



Cloquet, MN
Where STARS come to shine!

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Northern Lights Academy Cooperative's COVID-19 Plan 2022-2023

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The following plan is put into place with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Operational Guide for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs to Support Safe In-Person Learning.

Strategies for Everyday Operations

Northern Lights Academy (NLA) will balance the risk of COVID-19 with educational, social, and mental health outcomes when deciding which prevention strategies to put in place. NLA uses multiple layers of mitigation to reduce infectious diseases, including the virus that causes COVID-19.

Staying Up To Date on Vaccinations

Staying up to date on routine vaccinations is essential to prevent illness from many different infections. Vaccines reduce the risk of infection by working with the body's natural defenses to help develop immunity to disease. Like all public schools in Minnesota, NLA follows the School Immunization Law in Minnesota. Specific to COVID-19, the school staff at NLA will share COVID-19 vaccine information with students and parents/guardians upon request.

Staying Home When Sick

Staying home when sick can lower the risk of spreading infectious diseases, including the virus that causes COVID-19. Northern Lights Academy encourages sick staff to stay home without fear of retaliation, loss of employment or other negative impacts. NLA provides excused absences for students who are sick.

Ventilation Systems

Schools can optimize ventilation and improve indoor air quality to reduce the risk of germs and contaminants spreading through the air. The buildings which house the classrooms for Northern Lights Academy have addressed the air exchange rate with all ventilation systems throughout the day. Air filters are regularly changed in all air handling units and scheduled preventative maintenance tasks are completed on these systems throughout the year.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

Washing hands can prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Northern Lights Academy will teach and reinforce covering coughs and sneezes to help staff and students from getting and spreading infectious diseases, including COVID-19.

Cleaning and Disinfection

At each site housing NLA classrooms, custodial and building maintenance staff will utilize disinfectants and cleaners with a strong COVID kill claim on a daily basis to reduce the risk of germs spreading throughout the buildings.

Masking

Wearing a well-fitting mask consistently and correctly reduces the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Although masking is **not** required, any staff or student who chooses to wear a mask will be supported in their decision to do so.

Testing

Northern Lights Academy will take advantage of the free testing option provided by the Minnesota Department of Health. Staff and students will have access to at-home covid tests as supply allows. In addition to providing free at-home covid tests, NLA will share information about other options to receive free covid tests and free community testing sites.

Isolation and Quarantine

Isolation is a strategy used to help prevent the transmission of COVID-19 by keeping people who have symptoms of covid, or have tested positive for covid, apart from others while they are likely contagious with covid. Northern Lights Academy will not require a specific amount of time of isolation after testing positive for COVID-19, however we will require that staff and students stay home when feeling sick.

General return to school guidelines will be followed when sick which are the following:

- Consider returning to school after being fever-free for at least 24 hours, without using fever-reducing medication.
- Symptoms have improved.
- Follow any other specific guidelines you receive from your physician.

Although a specific amount of time is not required to isolate after testing positive for COVID-19, if staff or students choose to isolate for 5 days, they will be supported in their decision to do so.

Quarantine is a strategy used to prevent transmission of COVID-19 by keeping people who have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 apart from others. Quarantine will not be required at Northern Lights Academy. Absences related to quarantine may not be excused.

Reporting cases of COVID-19

Schools in Minnesota are required to report positive cases of COVID-19 to the Minnesota Department of Health. If staff or students test positive for COVID-19, please contact the NLA office.

