



**BOBCAT TRACKS:  
BACK TO THE  
CLASSROOM!**

~ The Brookings School District  
Smart Start plan to open schools  
amidst a global pandemic ~

**Brookings School District**



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*A Message from Dr. Schultz, Superintendent*

Since March 2020, Brookings School District has faced profound changes in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. I am pleased to share that the successful implementation of in-person learning has empowered us to make substantial adjustments to the initial plan crafted for the fall of 2020.

As we look ahead, it is our commitment to actively monitor local infection rates. In response to evolving COVID-19 conditions, we are prepared to revise our plan if deemed necessary. This process will be conducted in close consultation with local and state medical partners. Our stakeholder's health and safety remain our top priority, and we appreciate your continued support as we navigate these challenging times together.



## **Guiding Principles:**

It's clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on school districts, including the Brookings School District. The emphasis on the value of face-to-face instruction and the recognition of the relationships formed in the classroom for the social and emotional well-being of both students and adults are crucial insights.

Several perspectives have influenced the Brookings School District plan.

- Our plan attempts to reasonably implement guidance from:
  - Center for Disease Control
  - American Academy of Pediatrics
  - United States Department of Education
  - South Dakota Department of Education
  - Federal and State elected officials
  - South Dakota Department of Health
  - Local Health Systems
  - Local stakeholders

## **District Assurance of Regular Review:**

The South Dakota Department of Education will collect assurances from Superintendents that Safe Return Plans have been reviewed at these points during the school year:

- December 2021 (in conjunction with December Child Count)
- June 2022 (in conjunction with Year-End Sign-Off)
- December 2022 (in conjunction with December Child Count)
- June 2023 (in conjunction with Year-End Sign-Off)
- December 2023 (in conjunction with December Child Count)

Questions can be submitted by email to: [Summer.Schultz@k12.sd.us](mailto:Summer.Schultz@k12.sd.us)



## **School Operations:**

### **ACADEMICS**

Face-to-face instruction offers the most favorable opportunities to provide instruction and targeted services for all learners. It further allows us to monitor learners disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic closely. Additional staff in the form of interventionist teachers have been hired. Interventionists will monitor learners' progress and provide intensive targeted support to learners who are not achieving at grade level and do not receive special education services. Classroom teachers will work directly with these individuals to ensure a continuum of services is offered.

**The following areas have returned to near normal operation, although the district will continuously monitor local infection rates and adjust accordingly.**

### **TRANSPORTATION**

The Brookings School District has planned for a full return to normal bus service operation.

- Adult family may transport their child to and from activities when requested (subject to coordination with advisors and/or coaches).
- Busses will be sanitized as needed.
- When possible, windows will be down for air circulation.

### **FOOD SERVICES**

We have planned a full return to normal food service operations.

- Learners will be provided time to wash or sanitize their hands before entering the serving line.
- If infection rates increase, alternative seating arrangements, locations, and staggering will be considered.

### **FACILITY ACCESS**

- School district facilities may be available to outside clubs or organizations per district policy.
- Upon approval, visitors and volunteers may enter the schools.
  - District administration has the authority to monitor local infection rates and temporarily pause access accordingly.

### **ACTIVITIES & SPECTATORS**

Activities will return to full capacity.

### **CLASSROOM SAFETY & FACILITY CLEANING**

- To the fullest extent possible, learner seating will allow for physical distancing.
- Learner belongings will be kept separated from others and in individual desks, cubbies, containers, etc.
- Certain areas will have enhanced filtration systems.



## **Testing/Exposure/Communication:**

### **SCREENING**

- Any individual with a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher without medication should not be present in school.
- Anyone demonstrating a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher will be sent home immediately.
- If a learner or staff member has a known exposure to COVID-19, the individual is directed to quarantine per current [South Dakota Department of Health guidelines](#).
- Anyone with a positive COVID-19 test must isolate, according to the [South Dakota Department of Health guidelines](#).

### **TESTING OPTIONS**

- Contact your health care provider.
- Tests will be available for at home use for symptomatic learners and staff members. A limited number of those tests will be available. Please speak with your building nurse for more information.

### **VACCINE RESOURCES**

The Brookings School District will **NOT** require learners or staff to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. This is a personal choice you should discuss with your health care provider.

- Vaccines are available at the following locations in Brookings:
  - Brookings Health System: (605) 696-9000
  - Sanford Health: (605) 697-1900
  - Avera Health: (605) 697-9500
  - Hy-Vee Pharmacy: (605) 692-7311
  - Lewis Drug: (605) 692-6688
  - Walmart Pharmacy: (605) 692-1858

### **CLOSE CONTACTS & QUARANTINE**

BSD will not make any determinations of close contacts nor determine related quarantine protocols. This determination will be at the discretion of the [South Dakota Department of Health](#) or another medical professional. The South Dakota Department of Health has statutory authority to isolate sick individuals. Only individuals who test positive or exhibit fevers will be excluded from school.

### **COMMUNICATION**

- The District will not communicate individual cases.
- In order to maintain the safest and secure learning environment, the Brookings School District asks parents/guardians to communicate promptly with their child's school in the event of a positive diagnosis or absence related to COVID-19.



## **Other:**

### **FACE COVERING/MASKS**

Face masks will be deemed optional. Click [HERE](#) for more information on how to properly wear a face covering/mask.

### **PROPER HYGIENE MEASURES**

- Teach and reinforce proper hygiene measures such as [hand washing](#) and [respiratory etiquette](#)
- Staff and learners will wash hands and/or use sanitizer regularly

### **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH**

Each building has a full-time counselor to prioritize learner needs. We understand each child has been impacted by the pandemic differently; therefore, individual services will be offered should a learner's social and emotional needs warrant targeted assistance.

The Brookings School District has an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) membership for all staff members. The EAP is a district-sponsored benefit that provides immediate, confidential, and free resources for employees and their families. The EAP helps people address personal and work-related issues away from work so that they can be more present, focused, and productive at work.

### **ACTIVITIES**

[SDHSAA Return to Play](#) protocols will be followed. Asymptomatic or mild illness does not require a Return to Play appointment with a physician; however, moderate to severe and cardiopulmonary symptoms do.