

Highmore-Harrold School District
School Safety and COVID Mitigation Plan
2021-2022 School Year

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School District Point of Contact: Superintendent Quinton Cermak

The Highmore-Harrold School District has created this document to help ensure student and staff safety amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), South Dakota Department of Health (SD DOH), South Dakota Department of Education (SD DOE), and stakeholders of the Highmore-Harrold School District provided guidance for the creation of this plan.

Plan Accessibility in Other Languages

This plan will be posted to the Highmore-Harrold School District website in Adobe .pdf format. Patrons who need this document translated can visit <https://translate.google.com/> and copy and paste the web address of this document into the detect language box and select the language of which they want the document translated to.

Operational Phases

The Highmore-Harrold School District will continue to implement “operational phases” to respond to numbers of positive cases of COVID-19 in the school building, with some emphasis also being given to level of community spread present in Hyde County.

Normal Operations, or “Phase 1”

During normal operations, the Highmore-Harrold School District will operate a full daily schedule with full student and staff attendance at school. All scheduled extra-curricular activities and events will continue, with no limits or restrictions on spectator attendance. The Highmore-Harrold School District will practice mitigation efforts that include once daily temperature screenings upon entry to the school building, disinfecting classroom surfaces through hourly cleanings, and practicing proper hand hygiene including hand washing and use of hand sanitizer. Additionally, twice a week “fogging” of the building and classrooms with an appropriate disinfectant solution will take place to help keep surfaces sanitary. The Highmore-Harrold School District will recommend and encourage the use of face masks and will support all students and staff who choose to wear them.

Distance learning or e-learning will no longer be provided to students who are absent due to COVID-19 protocols. Students who miss school due to COVID-19 will be provided with time to make up schoolwork that is missed based on existing school policy.

The Highmore-Harrold School District will return to pre-pandemic school visits by parents, vendors, and recruiters. Community use of the gym and weight room will also be permitted during the hours the school is not in session.

“Phase 2”

The Highmore-Harrold School District will enter Phase 2 if a threshold of 5% (13 positive cases) of the student and staff populations present positive cases of COVID-19, and when infectious, the student or staff member were in the school building. All scheduled classes and activities will

continue. All students and staff will be required to wear face masks while in school when unable to social distance at least six feet from other people. No restrictions will be placed on scheduled extra-curricular events for either participants or spectators.

The Highmore-Harrold School District will increase mitigation efforts that include daily “fogging” of the building and classrooms with an appropriate disinfectant solution. Daily temperature screenings will also continue.

Distance learning or e-learning will be provided to students who must isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19 protocols.

School visits by parents, vendors, and recruiters as well as community use of athletic facilities will be restricted.

If the outbreak is contained, Phase 2 will last 10 days from the onset of the positive cases were in the school building, or in accordance with current CDC/DOH guidelines.

“Phase 3”

The Highmore-Harrold School District will enter Phase 3 if a significant outbreak of COVID-19 is prevalent in the school building. School administration will consult with the school board to make this determination. When in Phase 3 all scheduled activities will be cancelled or postponed, and all classes will move to the distance learning or e-learning model.

Mask Wearing Protocol

When the Highmore-Harrold School District is in “Phase 2” and mandating masks in situation where students and staff cannot socially distance, all efforts will be made to ensure everyone is wearing their mask consistently and correctly. Below are examples of correct mask wearing:



Masks should fit snugly over the nose and under the chin and be made of a fabric that allows for ease of breathing. When in a mask mandate, Highmore-Harrold School District students and staff will wear masks when within six feet of others.

Hand Washing Etiquette

Students and staff will continue to wash hands at appropriate times throughout the school day. These times include, but are not limited to, upon arrival in the building, prior to leaving a bathroom, prior to lunch, after returning to the school building from recess or other outside activity, and whenever contact is made with another individual. Signs will be hung in the hallways near bathrooms to both provide examples of proper handwashing technique and to encourage handwashing.

Respiratory Etiquette

Students will be taught proper respiratory etiquette techniques regarding coughing and sneezing. Students will cough and sneeze into their elbow when possible or cover their mouth with tissue paper or hands. Students and staff will turn away from others when coughing or sneezing and will sanitize their hands immediately after a cough or sneeze attack.

Student Accommodations

The Highmore-Harrold School District will accommodate all students who are unable to physically attend school due to COVID-19 protocols by providing opportunities to make up classwork according to existing school policies. All students in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade will be issued computers, which can be taken home so students can access the district's e-learning management system, which is Google Classroom, or receive emails from teachers regarding assignments missed. Students who are not affected by COVID-19 protocols will be expected to physically attend school. Students with documented disabilities that may render them immune-deficient can attend school through the district's distance learning platform. Please contact the school district office if you believe your child will qualify for this accommodation.

Positive COVID-19 Test Result

Isolation guidance

Positive for COVID-19 and **do not have symptoms:**

- Isolate for 5 days and then wear a mask until day 10.
- If they develop symptoms after testing positive, the 5-day isolation period would **start over**. Day 0 is the first day of symptoms.

Positive for COVID-19 and **have or had symptoms:**

- Isolate for 5 days. Day 0 is the first day of symptoms (test date is no longer used).
- Mask worn until day 10.
- If they continue to have fever or other symptoms have not improved after 5 days of isolation, they should wait to end isolation until they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and their other symptoms have improved.

Contact Tracing

Quarantine guidance

The Highmore-Harrold School District will no longer require students and staff who have been exposed to a positive case of COVID-19 to quarantine. Anyone exposed to a positive case can stay in school while wearing a well-fitting mask for five days. If they remain symptom free after day five, they can remove the mask. Students and staff who wish to quarantine for those five days can do so through following the certified and classified leave policies. Students who quarantine will not participate in distance learning and will be responsible for making up all work missed upon their return to school.

The Highmore-Harrold School District will continue to adapt to CDC guidance regarding contact tracing and positive test results.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

The Highmore-Harrold School District takes the social, emotional, and mental health of both staff and students very seriously. The teaching staff observes student behaviors and will encourage students to visit the district counselor and will alert the school counselor of at-risk students on an as needed basis. The district also has a counselor from Capital Area Counseling visit the school at least once a week. Staff also frequently visit the school counselor and are encouraged to use their allotted sick leave for mental health days when they deem it necessary.

Food Service

The Federal School Lunch Program no longer provides waivers to allow the Highmore-Harrold School District to provide free breakfasts or lunches. Lunch prices can be found on the School Lunch Menu tab on the school website. The district also has the capability to provide lunches to students if the transition is made to a remote learning environment.

Vaccination

Like face masks, the Highmore-Harrold School District encourages all patrons who are of age to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, but it is NOT a requirement for enrollment, attendance, or employment. If your child has been vaccinated, the school district encourages you to share a copy of your child's vaccination card to be placed in their student file. This will remain confidential, and it is completely voluntary. Sharing the vaccination card will help the school district when conducting contact tracing.

Health Screenings

The Highmore-Harrold School District will use infrared scanners to check student and staff temperatures when deemed necessary. School personnel will also have access to additional temperature checking equipment to help accurately take temperatures. Any person who is

identified as having a high temperature will be quarantined until parents/guardians can come to either take the student home or to their healthcare provider. Student health regarding illnesses other than COVID-19 will continue to be monitored. Temperature checks in these instances will continue to be provided, and regular communication with parents will continue to ensure sick children are home recovering and not attending school and spreading any illnesses.

Physical Distancing

The Highmore-Harrold School District will not physically alter any of its current buildings to provide for physical distancing of students or staff. Classrooms with numbers that allow for physical distancing will be encouraged to do so, and any barriers such as desk shields will be allowed.

COVID-19 Testing

The Highmore-Harrold School District will have access to COVID testing in the form of the Quidel QuickVue (OTC) testing materials program for SY2021-22 through the SD DOH. Quidel tests can be given to both symptomatic and asymptomatic students and staff and can be administered either at school or at home under parental guidance. Students ages 14 and older can self-administer while children ages 2 and older can administer under parental guidance. The Highmore-Harrold School District will only administer tests with parent/guardian permission and will determine if the test will be administered in the school or at home on a case-by-case basis.

ESSER/ARP

The Highmore-Harrold School District has been awarded ESSER/ARP funding to help mitigate the spread of COVID and to provide resources to make up for lost instructional time due to the pandemic. This funding amounts to \$568,404, with 20%, or \$113,681, set aside to address lost instructional time. All funds must be allocated by September 30, 2024, and once the SD DOE has given approval, and the funds have been spent, the district will be reimbursed.

The school district currently has three funding projects to propose to SD DOE for approval. Project one is the purchasing of The Wonders Reading curriculum for grades Kindergarten through 6th Grade. This reading series will address the lost instructional time that resulted in 24% of Highmore-Harrold Elementary students scoring a 1, or “Basic” on the standardized Reading assessment administered during the Spring of 2021. The cost of The Wonders Reading curriculum is \$40,680.

The second project is to address lost instructional time through extended learning opportunities. Classroom teachers or aides will provide directed study halls and tutoring for at-risk students after school on Mondays through Thursday. Extended learning will take place from 3:30 to 4:30, with a K-6 session and a 7-12 session, and transportation will be provided to students who live outside of the Highmore community and need a ride home. Teachers will receive a stipend to provide the tutoring and to take students home. The cost of the extended learning is approximately \$12,500.

The third project to address lost instructional time is the purchasing of online software such as IXL, Edmentum, and subscriptions to the SD Virtual High School for credit recovery courses. These digital tools will provide tools for teachers to provide remedial and supporting coursework to help students reach on grade-level learning, and to provide credit recovery opportunities for students who are at risk of dropping out. The cost of these digital tools is approximately \$33,677.

The current total amount budgeted to address lost instructional time is \$85,877.

Additional items budgeted include \$20,000 for sanitation solution for the fogging machines, which will help improve indoor air quality in all Highmore-Harrold School District buildings.

PPE and Other Mitigation Strategies

The Highmore-Harrold School District still has funding available from the ESSER II allocation of the Fall of 2020. Cleaning supplies and PPE such as masks and gloves will be purchased from this allocation.

Also purchased from this allocation were upgrades to the school district's existing HVAC system, which includes adding Ionization to all classrooms, and upgrading a portion of the existing system to allow for more control of fresh air intake.

Prior Reviews

The contents of this document were reviewed several times during the 2020-2021 school year, and these reviews can be found in the board meeting minutes on the website. In preparation for the 2021-2022 school year, the rough draft plan for this plan was sent to a collection of parents, teachers, administration, and board members. The feedback was used in the final draft of this document.

Assurance of Regular Review

The Highmore-Harrold School District will review this plan at minimum every 6 months. The reviews will begin with a survey sent to parents via Survey Monkey, and the review of those surveys will take place in open session school board meetings, with the next review scheduled for June 2023. The district pledges to review this plan more frequently if new data exists, or if circumstances require it. Upon review, this document will be updated to reflect the district's current return to school plan.