

July 30, 2020

On July 30, Governor Tim Walz signed Executive Order 20-82 to implement Minnesota's Safe Learning Plan for the 2020-21 School Year. This plan "uses a localized, data-driven approach that allows school districts and charter schools to operate in a learning model that is responsive to the prevalence of COVID-19 cases in their community. The plan prioritizes safe learning for all Minnesota students, including requiring school districts and charter schools to give families the option to choose distance learning for their student no matter which learning model their school is implementing." This plan was developed with guidance from the Minnesota Departments of Health (MDH) and Education (MDE).

This summer, all Minnesota school districts were asked to plan for three scenarios:

- in-person learning
- hybrid model and
- distance learning

Orono Schools has carefully developed a positive back-to-school plan to bring as many students back to campus as possible while adhering to health and safety guidelines for social distancing and mitigating the spread of COVID-19. Per state requirements, and to meet the needs of all Orono learners, the district will also offer a distance-learning plan (at all grade levels) should families elect that option.

Orono Schools is eager to release their plan to families. Based on the July 30 announcement, the district must first confer with a consultant from either MDE or MDH to help determine which learning model is best to begin the 2020-21 school year. The decision-making process will center on local data, indicating the level of viral activity in the surrounding county, and the district's ability to meet health requirements and recommendations released by MDE and MDH.

The back-to-school plan for Orono Schools will be released by the district as soon as possible following further analysis in partnership with MDE and MDH.