

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

11-25-2020

Q. How is Nevis School District making decisions regarding which learning model to use?

A. The state provided a chart as a guideline for school districts. The chart is not a rule, it is one piece of information for districts to use when deciding which learning model to use. Factors which are included in the decision making process:

- Two week case rate
- Current case rate in the county
- Current cases in the school
- School staff availability

2 Week Case Rate	Learning model
0-9	In-person learning for all students
10-19	In-person learning for students grades K-5; hybrid learning for students grades 6-12
20-29	Hybrid learning for all students
30-49	Hybrid learning for students grades K-5; distance learning for students grades 6-12
50+	Distance learning for all students

Q. Who makes the decision as to which learning model Nevis School District is currently using?

A. The District's COVID Management Team (CMT) which includes Superintendent Parks, Principal Michaelson, Dean of Students/Activities Director Bryan Wormley, School Nurse Jenny Rittgers, Social Worker Heidi Wormley, Office Staff Lynne Gustafson, County Health Coordinator Marlee Morrison, two parent/community member, and two school board members meet to discuss and recommend which learning model Nevis School will be using.

Teaching & Learning

Q. What is the difference between asynchronous and synchronous learning?

A. The difference is whether students are online simultaneously with their teacher or not.

- Synchronous learning is when the student and teacher are together at the same time, simultaneously. The teacher delivers the material while the student watches and interacts.
- Asynchronous learning is when the teacher records the lessons and the student watches the recording at any time they are available. This means the teacher can record the lesson at 8:00 a.m. and the student can watch the lesson at 7:00 p.m.

Q. Didn't Governor Walz say schools must use asynchronous learning in Executive Order 20-94?

A. No, the order did not require asynchronous learning. The Governor said schools "should implement teaching and learning environments that do not require teachers to provide instruction simultaneously to students who are in person and those that are learning remotely". This means teachers are given some flexibility.

However, the MDE 2020-21 Planning Guidance for Minnesota Public Schools states schools should “Develop and require as many synchronous opportunities as possible, with opportunities for student-to-student interaction for students of all ages.” It is important for students to have interactions with their peers and teachers. As a result, some Nevis School teachers require students to Zoom synchronously. The benefits of synchronous learning include: students are able to interact with their peers and teacher, students can ask questions, and teachers can gauge student learning and make necessary adjustments.

Nevis School also acknowledges there are instances when students are unable to Zoom synchronously. As a result, recorded lessons will be posted for students in Google Classroom, allowing all students asynchronous access to the material. The recordings also serve as a way for students to review material.

Q. How do I know the times of Zoom sessions?

A. Cohort Zoom schedules were sent to parents and posted in students’ “Class of” Google Classroom.

Q. What if my child misses a required Zoom session?

A. Lessons are recorded and posted on Google Classroom or Seesaw. This allows students who missed the lesson to watch the recording later. All students have the opportunity to learn the material. Having the lesson recorded allows all students the opportunity to learn the material. It is the student’s responsibility to watch the videos.

Q. Is there extra help available for students who are struggling?

A. Yes, there is extra help available. Every Friday is devoted to helping students. Teachers are available throughout the day to help students, answer questions, and just to talk. Plus, for students in grades 7-12, there is a math help session every Tuesday night from 5:30-7:00 via Zoom.

Q. While in hybrid learning model, why can some students attend school every day while others are restricted to the two days per week?

A. In Executive Order 20-94, school districts were instructed to prioritize in-person learning for students with disabilities. If your student is currently on a 504 or receiving special education services please contact your child’s special education teacher or a social worker to see if this is an option for your student. Consideration is given to students on a case-by-case situation while considering class sizes and other safety considerations.

Q. How will conferences be held in March?

A. Conferences will be held virtually March 23 and 25 via Zoom. Sign up for conferences in your ParentVUE account. Conferences will be the same format as the fall conferences.

Elementary conferences are scheduled every 15 minutes and high school conferences every 10 minutes.

Q. How can I **communicate with a teacher?**

A. Please feel free to email a teacher at any time. They should respond within 24 hours. You are also welcome to schedule a Zoom call with the teacher. Plus, you can call the school office and leave a message for the teacher to return your call.

iPads and Chromebooks

Q. What if something happens to my student's device (Chromebook or iPad)?

A. If the device isn't working properly, please contact Bud as soon as possible. The sooner the situation is resolved, the sooner the student can return to learning.

Q. Are there **protective cases for student devices?**

A. Yes there are protective cases.

- Elementary students issued iPads have a protective case which should keep the device safe under normal situations.
- Chromebook cases arrived later and have been distributed to students. If your student did not get a Chromebook case, please contact the high school office. The case will help protect the Chromebook in many situations from damage.

School Activities

Q. Are all **activities discontinued when the school district is in distance learning model?**

A. No, all activities are not discontinued. The only time in-person activities are discontinued is when the school district is required to move to distance learning by state order or when activities are discontinued through state order. Otherwise, if Nevis School District chooses to use the distance learning model, students can still participate in activities.

During a state ordered discontinuance, virtual activities can still continue. This means, coaches are encouraged to communicate with their team members. Individual workouts can be shared. Virtual competitions can be held (i.e. math league and knowledge bowl contests).

Q. What is happening with **music contests?**

A. In the past, music students have participated in solo contest in November. Currently, the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) has stated solo and ensemble contest cannot occur before February 1 and participants should plan to participate virtually.

Q. Will there be a winter concert?

A. No, there will not be a winter concert. The music department is working hard to make music fun and maintain skills. It has been hard to put together a music program with students due to changes in learning models (distance and hybrid). The goal is to have a music program in the spring.

Q. How does the rule “students must be in attendance all day to participate in after school activities” apply?

A. The rule applies in the following ways:

- In-Person Learning model – All in-person students must be in school all day to participate in activities after school.
- Hybrid Learning model – Students are required to be in school all day on the day they are assigned. If they are an A Day student, they must be in school all day on Monday and Wednesday to participate after school. If they are a B Day student, they must be in school all day on Tuesday and Thursday to participate after school.
- Distance Learning days - Participation in activities after school is a privilege. This Privilege can be affected and/or revoked with CONTINUED academic and or participation issues with a class or classes. Administration will have discretion.

Attendance

Q. How is attendance taken?

A. Students must check in to their classes.

- In the elementary, attendance is taken once during the day. Students are required to check-in daily in Google Classroom.
- In the high school, students are required to check in to every class through Google Classroom. This means sometime during the day, students must access their class and click on the attendance.

Q. How do I report a student absence?

A. There are three ways for you to report an absence.

1. Log into your ParentVUE account. Click the blue button “Report Absence”. Enter the date and select the reason. Please enter any notes you feel are valuable. Click Save. You can report absences up to 45 days in advance.
2. Call 218-652-3500 and press 1 to leave a message.
3. Call 218-652-3500 press 1 for high school or 2 for elementary to speak to staff to report an absence.

Q. By what time must attendance be completed?

A. Attendance must be completed by 3:30 p.m. on Monday through Thursday and by 11:59 a.m. on Fridays. This will allow teachers time to update attendance in system.

Q. Do I need to report my child is ill or on vacation if we are distance learning?

A. Yes, you need to report any attendance changes for your child. If your child is ill or on vacation and will not be able to participate in classes, it is important to report the absence. First, your child will not be marked absent and you will not receive a phone call. Second, teachers will know your child has an excused absence from class. Otherwise, teachers can expect your child to participate in class and complete assignments as assigned.

Q. Will Nevis School District file truancy on students?

A. Yes, Nevis School will file truancy if necessary. We will work with you as much as possible. If your student needs mental health help, we will work with you to find a provider that will work. If you need technology help, we will work with you to make sure the device is working, WiFi is working, and you have all the information you need to encourage your student to attend required Zooms and complete all assignments. After all of this, if your student is still not attending school as required by law, Nevis School will file truancy paperwork. We want to make sure your student is getting their education.

Q. Will Nevis School be using the five instructional days for planning time?

A. Yes, Nevis School is planning to use up to five instructional days as planning time for staff as we move between learning models. In Governor Walz's Executive Order 20-94, school districts were allowed to count five planning days as instructional days. The days would be used to allow staff planning times as the district moves between learning models. The District opted to use three of these five days, November 23-25, as a transitional planning period.

Cafeteria

Q. How do I pick up meals?

A. It depends

- Distance Learning only students – meals are distributed daily from 9:30-10:30 a.m. Parents can pick up three meals on Mondays and two meals on Wednesdays OR pick up five days of meals on Mondays.
- Hybrid Learning Model – when in the hybrid learning model, students pick up the next day's meal as they leave the building. Food service staff stand at the end of the hall and distribute meals to students who wish to take them.
- Distance Learning Model – when either the high school and/or elementary school is in distance learning model, meals are being delivered via the bus routes Mondays through Thursdays in the morning from approximately 9:00-10:30, or you can opt to pick up your

meals from the East Cafeteria door (#10) Mondays-Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Q. Meals in the fall were free of charge to all students, will that continue?

A. Yes, meals will be free of charge for the entire 2020-2021 school year.