Students will go to the commons and sit by class at tables spaced out, then be shown how we will go through the lunch line.

7TH & 8TH GRADE: Wednesday, August 16th 3:00-6:00pm

HIGH SCHOOL – Wednesday, August 16th

GRADE 9 10:00 -11:30am Wednesday, August 16th

- HS Welcome and Freshman Orientation Activities
- Laptop Check-out
- Class Meeting and Student Handbook Review
- Students report to the Auditorium

GRADE 10 12:15 – 1:15pm Wednesday, August 16th

- Class Meeting and Student Handbook Review
- Laptop Check-out
- Students Report to the Auditorium

GRADE 11 1:30 – 2:30pm Wednesday, August 16th

- Class Meeting and Student Handbook Review
- Laptop Check-out
- Students Report to the Auditorium

GRADE 12 2:45 – 3:45pm Wednesday, August 16th

- Class Meeting and Student Handbook Review
- Laptop Check-out
- Students Report to the Auditorium



This plan was created in conjunction with Vermillion School District School Board, Administration, Staff, Parents and Health Care community. This plan follows closely to SD DOH, CDC, and SD DOE guidelines. It is meant to plan and care for the safety, social and emotional needs of VSD students and staff and provide flexibility for instruction in a safe manner. It is the belief of the Return to School Committee (RTSC) that person to person instruction best meets the needs of our students. The RTSC outlined four overarching goals for this plan, Academic Supports, Operations, Activities, and Health/Safety/Facilities. This plan is subject to change.

Return to school plan contributors: Doug Peterson, Rachel Olsen, Jim Peterson, Carol Voss-Ward, Damon Alvey, Jon Frey, Jason Huska, Tom O'Boyle, Sam Jacobs, Kim Johnson, Amy Askew, Amy Pohlson, Joseph Delvaux, Trisha Fisher, Jean Hansen, Sara Hage, Melanie Mahowald, Trevor Mandernach, Roxane Olson, Darcy Sammelson, Bill Settles, Kelly Stone, Mindy Whisler, and the SDHSAA.

This plan is not intended to establish minimum requirements or standards of care. All aspects of this plan are aspirational and discretionary in their implementation by the school district, its agents, and employees. It is acknowledged and understood that this plan is subject to numerous laws, regulations and agencies that promote or require exceptions and accommodations, making mandatory and uniform application, enforcement, and compliance unlikely. It is also acknowledged and understood that incident response and reaction expediencies, as well as ever changing dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic itself, render any absolute plan adherence expectations unrealistic.

The following guidelines are intended to provide protection for our employees, students, and community.

ASSUMPTION OF RISK

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, and its variants, was declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 and its variants are extremely contagious and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact. As a result, federal, state, and local governments and federal and state health agencies recommend social distancing.

The Vermillion School District has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, the District cannot guarantee that individuals will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, school attendance could increase the risk of contracting COVID-19.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

THURSDAY, AUGUST 17TH

<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL IN-PERSON LEARNING PLAN</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">REMOTE LEARNING PLAN</p>
<p>Students will be instructed in the traditional manner with students and teachers present in the same classroom. Mitigations such as social distancing and enhanced cleaning will be promoted, and enhanced hygiene practices will be taught and practiced throughout the school.</p> <p>Food Service will run as normal. Students will continue to have access to a highly nutritious food program that meets all national school lunch program guidelines.</p> <p><u>ACTIVITIES</u> SDHSAA may promote a back-to-school activities plan which the VSD will follow. At this time, determination of schedules, games, spectator participation are back to normal. Fine arts, club activities, and concerts are expected to be normal to pre-covid practices.</p> <p><u>BUSING</u> Transportation will be offered as normal. The bus will receive extra cleaning protocols. Assigned seats may be implemented to ensure contact tracing can be established. If a school masks due to warranted infections, the buses may become mask mandated as well.</p>	<p>https://www.bholc.org/</p> <p>The school district will provide a remote learning option through Black Hills Online Community. The costs will be covered by the school district and the commitment to enroll will be for full semester increments.</p>



VERMILLION SCHOOL DISTRICT RETURN TO SCHOOL PROTOCOLS

Academic Supports



Staff/Students/Parents

- New staff have been hired to reduce some class sizes and provide additional mental health support. Reassign staff as needed to cover daily operational needs prioritizing student learning and safety.
- Commitment to ongoing and systematic communication to staff and families.
- Staff and students practice operational safety procedures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and its variants.
- All JK-12 students will be assigned a district device.
- Students will have access to library books.
- Dates for RTSP Review:
 - August 2022
 - December 2022
 - June 2023
 - December 2023
 - June 2024
- Vermillion School Board will have COVID updates at their June and December school board meetings.

Social and Emotional Health



- Focus on social and emotional health, inclusion, and anxiety reduction.
- Work to introduce students to new look of school and classrooms before school starts, creating welcoming environments for learning.
- Extra staff have been hired to address concerns in this area. Contact building principal for details.
- Students experiencing learning loss will have access to other opportunities including, alternative instruction, counseling services and summer extended school programs.

Schedule

- Class schedule will follow the school calendar. Schedule modifications (ex. Lunch/recess) as necessary – start/end of day bell times remain unchanged.
- Physical education will use outdoor spaces, when possible, consider CDC guideline for safety.

Dressing for Physical Education

- Elementary PE classes do not dress for PE.
- MS/HS PE classes will return to normal PE dress protocol.

<p>Activities</p> 	<p>Extracurricular Activities –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance from the South Dakota High School Activities Association, SD DOE, and SD DOH will be followed for all extracurricular activities. • Decisions on seasons, events, games, practices will be determined based on available data at the time. Currently a normal sports and fine arts schedule is expected.
<p>Health/Safety/Facilities</p> 	<p>Pre-Screening for Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents should screen their children at home for fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea. They should document the screenings and retain at home. • Students should not report to school if symptomatic. • Testing is recommended if symptomatic. <p>Hand Washing/Sanitizing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach and reinforce proper hand hygiene and COVID mitigation. • Hand sanitizer will be available. • Bathroom breaks will be scheduled in such a way as to encourage social distancing and promote frequent handwashing. <p>Touch Surface Cleaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vermillion School District will use specific cleaning solutions documented to protect against viruses. • The installation of hand sanitizing stations throughout school buildings. • Increasing outside air intake to increase more fresh air into the buildings. • Respiratory etiquette will be promoted. <p>Water Fountains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spigots of water fountains for individual use will be sanitized often. • Students are encouraged to use individual water bottles. <p>Positive Cases and Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vermillion School District will follow guidance from the SD DOH. During these absences, these individuals will work through schoolwork expectations with teachers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive cases are expected to isolate at home for 5 days. During these absences, these individuals will be expected to communicate with teachers to keep up with missed schoolwork. • Positive cases may return on day 6 with the recommendation to wear a well-fitted mask from days 6-10. • Communication of positive cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are expected to communicate positive cases to the appropriate school office. <p>Response to Students who become COVID symptomatic during the day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vermillion School District will follow guidance from the SD DOH.

- If a student or staff member becomes sick with COVID-19 symptoms during the school day, the student/staff member will be sent home.
- Classroom will be thoroughly cleaned.



NURSE'S OFFICE

- Students or staff that exhibit potential COVID-19 symptoms will be removed from the classroom, checked by health staff, and complete COVID-19 symptom screening.
- Screening protocol, developed in collaboration with local health officials and SD DOH, will be used to identify potential COVID-19 risks. Students/staff will be sent home accordingly.
- Return to School Guidelines must be met for students/staff to be cleared for return to school.



RETURN TO ACTIVITY HEALTH & SAFETY MEASURES

A. Screen for signs of COVID-19:

- All rostered individuals may be screened for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 prior to a practice/game/event, or any travel.
- Responses to screening questions for each person should be recorded and stored securely and in compliance with privacy laws so that there is a record of everyone present in case a student develops COVID-19.
- Any person with symptoms of COVID-19 should not be allowed to participate and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate health-care professional.
- People at risk for COVID-19 should consult with their medical provider regarding participation in athletic activities.

B. Protocol for Confirmed Close Contact and Positive Cases:

- Any Department of Health verified close contact must follow SDDOH guidelines. Currently, those guidelines require a 5-day quarantine from the date of contact away from school and daily screening of symptoms. **Amendment, see page 46**
- Any Department of Health verified positive case must follow SDDOH guidelines. Currently, those guidelines require the individual to self-isolate for 5 days from the first onset of symptoms and must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications. SDHSAA Covid-19 Return to Play Form is required for re-entry in participation.

C. Practice Good Hygiene

- 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 in workouts or contests.
- Avoid touching your face.
- 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 be always worn to minimize sweat from transmitting onto equipment/surfaces.
- Students will be encouraged to shower and wash their practice/game clothing as soon possible when finished with practices or games.

D. Travel

- When using a bus, students and staff will sit appropriately spaced within the bus to the extent possible.

- Sports teams and activities should limit travel to only those who will play/participate particularly when long trips are required by bus or van.
 - Students may wear face coverings while in a school vehicle/bus.
 - Transportation staff will clean and disinfect high contact areas on a frequent basis.
 - Hand sanitizer will be available in each bus/van in which athletes will use when they enter and exit the school vehicle.
 - Students will be socially/physically distanced as possible – family members may sit multiple to a seat.
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- All who ride the bus will sit in the same seat to and from the activity.
 - If requested in advance the athlete may request travel to and from an event with parent/guardian

OTHER GUIDELINES:

1. Guidance regarding social distancing and hygiene will be posted at facility entrances and high traffic areas.
2. Spectators at games will be a local decision. The host school MUST inform the visiting school in advance if any restrictions are in place as early as possible. If school want to save sections for social distancing, those should be clearly marked and advertised.
3. Facility cleaning guidance for the summer should be continued throughout the school year.
4. SDHSAA will determine if a contest is a “no contest” or “forfeit”. This will be outlined in the SDHSAA Fall Sports/Activities Task Force Plan.
5. Goals for all schools should be consistent:
6. Do what is best for ALL kids.
7. Do what is best to start and end each season.
8. Follow in-season modifications outlined by SDHSAA and let visiting schools know of procedures to follow when traveling to the host school at least a day or two in advance.



What Lunchtime Solutions is doing to mitigate the spread of COVID-19

As the beginning of the school year approaches, we know schools and families face difficult decisions and obstacles from the impact of COVID-19. As your school food service provider, Lunchtime Solutions is taking action to provide a safe work environment for our employees and a safe food service experience for our student customers. These actions include tools and employee training for executing our program in your schools safely, including changes in operations.

Our commitment to safety has never been more important as we face the challenges of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Changes in the foodservice program:

Dependent on your school and local health advisories, there could be several things that look different; however, you can still expect healthy and delicious food options that your student will enjoy and that meet USDA regulations as part of the National School Lunch Program.

1. **Options:** To begin the school year, menu options will look similar to what the students saw two years ago. Our options will be choices the students love, ensuring a high level of satisfaction.
 - a. If students visit the cafeteria and come through the line, entrées and the self-serve fruit and vegetable bar will be in use.
 - i. A sanitizer station with signage in each serving line to encourage washing and sanitizing hands before use of the food bar.
 - ii. Staff will wipe down tray slides, condiment bottles and other high touch surfaces.
 - iii. Staff will wipe down all spoons and tongs.
2. **Supply shortages:** Food and supply shortages are very fluid, and we ask for your patience without staff as menu option changes are inevitable.
 - a. Many suppliers are seeing challenges with providing everything we order due to manufacturing and supply chain limitations.
 - i. You may have experienced this personally when you go to the grocery store or order groceries online.
 - b. Due to these potential shortages, some items are no longer available, and some will be substituted with similar options.
 - c. Our menus may change without notice due to supplier shortages.

Vermillion School District Return to School Plan

Lunchtime Solutions is partnering with your school to navigate any health emergency and to mitigate the risk of the spread of COVID-19. Together we will work to optimize

nutrition while ensuring the health and safety of the students and communities we serve.

If you have any questions or concerns about the program or our mitigation protocols, please call your Food Service Director.

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