



Independent School Dist. No. 85
100 County Road 25
Lewiston, MN 55952
(507) 523-2191

Gwen Carman, Superintendent
Cory Hanson, High School Principal • Dave Riebel, Elementary/Intermediate Principal

December 18, 2020

Dear Lewiston-Altura School District Parents,

On November 15, 2020 I informed you that our PK-12 students would remain in a distant learning model of instruction through at least January 4, 2020. On Wednesday, Governor Walz provided school districts updated guidance and mandates for school districts. One of the areas of confusion have been whether students can be in school before January 18th. The Department of Education has clarified that if it was a school district's plan to make an announcement in December regarding its post winter break learning models, the district may choose to return to face to face or hybrid learning models prior to January 18th.

In the past few days, we have spent much time reviewing the current COVID-19 data trends, additional information and clarifications from MDE, and with a continued prioritization of the physical safety, mental health and academic needs of students, below is a summary of how our district will be proceeding after Winter Break.

The Lewiston-Altura School District will return to our previous learning models on Wednesday, January 6th. The Governor is requiring districts to provide teachers two days of preparation for the transition for students to be back in our schools. This is why there will be no instruction on January 4th or January 5th.

Specifically:

- Preschool, elementary and intermediate classes will return to daily face to face instruction with safety protocols to keep students in separate classroom 'pods'.
- Students in grades 7-12 will return to their 3-day hybrid purple, red, green rotation. January 6th will be a Purple Day.
- Daily bus routes will resume with the same schedule being followed in November.
- Parents may choose to keep students in distant learning every day. Contact Elementary/Intermediate Principal Dave Riebel or High School Principal Cory Hanson if you want to change your child's learning model from what it was November 13th.
- Winter sport practices will resume Monday, January 4th. Coaches will contact student athletes about schedules and required safety protocols.
- January 5th: Meals can be picked up at each school 6:00-8:00am and will be delivered to the Stockton Community Center 6:00 – 8:00am. (There will be no meal pick up December 24th - January 4th.)
- Starting January 6th: Students who are distant learning only and HS students at home on an 'off' day may pick up meals at the high school only 6:00 – 8:00am, and 3:00-3:15pm. We will no longer be delivering meals to the Stockton Community Center.

OTHER IMPORTANT NOTES:

- NO students or staff have yet contracted COVID-19 in our buildings. We will continue our health and safety protocols so we can do everything we can to KEEP students in classrooms and in sports.
- Currently, all staff are now required to wear masks and face shields when interacting with students. We are continuing to monitor the details of this new mandate.

- Our district will work with the State to facilitate COVID-19 testing every two weeks for staff who choose to have it done.
- It is essential that students, staff, parents and community members continue to wear masks in public, maintain social distancing in public, frequently wash hands and avoid social gatherings with individuals beyond your household.
- It is extremely important that parents continue to inform School Nurse Michelle MacPherson if students have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have had direct contact with anyone with who has had a positive COVID-19 diagnosis **EVEN OVER WINTER BREAK**. We understand the inconvenience and stress associated with quarantines, but this information is essential to helping keep all students and staff healthy and IN SCHOOL for the long term.
- We will continue to follow the [decision tree](#) from MDH for exclusion of ill students. Please monitor your child every morning before sending them to school and keep home if they are ill. Please note that if our county data again increases, we may require students with ANY illness symptom to stay home.
- Our district is keeping the 14-day required quarantine period, if they are considered a close contact of a person with COVID-19. We will not be allowing the shortened quarantine period for students and staff. This decision is with guidance from Winona County Public Health and Winona Health.
- We will continue to monitor COVID-19 case rates in our schools, in our communities and in our region. Please understand that our Learning Models continue to be subject to change.

Additional Calendar Notes: Please check the webpage for our school updated calendar. In January, students will not have instruction on January 4, 5, 22 and 25. December 21st is a two-hour late start. Winter Break begins December 24th.

If you have questions, comments or concerns, please contact us.

KEY CONTACTS:

Elementary/Intermediate Principal Dave Riebel - 507-522-3213, driebel@lewalt.k12.mn.us

High School Principal Cory Hanson: 507-522-3232, chanson@lewalt.k12.mn.us

School Nurse Michelle MacPherson: 507-522-3290, mmacpher@lewalt.k12.mn.us

Superintendent Gwen Carman: 507-522-3401, gcarman@lewalt.k12.mn.us

Thank you for your continued understanding, flexibility, and diligence to support for our students and staff through the upcoming months. I truly believe we are seeing a downward trend in our area COVID-19 rates because of everyone's increased commitment to consistently wearing face coverings in public, social distancing and increased avoidance of large social gatherings. I understand the disappointment these changes bring to traditional Holiday family celebrations. However, it is so important that we get through this Holiday Season with the necessary health precautions so we can keep our Lewiston – Altura students in classrooms and in sports throughout January and hopefully the rest of this school year.

Sincerely,



Gwen Carman
Superintendent