



**Urban Academy**  
**Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan**  
**for the 2022-23 School Year**  
**District #4088**

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## Urban Academy's Safe Learning Plan

Urban Academy is following the guidance in Minnesota's [Safe Learning Plan](#) to continue to educate students and keep our community healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic. Minnesota's Safe Learning Plan was created at the request of Governor Tim Walz and Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). The State allows schools to implement different learning models as long as schools take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

This document explains the Safe Learning Plan for the 2021-22 School Year and outlines resources and supports that are available for the school year. The following information is guidance on how Urban Academy plans to respond to a safe return to learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. While reopening our facility for in-person instruction is what we want for our students, the main priority must continue to be the health, safety and wellness of our students, staff, and community.

After careful analysis and consideration of Urban Academy's community, student populations, staff, facility and resources, the school decided on having two learning models or scenarios for the 2021-2022 school year. The default learning model will be Distance Learning. The alternate model will be In-Person Learning. This model will be implemented if and when restrictions and guidance from the MDH and MDE allow for safe in-person learning in the Urban facility. Until the conditions are right the default scenario is distance learning. for as long as the MDH and Governor Walsh determine the spread of SARS-Cov-2 virus meets the threshold of safety for in-person learning.

## The Distance Learning Model at Urban Academy (Fall of 2021)

**Distance Learning defined:** Students engaging in distance learning have access to appropriate educational materials and receive daily interaction with their licensed teacher(s). It is important to note that distance learning does not always mean e-learning or online learning. It is critical to provide this learning in a format that can be equitably accessed by all students.

### Distance Learning Plans and Protocols

The Urban Academy distance learning plan addresses limited technology access by a large number of families. Providing equal access to learning will be accomplished by converting current program and curriculum content to printed packets. Packets will cover all subjects by grade level.

The packets for core subjects of literacy (reading and writing), math and social studies will cover a full week of learning instruction. Packets will start with a friendly greeting and note from the teacher, list the lessons/activities for the week and a schedule of time to spend on each lesson/activity. Mondays through Thursdays students will work on activities in the packets. Activities on Fridays address assessments for each subject covered in the week. Other subjects have packets called Choice Boards covering movement, social studies, science, writing, and art. Students have a choice for which activity to complete sometime in the week. Teachers will track student activity and progress through feedback during the week. Parents are asked to support each student's schedule and activities.

Custom packets will be provided to students with IEPs and/or English Learner (EL) Learning Plans to allow for accommodations and to maintain student progress according to their plans.

Each day teachers will talk with each student to connect personally and discover how the student is doing with activities and learning. Some instruction and help will be provided during these times. Each week EL teachers will communicate with students according to the existing pattern of interaction and in collaboration with the students' teachers. Service and plans may be adjusted based on feedback and assessments. Special Education teachers will communicate weekly with students according to the existing pattern and based on the student's IEP, in collaboration with teachers, paraprofessionals and parents.

Materials will be delivered weekly by bus along with meals to pre-arranged bus stops where families will receive the packets for the following week.

Teachers and other staff will communicate regularly with parents and students about plans, adjustments, needs and so on. Communications will happen as best serves the parents and students -by phone calls, with the help of a translator as needed, by email, text, and possibly other means.

To the degree possible, differentiated instruction and one-on-one support will be provided through communications with the student and parents by the teacher, the EL teacher, the SpEd teacher, and paraprofessionals. Modifications and approaches for learning such as scaffolding and gradual release can be provided through learning materials. Coordination and collaboration between staff will help ensure that each student's learning is supported and progressing.

Instructional leadership, as in the normal course of action at the school, is provided by Dr. Mongsher Ly, Instructional Coach Harold Lang, and the Instructional Leadership Team. This will happen through regular online meetings and by continually monitoring student engagement, teacher practices, and curriculum development.

All non-teaching staff will be on board and doing "reach-out" services to students' homes and families for continued support. For example, providing home visits by dropping off work packets or food if the student(s) misses the drop off time and day. If a student was being provided support in school by specific individual(s) then the support or specialist staff will continue to reach out to the student to continue that support.

Materials delivered to students and parents will not contain protected student or staff information. All planning and preparations for student learning remain within the school's secure processes and software systems.

The purpose of Distance Learning is to protect everyone's health as much as feasible. Therefore, scheduling and preparing student packets/materials at the school facility will be done in ways that maintains effective social distancing within the school. Spacing and scheduling for access to computers and copiers distributes workloads over a full week and minimizes possibilities of transmitting the virus between people. All surfaces will be sanitized between sessions to further minimize transmission. Handoffs of packets and food will be done with minimal contact and ideal distances between people. Personnel will have sanitizing solutions to clean surfaces and hands between handoffs. Containers and

materials that could transmit the virus will be sanitized as much as possible. All staff, parents and students will be given instructions/guidance on how to protect against the spread of the virus.

Dr. Mongsher Ly, Instructional Coach Harold Lang, and the Instructional Leadership Team will meet to review the overall Distant Learning Plan and to review progress. Adjustments will be made as needed. Significant learnings and changes likely will occur. The school will update the plan as needs emerge and as new practices are developed to meet those needs. This will happen through regular online meetings.

Any student who also must be at a daycare provider during the school day will have the packets available to engage in learning. The daycare provider will be responsible to support these learning activities if there is any overlap with a normal school day.

Any Urban Academy students whose parents are qualified emergency workers will be given care at the Urban Academy facility according to MDE and State requirements. Staff who are present with the students will manage student needs within the expected constraints to minimize transmission of the virus and also to support students as they work on their learning activities.

## **Attendance and Truancy**

Urban's attendance policies will remain unchanged. Specific methods for taking attendance will be modified to work for the Distance Learning Plan.

Daily attendance will be taken by each teacher for each individual student as they reach out and contact them daily. Daily attendance will be taken, as if it were a regular day at school, and submitted to the attendance staff for daily tracking.

Expectations about attendance and truancy will be communicated to parents in several ways (1) personal phone call by the teacher and an interpreter, if needed, (2) Notice will be in the work packets that go home, and (3) newsletter that is mailed home. Students will learn and understand from their parents, teachers and staff through direct communication and information sent home in packets. Staff have received expectations from administration through training and standard communications methods.

## **The In-Person Learning Model at Urban Academy (updated Feb. 2021)**

Students attend school, following additional safety precautions, including face coverings as mandated by state officials. Specifics are provided in the Health and Safety Procedures section below. Some families may continue to have the option of distance learning at the beginning of each quarter throughout the academic year.

Students attend school, following additional safety precautions, including face coverings as mandated by state officials. The In-Person Learning Model is made as close as possible to the standard program design prior to the start of the pandemic. Health and safety specifics modify practices and procedures. See the Health and Safety Procedures section below.

Students attend school from 9:00-3:30 Monday through Friday. Students are provided transportation to and from school by bus with modifications in practice to meet health and safety requirements. Adjustments are made as appropriate to current regulations and guidelines.

Families would continue to have the option of distance learning at the beginning of each quarter throughout the academic year. Students choosing distance learning will remain in distance learning until the end of the quarter.

## **Special Education - IEP or 504 Plan**

Each student with an IEP will receive ongoing services to the degree possible through the Distance Learning Model outlined at the beginning of this plan. Each student's IEP will be monitored and the appropriate teacher will work with the student through customized packets, phone calls and conversations with others who support the student's learning and learning plan. Progress will be assessed through conversations and weekly assessments.

For students in the In-Person Learning Model their services will be provided in a similar manner as in prior school years. There will be some adjustments to ensure health and safety protocols are met.

Programming and services are based on the individual student's needs as determined by the individual education program (IEP) team and as documented in the IEP or 504 plans.

## **English Learners**

Each student with an ELL Individual Learning Plan will receive ongoing services to the degree possible through the distance learning plan outlined in the distance learning section outlined at the beginning of this plan. Each student's Individualized Learning Plan will be monitored, and the appropriate teacher will work with the student through customized packets, phone calls and conversations with others who support the student's learning and learning plan. Progress will be assessed through weekly assessments and verbally administered WIDA assessments, by student reporting and reading of work done for specific activities.

For students in the In-Person Learning Model their services will be provided in a similar manner as in prior school years. There will be some adjustments to ensure health and safety protocols are met.

## **Students Experiencing Homelessness or Housing Instability**

Homeless students will be given the same support as all the other students. School materials, food and teacher contact will be provided without any limitations.

## **Early Learning**

The teacher will contact each student on a daily basis along with one more parent. It is vital that parents are a part of this learning process as their 4-year-old will need a lot of guidance through these trying times. The teacher will setup a daily routine with the parent(s) to ensure and support daily learning.

These actions will happen regardless of where students will be during the school day. The Urban Academy Prekindergarten program will fulfill minimum hour requirements between teacher and student based on MDE guidance and rules adjusted for the distance learning period.

For students in the In-Person Learning Model their services will be provided in a similar manner as in prior school years. There will be some adjustments to ensure health and safety protocols are met.

## Health & Safety Procedures

When the In-Person learning model is active some or all enrolled students and staff will be physically on-site for at least part of the instructional day. For school staff working at the school facility throughout the school year the same guidelines will apply. The majority of the following procedures are applicable for In-Person Learning situations and are put in place to protect the health and safety of those students and staff.

### Facility Entrance and Movement within the Facility

Following guidance is the expected procedures to be followed by students and staff relating to school daily entrance while attending In-Person.

- People arriving to the school facility will have their temperature taken, sign in, and answer relevant questions pertaining to possible exposure to or symptoms of COVID-19.
- Daily health screening will be conducted by the school for all students and staff prior to entering the school building.
  - Temperature check will be conducted.
  - Anyone with an elevated temperature will be directed to an isolation area for additional screening.
  - Students and staff will remain in the isolation area until they are rescreened and either cleared to enter or they go home.
  - Students that are dropped off will enter through the main entrance.
- Parents/Guardians are required to conduct a wellness screening of their child before sending them to school. Please keep sick children home.
  - Temperature 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher when taken by mouth;
  - Sore throat;
  - Uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline);
  - Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain; or
  - Onset of severe headache, especially with a fever.
- The school will prioritize for school staff to receive COVID-19 testing every other week as much as is feasible. This practice may be modified as guidelines are relaxed by authorities.
- Non-essential visitors **will not** be allowed into the school building. Parent visits will need to be prearranged.
- Large group activities will be prohibited until state guidelines allow resumption. Specific restrictions may still apply and will be communicated to staff, families, and others.

- Cloth masks and/or face shields are required to be worn by all staff, students and any visitors while entering and while within the building and while traveling on a school bus or contracted vehicle. This rule will continue through the end of the 2021-2022 school year.
  - The school will provide students and staff with a couple of washable cloth or reusable masks. The school will have disposable masks on hand for emergency use.
  - Students and staff may choose to supply their own face covering provided it meets the COVID safety guidelines.
- Hand wash and sanitize as much as possible.
- Social Distancing for students of six feet of distancing. If this cannot be met, a minimum of three feet of physical distance between students must be maintained. Adults at 6 feet, as much as possible.
- When vaccination rates and local/county infection rates allow then the relaxation of restrictions adjustments will be made according to new guidance from the MDH and MDE. This is determined in part by the 14 day average of county infection rates, expressed as infections per 10,000 people. If the rate is below 10/10,000 and not rising the restrictions can be fully relaxed.
- Exceptions may apply to mask wearing during physical education or when eating/drinking. However, the school will consider if doing these activities without masks is a significant risk factor to people's health and safety. If the situation is too risky these activities may not be allowed at all.

### **Bus Transportation:**

Following guidance is the expected procedures to be followed by students and staff relating to school transportation by School Bus or Type 3 vehicle while under Hybrid Learning. The goal is to meet 50% capacity spacing.

- No passengers in the seat directly behind the driver.
- Assigned seating required.
  - Students sit in alternating rows leaving an empty row between riders.
  - Students either sit alone or as a household.
  - Students are required to remain in their assigned seats the whole route.
- Bus loads back to front and unloads front to back.
- Masks are required to be worn by staff and students while on the bus.
- No eating or drinking while on the bus.
- Use hand sanitizer upon entry.
- Staff monitors will direct students to wear masks & stay in assigned seats.
- Students are restricted to their assigned route only.
- Containing students in pods reduces the risk of exposure.
- Parents/Guardians will be responsible for alternative transportation arrangements.
- Buses will be sanitized between routes.

### **Procedures for COVID-19 exposure scenarios of students and staff**

Isolation and re-admittance procedures for positive COVID case - following MDH procedures.

- Parent/Guardian is responsible for reporting to the school of any symptoms in their students or possible COVID-19 exposure.
- If the school is notified of a positive COVID case of a student or staff member this information will be shared with MDH.
- Person's name and phone number. Date first developed symptoms.
- If not symptomatic, the date they were tested and why they were tested.
- Date the person last attended school.
- MDH will use this information to determine any exposures (close contacts) that may have occurred in a school setting.
- Close contact is anyone who was within 6 feet of the person who is sick while they were considered to be infectious, for 15 minutes or more (regardless of whether either person wore a cloth face covering or face shield).
- Schools will notify all identified close contacts of their exposure to a confirmed case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with state and federal law. The MDH follow-up team will provide an exclusion letter and a fact sheet that the school will be asked to give to all close contacts.
- MDH will evaluate next steps and provide guidance. The evaluation will take into account the information available, with a focus on those who might be considered close contacts if the person was onsite during their infectious period. MDH will consider the following to inform a recommended plan of action:
  - How long was the person on site while potentially infectious?
  - Whom did that person come in contact with?
  - Was that person with a closed group in one classroom?
  - Was that person or classroom mixing with other people or classrooms?
  - Was there intermixing between groups or classrooms?
- MDH recommendations depend on the extent of the exposure and what mitigation measures were in place at the time of exposure and may include:
  - Notifications sent to staff and families to alert them of a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 in the school community.
  - Exclusion of close contacts, which involves requiring close contacts to stay home for 14 days.
  - Closing an entire classroom or school setting for 14 days. This will depend on the extent of exposure and whether there is the possibility of ongoing transmission.
  - Take no further action.
- If a household member of a child is diagnosed with COVID-19, the child will be considered a close contact and needs to be excluded from school and needs to stay at home for 14 days from the date of their last exposure to the household member.
  - Children do not represent an exposure risk within your setting solely because their parent tested positive, as long as the child has not had any symptoms.
  - If you have been able to limit the amount of time the household member has been in your setting and there was limited interaction with others, there is a good chance no one would be considered a close contact, and therefore nothing needs to be done.
  - MDH doesn't require programs to send a general notification of a positive case in this situation.
- Vaccinations and COVID exposure – If you have been fully vaccinated and been exposed to someone that has tested POSITIVE, you DO NOT have to quarantine as long as it has been more than 14 days since you've received your last vaccine (per our school nurse, CDC and MDH).

Classroom Safety: Following guidance is the expected procedures to be followed by students and staff relating to classroom safety management while attending In-Person. These may change during the course of the year as we learn more about the spread of the virus.

- Desks will be spaced a minimum of 6 feet apart. Students will have assigned seats, facing the same direction.
- Use hand sanitizer upon entry into the room.
- Wash hands frequently for 20 seconds with soap & water.
- Teachers will sanitize frequently touched surfaces (desks, chairs, knobs).
- Masks are required to be worn by staff and students while in the school building and outdoors when 6 feet social distance cannot be maintained.
  - Students will be provided with a mask for use in school.
  - Student masks will be collected at the end of the day and washed for the next day. Masks will be marked with student names to ensure they receive the same mask.
  - Adjustments to social distancing requirements will be communicated if and when authorities validate these changes.
- Rooms will be cleaned and disinfected each evening.
- Student groups will stagger the times for transfers, bathroom breaks and recess to reduce mingling of student groups.

Students are to follow social distancing while in school.

- Remain 6 feet apart while in lines unless different distances are recommended.
- Follow directional marks while in hallways and the cafeteria.
- Follow a road-like traffic flow while in the hallways, always staying to the right.

Facility Sanitation - Following CDC guidance is the expected procedures to be followed by staff relating to facility safety management while attending In-Person.

- Extra sanitizing in bathrooms and communal areas will occur during the day.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
- Guidelines for classroom sanitation procedures by teachers and staff.
  - Desks, door & sink handles and other frequently used surfaces are to be sanitized minimum of twice daily and/or between new student groups.
- Signage related to COVID-19 health & safety has been posted.
  - Entrance doors, symptoms of illness and face masks are required.
  - Social distance & hand washing reminder signage is prevalent throughout the building.
  - Flow and spacing indicators for social distancing placed on floors.

## Facility

Physical changes to facilities to follow to provide safety.

- In-Door Air Quality has been checked and approved air flow and filter recommendations.
- Added safety shield barriers where needed.

## Food Service

- All students are eligible to receive meals.
- Meal service will continue regardless of the learning model the school is in. Students in Distance Learning can select if they want school meals or they can opt out of school meals while at home. The school will deliver meals to the student's house.
- Students in In-School Learning will receive meals according to published meal serving times and plans. Specifics on meal serving, locations, and times will be adjusted based on social distancing requirements.

## Communications

During the school year the Instructional Coach collects questions from staff daily and compiles answers into one email to staff that is sent every day at about 3:00 p.m. Questions that need immediate response will be addressed as needed. Dr. Mongsher Ly will still be holding regular Cabinet meetings that bring together all departments via Google Hangouts to communicate needed information to all staff as well as identify any crucial issues.

Urban Academy staff will communicate with parents, students, and the community about the distance learning model in several ways: Through the Urban Academy Website, mailings and notices in work packets that are delivered to parents. Follow up phone calls will be made to ensure understanding.

Information from the State Department of Education, State Department of Health and the information from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will be posted on the website and also posted on the newsletter that will be mailed home.

Interpreter staff will also be calling homes to do outreach to families to support them and inform them of the continued information that is coming from the local and national agencies as indicated.

The school administration tracks all relevant updates from the state of MN, CDC, and St. Paul departments. Relevant conference calls or webinars are attended. The school will communicate with authorities, including its authorizer, IQS, about the state of the school and needs that emerge. Should any staff or students become infected with Coronavirus the school will notify the MDE and MDH and appropriate personnel and agencies as required by then current orders. Urban will follow up based on instruction from the agencies.

Urban will communicate with staff and parents to connect them with resources that can assist families experiencing homelessness. This assistance will be as close as possible to what the school normally does.

Because some families and students may remain in the Distance Learning Model the entire year, these practices will remain in place to ensure all families, staff and students are well informed and able to give feedback.

## Tribal Considerations

For any students enrolled at Urban who are registered as members of a Native American tribe the Urban Family Specialist and other specialists will reach out to all tribal liaison officers or tribal authorities to support student learning concerns and needs without any limitations. School packets, food and parent contact will be provided. Urban will also be culturally respectful and responsive to students reporting as American Indian and Alaska Native but not officially registered with a tribe.

## **Before and After Care**

Urban will continue to do outreach to all families and community partners through website and newsletters. The school will provide before and after care programs for children of Families of Emergency Care only. If needed, support staff will be available to provide the student care.

Plans must be translated and communicated in written and oral languages based on the needs of each community.

## **More information from the MDE**

<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/health/covid19/mde034139>