

Return to Learn/ESSER III Funds

Spirit Lake Community School District's Return-to-Learn Plan

The Spirit Lake Community School District (SLCSD) developed this plan for the 2021-2022 school year as directed by the Iowa Department of Education. Our website (www.spirit-lake.k12.ia.us) holds updated information regarding our COVID protocols, as well as health and safety protocols.

Full-Time, In-Person Learning

Spirit Lake Schools will hold in-person learning for all students during the 2021-22 school year. We will follow our adopted district calendar with the number of school hours and contact hours covered, as assigned by the Department of Education, and approved by our school board last spring. This calendar is also available [here](#) as well as on our district website.

Health and Safety

Spirit Lake Schools has protocols in place for the health and safety of our staff, students and families. As a district, we held in-person for all grade levels and students during the 2020-21 school year, amidst a year of challenges, multiple changes in guidance and the beginning of the vaccination. We will begin this year with the cleaning, reporting and tracing protocols that we ended the school year with. We cannot guarantee that our students in all classrooms will be spaced (as we are keeping all students onsite this year), but we will maintain a 3 foot distance in as many classrooms as possible. We have maintained some double rooms (from last year's changes) and did our best in scheduling larger classes in larger spaces. In addition, walls have been built to allow for classrooms to meet in places that were not originally classrooms. The district will also continue the sanitation and cleaning efforts that were in place at the end of the 2020-21 school year. Sanitation and frequent hand washing routines are built into our school day. Hand sanitizer is available for students to use within the classroom. Masks are not required. However, students and staff that choose to wear a mask are welcome to do so. School staff will be attentive to student reactions towards those students who choose to wear a mask and will handle any situation of concern.

Last year, we monitored our district data, as well as our local data, very closely. We reviewed the numbers on a weekly, sometimes daily basis, as well as communicated closely with Dickinson County Public Health. Monthly updates were given at the school board meetings, along with conversations regarding any adjustments that were needed to ensure our students, staff and families were safe. We will continue this monitoring and assessment of data in the same manner this year. In addition, we will continue our conversations with our local public health department, monitor CDC and Department of Education guidance, and make any adjustments that are needed throughout the school year. We have discussed plans to add more space back and change policies if that should become necessary or mandated.

Spirit Lake Schools

Students and staff who are sick should stay home. The following guidelines have been developed to help students and staff determine the most appropriate return to school date for the safety of all.

Students/staff will be sent home with ANY temperature above 99.9°, as this has been and remains our school district policy. Students may return when they have been fever free (without pain reducing medication for 24 hours).

If students/staff have symptoms associated with COVID or its variants, they are expected to STAY HOME and consider following up with your Healthcare Provider and/or testing. If they opt to test, please note that only tests utilizing PCR testing are acceptable (test at a clinic - rapid Binex or full PCR - or a home test received from Public Health). We ask students and staff to report testing and test results to Katy Stokke or Angela Olsen.

The return to school guidance for illness is listed below in the chart. The full details are found [here](#).

No Medical Diagnosis or Testing	Negative COVID-19 Test	Alternative Diagnosis	Positive COVID-19 Test
High risk symptom(s) or more than one low risk symptom are reduced, fever is below 100 degrees for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication) plus one additional school day!	Return to school after fever free - below 100°- for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication) and symptoms improving.	Return to school after fever free - below 100 ° - for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication) and symptoms improving.	Return to school after fever free - below 100° - 24 hours (without fever reducing medication), symptoms improving, AND 10 days since symptom onset..

Spirit Lake Schools hired an additional part time school nurse during 2020-21 and added additional time for the 2021-22 school year to help care for our students. The hired nurse will serve our high school students and cover lunch at the middle school. Our full time school nurse will be available for the elementary and middle school students all day. Students who have COVID-like symptoms will be asked to mask and those caring for the ill student will be offered PPE. These students will be kept in an isolated area until the student can be picked up at school.

In regards to mental health concerns and needs, SLCSO trained two teachers in Mental Health First Aid over the 2021 summer. These teachers will be assisting other teachers in providing mental wellness activities and opportunities to students. In addition, SLCSO continues to hold conversations with mental health providers in the area and hopes to arrive at a partnership with one or more providers during the 2021-22 school year.

Spirit Lake Schools continues to offer free breakfast and lunch during the 2021-2022 school year to all students enrolled in the District.

Virtual Learning

The full-time in-person learning may be moved to virtual learning by governor's emergency proclamation related to COVID-19, if necessary.

Addressing Learning Loss (ESSER III Funding)

During the first month of the 2021-2022 school year, assessments will be administered with data analysis conducted to determine the educational level and proficiency of students. The following assessments will be used to make programming and placement decisions: IGDIs for literacy and math for preschool students, FAST assessment for students in grades TK-5, and Skills Iowa Assessment in grades 9-12. Assessment results will be shared with parents.

The district has created a plan to help remediate the learning loss for missed school in the spring of 2020 or any recurring missed school in 2020-21 due to illness or choosing other educational options. The plan will be updated often as decisions are made, plans are implemented and additional needs are identified. The elementary plan includes hiring a reading and math interventionist, who from the assessment data and classroom assessments, can provide research based interventions to help accelerate student learning. The middle school will plan to target learning loss through after-school tutoring and homework assistance for those who are struggling academically, are performing below grade level, or to support those failing courses. This program initially is planned for 2021-22 and 2022-23 school year.

Also to help remediate the learning loss, summer school is being planned for students during the 2022 and 2023 summers. Elementary students achieving below grade-level standards in reading or math will be encouraged to attend the elementary summer school. Middle school students achieving below grade-level in reading or math and/or failing core classes will be invited to attend the middle school summer school. High school students failing classes will be invited to attend the high school summer school.

Technology

Spirit Lake Schools are a one to one environment with laptops for students in grades 6-12. Students in grades 3-5 are provided laptops that stay in the classroom, while PK - 2 have access to devices while at school through classroom sets or mobile carts. Additional devices have been purchased so there will not be a need to share devices. We will now have extra devices on hand, should they be needed to support families at home with devices for ill, quarantined, or medical situations.

Other ESSER III Funding Plans - Safety and Mitigation

Spirit Lake Schools plans to upgrade the geothermal system within the district. The objective of this upgrade would be to enhance the circulation of the air, improve the air quality and increase the number of times that air is exchanged within the building. The intent of the system we are looking at is to pull in fresh outside air while exhausting the building air to maintain a constant air exchange of three to four times per hour. This would improve the air quality within the building, ensuring a safe and healthy building environment for our students.

Physical distancing and being outside were two of the strategies that served us well in 2020-21 and were reliable in mitigating COVID and its variants. Therefore, our plan is to create outdoor learning environments, equipped with tables and seating that could be used for multiple purposes. First and foremost, teachers could use the outdoor spaces for class, allowing students to be both outside and physically spaced. Second, we plan to add a cooking area (kitchen) in the outdoor learning environment. This would allow two things to happen. One, our consumer science courses could utilize that space as a classroom, allowing physical distancing between the lab groups and again being outside. We would also plan to use the outdoor environment (since equipped with a cooking area, tables and seating) for outdoor seating at lunch. Lunch is a time when our students are closer together than the classroom and are not able to wear masks, should that be the mandate of our district or the State of Iowa. This outdoor seating area would again allow us to physically distance our students at lunch and be outside to aid in the mitigating of the spread of this and all illnesses.