



# NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ambler · Buckland · Deering · Kiana · Kivalina · Kobuk · Kotzebue · Noatak · Noorvik · Selawik · Shungnak  
PO Box 51 · Kotzebue, Alaska 99752 · Phone (907) 442-1800

# NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act MITIGATION PLAN

Last Updated: September 1, 2021

**MISSION:** To provide a learning environment that inspires and challenges students and employees to excel  
**VISION:** To graduate all students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for a successful future



## Contact Information

### District Information

Name of District: Northwest Arctic Borough School District

District Point of Contact Name: Scott Lefebvre, Assistant Superintendent

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## Assurance Agreement for ARP Act Mitigation Plan

The district assures either:

- a) It will, within 30 days of receiving ARP ESSER funds, develop and make publicly available on the district's website a mitigation plan for the safe return and/or continuation of in-person instruction and continuity of services as required in section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP and in the U.S. Department of Education's [Interim Final Requirements](#), **or**
- b) It developed and made publicly available on the district's website such a mitigation plan that meets statutory requirements before the enactment of the ARP Act that meets - federal requirements. (The ARP Act was enacted on March 11, 2021)

The district assures that:

- a) It will periodically review and revise its mitigation plan, as appropriate, no less frequently than every six months for the duration of the ARP ESSER grant period (i.e., through September 30, 2023); and
- b) It will seek public input, and take such input into account, on (1) whether revisions are necessary and, if so, (2) the proposed revisions to the mitigation plan.

Before making the mitigation plan publicly available, the district **must seek public comment on the mitigation plan** and take such comments into account in the development of the plan.

Name of Superintendent: Terri Walker

Signature: 

Date: 9/1/21



# Mitigation Plan

## Plan Components

Districts must implement, to the greatest extent practicable, prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff. Describe the extent to which the district adopted policies and a description of such policies on each of the strategies listed below:

### 1. [Masks](#)

Mask use is universally required (i.e., required regardless of vaccination status) in the schools while students are present. Reasons for this include:

- Having a student population that is not yet eligible for vaccination (e.g., schools with grades Kindergarten - 6th).
- Lacking a system to monitor the vaccine status of students and/or teachers and staff.
- Awareness of low vaccination uptake within the student, family, or teacher/staff population or within the communities.

Unvaccinated people are always required to use well-fitting face masks consistently and correctly in all designated School District facilities and while outdoors in a group.

Vaccinated people may forego wearing a mask in the school facilities when no students are present unless there is a high level of community transmission.

During times of a high level of community transmission, consistent and correct use of well-fitting face masks will be required by all people in all designated School District facilities and while outdoors in a group.

Exceptions for those with disabilities will be determined in accordance with Federal disability law.

The district will continue to follow updated guidance provided by the CDC on the use of masks in school settings.

### 2. [Physical distancing \(e.g., including use of cohorts/pods\)](#)

Maximum physical distancing will be maintained. Desk shields will be required for individual student workspaces and eating areas. Several [studies](#) from the 2020-2021 school year show low COVID-19 transmission levels among students in schools that had less than 6 feet of physical distance when the school implemented and layered other prevention strategies, such as the use of masks.

No whole-school events are allowed at this time. Gatherings of students that include multiple grades and/or classes may occur provided students are physically distanced by no less than 3 feet.



The District will continue to follow updated guidance provided by the CDC on physical distancing.

### 3. [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#)

Schools will monitor and reinforce handwashing and [respiratory etiquette](#) (covering coughs and sneezes) and provide adequate handwashing supplies. Schools will:

- Teach and reinforce [handwashing](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Remind everyone in the facility [to wash hands frequently](#) and assist young children with handwashing.
- Make hand sanitizer available.

The District will help students and staff understand that handwashing and respiratory etiquette should continue beyond the pandemic to prevent other infections.

The District will continue to follow updated guidance provided by the CDC on handwashing and respiratory etiquette.

### 4. [Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation](#)

High-touch surfaces will be cleaned routinely. Desks, tables, and desk shields will be cleaned in between each use of different students.

Air filters across the district are being replaced with air filters ranging between Merv 8-13. Fresh air intake has been increased from 10% intake into buildings to 50% intake.

Exhaust fans will be used in kitchens and restrooms.

During times of a high level of community transmission, all designated NWABSD facilities will be closed to the public unless an appointment has been made.

The District will continue to follow updated guidance provided by the CDC on cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation.

### 5. [Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments](#)

School principals and District staff will cooperate with regional health provider requests to support contact tracing efforts to the extent allowable by privacy laws. Confidentiality will be provided regarding persons diagnosed with or exposed to COVID – 19.

School staff will communicate with regional health providers regarding any positive cases and will proactively communicate with staff and families of any close contact exposure suspected to occur within the school setting.

- A parent letter will be sent home with the suspected exposed student(s) to include information on testing, monitoring for symptoms, quarantining after exposure, and when to return to school



- a) Unvaccinated staff and students with COVID-19 exposure are instructed to stay home from school for 7 days after the exposure.
    - i) Close contacts must test on day 5 or later.
    - ii) Staff and students may return to school on the 8<sup>th</sup> day after a negative test result
    - iii) If no test is available, students and staff may return to school on the 11<sup>th</sup> day after exposure
  - b) Vaccinated staff and students must monitor for symptoms and test between 3-5 days after suspected exposure and may remain attending school fully masked throughout this time
    - i) If no test is available, vaccinated staff and students must do a daily antigen screener for 5 consecutive school days starting from day 2 after exposure
  - c) Students and unvaccinated staff must quarantine at home if they have a household member that has been diagnosed COVID positive regardless of the ability of that household member to isolate
    - i) Students and unvaccinated staff must test 7 days after the household member has completed their mandatory isolation to return to school
    - ii) If no test is available, students and unvaccinated staff must quarantine for a full 10 days after their household member is cleared
  - d) Staff, regardless of vaccination status, must quarantine at home if they have a household member that is not able to isolate and has been diagnosed COVID positive
  - e) Vaccinated staff that do not have direct contact with students and have a fully isolated COVID positive household member may attend work if they have tested negative and are able to work in a personal workstation
    - i) Vaccinated staff must do a daily antigen screener and immediately test if there is a positive result, or they become symptomatic
    - ii) Vaccinated staff may return to their regularly assigned workstation after an additional negative test result taken 3-5 days after the household member has completed their mandatory isolation
      - (1) If no 3-5 day test is available, vaccinated staff must continue daily antigen screening and working at a personal workstation for 5 additional consecutive school days after the household member has completed their mandatory isolation
    - iii) Vaccinated staff must quarantine at home if any new household member tests positive for COVID while there is a household member in isolation
- Exposed areas of the school will be closed and disinfected
  - Exposures in a school will be supported case-by-case and will not automatically cause a school to change operational zones



School risk operational zones are determined on an individual school basis in coordination with Maniilaq Health, local village leaders, and NWABSD Administration. The NWABSD has two operational zones: Green Low-Risk Operational Zone and Red High-Risk Operational Zone.

Factors for changing risk operational zones include:

1. The level of case impact to the community,
2. The level of community transmission,
3. The level of community compliance to current mandates,
4. Vaccination coverage,
5. Availability of staff, and
6. Other.

The District will continue to work closely with Maniilaq Health Center and Maniilaq Public Health officials to update protocols as necessary. The District will continue to follow updated guidance provided by the CDC on contact tracing.

### 6. [Diagnostic and screening testing](#)

School staff will advise staff and students who exhibit symptoms to stay home. Students and staff who develop symptoms at school will be placed in an isolation area until transportation can be arranged, or medical attention can be provided. The District will refer staff and students who exhibit symptoms for diagnostic testing at the local clinic.

Student-athletes will be required to present a negative molecular COVID test prior to travel and competitions. School principals or designee will work with local clinics to arrange times for testing of athletes within 24 hours of travel or competition.

Staff traveling outside of the Northwest Arctic Borough region must complete the District [Travel Form](#) and follow all Federal, State, and Local mandates. In addition, staff must test immediately upon return to the region and again on day 3 after returning to the region.

1. Staff may return to work after showing the day 1 negative COVID-19 test results to their supervisor.
2. Staff must remain fully masked until day 3 negative test results are received and shown to their supervisor.
  - a. Staff may return to normal site mitigation after day 3 negative results.
  - b. Any staff member unable to take the day 3 diagnostic test must do the antigen screener for the 5 consecutive school days starting on the day they return to work.
3. All staff must show proof of negative COVID-19 diagnostic tests to their supervisor upon receiving the results and attempting to return to work.
4. Any staff member, regardless of vaccination status, returning to the region from travel and refusing to or unable to take any diagnostic COVID-19 test may return to work after 10 days.

Screening through antigen testing will be provided at all schools in the Fall of 2021. School principals will develop a screening schedule for staff and student populations. When a



community is experiencing moderate to high transmission, screening will occur more frequently. Prior to testing with antigen tests, the District will receive a CLIA waiver and report test results following State reporting requirements. Staff will receive training on proper reporting.

Informed consent will be obtained prior to testing from the individual (adult) or parent (student). Informed consent requires disclosure, understanding, and free choice, and is necessary for teachers, staff (who are employees of a school) and students' families, to act independently and make choices according to their values, goals, and preferences.

Students or staff receiving a positive antigen test result will be referred to the local clinic for diagnostic testing and appropriate care.

The District will continue to follow updated guidance provided by the CDC on diagnostic testing and screening.

### [7. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible](#)

The District will work with Maniilaq Health Services to support vaccination efforts for staff and students when eligible. The District will use its communication tools and facilities, when appropriate, to help support and accommodate vaccination efforts.

The District will continue to follow updated guidance provided by the CDC on vaccination efforts.

### [8. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies](#)

Schools will make individualized determinations as required by Federal disability laws to determine if an exception to mask requirements is necessary and appropriate. Additional determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis in compliance with Federal disability laws.

## **Continuity of Services**

*The District will ensure continuity of services including, but not limited to, services to address students' academic needs, as well as the social, emotional, mental health, and other needs of students and staff (e.g., student health and food service).*

The District strives to provide full-time in-person learning and believes that the mitigation strategies above help provide this opportunity. The District will no longer offer a remote learning option when in-person learning is provided. For families who do not want in-person learning for their child, the District continues to offer a homeschool program.

If there is an outbreak in a community or school, or local and regional COVID task force or emergency operations officials advise that schools not operate in person, the District has the ability and resources to offer off-line remote learning. Every student has a personal device (iPad or laptop) to receive assignments. Microsoft Teams (video and phone connections) along with



downloaded instructional videos provides an environment for classroom instruction. Canvas content can be downloaded for use when the internet is not available. Microsoft One-Note provides a sync-able platform for assessments and submission of student work. Support for social, emotional, mental health will continue to be provided through Social Emotional Learning (SEL) instructional curriculum offered over the same platforms, with additional support provided by school counselors.

Meal services will continue with scheduled pick-up for families and students when a school operational zone changes to remote learning (Red/At-Risk) due to COVID-19 community transmission rates.

### Periodic Review

*The District will periodically review and revise its mitigation plan, as appropriate, including a description of how the district will seek public input and take such input into account on (1) whether revisions are necessary and, if so, (2) the proposed revisions to the plan. Important Note: The district must review its mitigation plan no less frequently than every six months for the duration of the ARP ESSER grant period (i.e., through September 30, 2023).*

The District will provide stakeholder feedback opportunities prior to December and May of each semester through the following means:

- Parent Forums to answer questions and gain feedback
- Community Leadership Meetings to meet with tribal and municipal officials from each community
- Meetings with regional emergency operations officials
- Updated surveys for families and students