



Dear MPSD Families and Staff,

First, I want to thank everyone who has worked valiantly for the past five weeks to help the District offer a blended learning model mix of in-person (at school) and distance (at home) learning for our 4K-12 students, as well as a choice for full-distance learning.

While we strongly believe that the best model for our students is in-person instruction - ideally, our traditional five-day model, we unfortunately need to move at this time to full 100% distance learning due to community spread of the COVID-19 virus. Community spread has significantly increased countywide and across northeastern Wisconsin. Like other area districts have done in recent weeks - and upon the recommendation of our County Health Department, we are making the tough decision that we need to switch to a full 100% distance learning model while our community works to stem the spread of the virus.

Starting on Monday, Oct. 12, students in all Manitowoc Public School District schools will move to full distance learning. Our teachers, specialists and administrators have prepared for this and they are ready to help students and parents through this transition which will begin next week:

- 4K and Elementary student cohorts will attend school on Monday Oct. 5 and Tuesday Oct. 6, with no school on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday as staff prepare for full distance learning.
- Middle School cohorts will attend school on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday Oct. 6, 7 or 8, with no school on Monday and Friday.
- High School cohorts will attend school on Monday Oct. 5 or Tuesday Oct. 6, with no school on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Building principals will be communicating more information with their families on how distance learning will look at your school. We've got this and we will be there for you!

Criteria for changing learning models

We hope to return as soon as possible to a blended learning model - and eventually to our traditional, all 5-day in-person instruction. Working with county and state health officials, we have set a learning model decision matrix to guide when students can return to our schools. The criteria is based on **Manitowoc County's burden rate**, which is the total number of positive COVID-19 cases per 100,000 residents in the previous two weeks. Data comes from the state Department of Health website, dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/disease.htm.

When MPSD started school on September 1 Manitowoc County was averaging 100 positive cases per week. The past seven days have seen an excess of 275 positive cases. Manitowoc County's burden rate is now at 554.

When Manitowoc County's burden rate increases or decreases to a new decision matrix level for possible transition to a different learning model - and then remains at that matrix level for two consecutive cycles, the district will conduct an analysis to evaluate whether to change learning models. In addition to the use of the

decision matrix, the district reserves the right to consider other factors for shifting models to ensure the health and safety of our students, staff and community.

LEARNING MODEL DECISION MATRIX		
Current Learning Model	Next Learning Model	Manitowoc County Burden Rate (Positive cases per 100,000)
100% Distance	Blended	Less than or equal to 150
Blended	Traditional in-person (face-to-face)	Less than or equal to 75
Blended	100% Distance	Greater than 150
Traditional in-person (face-to-face)	Blended	Greater than 75

COVID-19 reporting during distance learning

During full distance learning it will remain important for us to track COVID-19 data within our school district and community. If your household is affected by COVID-19 (positive test, close contact) please call the attendance line at your child's school to report this information. Our school nursing team may reach out to you for more information. This data helps us to see how COVID-19 is affecting our school community while on a virtual platform. Our staff also will continue to report their health status according to our employee protocols.

Meal distribution

We will continue to distribute free breakfast and lunch meals to all children under age 18 at our existing locations and times. See details at bit.ly/MPSD-Oct-free-meals.

Technology and social/emotional health assistance

Families can continue to request and receive help technology assistance through our Launch Pad platform. Social and emotional health and wellness resources also are available. All assistance is detailed on our website, under Blended and Distance Learning, manitowocpublicschools.org/blended_and_distance_learning.

In order for our students and staff to return to school, we need our community’s health to improve. We ALL have the power to help by taking personal responsibility to wear a mask, watch our distance and wash our hands. Be well and thank you for your continued support of your children’s education during this global pandemic.



Mark Holzman
Superintendent, MPSD