



Smart Restart

7.31.2020

Greetings, Fargo Public Schools Families and Staff,

Fargo Public Schools (FPS) has been working diligently to develop the *FPS Smart Restart Plan* for the 2020 – 2021 school year with the safety and health of our students and staff as its top priority. Today, we release the plan, approved by our School Board yesterday, to our staff, parents, students and community.

Countless hours of work have been put into the plan, in collaboration with our teachers, staff, and local health officials, and through staff and parent input. The *FPS Smart Restart Plan* was developed based upon four guiding principles:

- Ensure the safety and well-being of all students and employees
- Promote equity and accessibility to learning for all students
- Provide instructional delivery systems to meet the needs of all students
- Foster positive relationships and interactions

We feel the plan as shared today best delivers the high quality educational opportunities you have come to expect from our school district, as we strive to fulfill our mission *to educate and empower all students to succeed*, regardless of the COVID-19 world pandemic. The *FPS Smart Restart Plan* has been built utilizing recommendations and guidelines from city, county, state, and national health organizations, public education agencies, and government officials. Feedback was gathered from Fargo Public Schools staff and parents through online surveys and a series of virtual input sessions. From the input sessions, FPS administration further updated and refined the plan.

The plan describes the educational delivery models, Levels 1 through 5, that FPS is planning for Kindergarten through grade 12 and Early Childhood Special Education for the school year and a virtual academy offering for grades K-12. Additionally, the plan defines the safety protocols that will be put into place due to COVID-19. You may view the full *FPS Smart Restart Plan* at www.fargo.k12.nd.us/smartrestart.

COVID-19 Instructional Plan Committee

According to the *FPS Smart Restart Plan*, Fargo Public Schools is establishing an FPS COVID-19 Instructional Plan Committee. The purpose of the committee is to meet every two weeks, review data regarding COVID-19 cases in our community and make determinations for which plan level will be used to deliver instruction in Fargo schools. Fargo Public Schools is seeking parent and staff representatives to serve on the FPS COVID-19 Instructional Plan Committee. FPS is currently seeking a parent representative from the elementary, middle, and high school levels to participate on the committee and a support staff representative, an elementary teacher representative, and a high school teacher representative to participate on the committee. Participants would need to have flexible schedules that allow them to participate in meetings (these meetings will have a virtual option). Additionally, if emergency meetings are needed, committee members may need to meet more frequently with short notice.

- If you are a **parent** interested in serving on this committee, please submit your name for consideration using [this link](#) by 5:00 p.m. on August 4.



- If you are a *staff member* interested in serving on this committee, please submit your name for consideration using [this link](#) by 5:00 p.m. on August 4.

On August 10, this committee will determine which instructional model will be used to open the 2020 – 2021 school year (Level 1-5). More information about the committee and committee meeting times are available at the links provided above.

School Start Date – Wednesday, September 2

At the School Board meeting on July 30, Board members approved pushing back the start date of the [2020 – 2021 school year](#) for students from Thursday, August 27 to Wednesday, September 2. This change in the start date will allow FPS to continue preparations for the school year, provide staff with training and professional development, and schedule small group time for students and families to visit schools and meet teachers in lieu of Back to School Nights. Fargo Public Schools will schedule student and family engagement opportunities prior to September 2. Please watch your email closely for additional information as we near our school start date of September 2; both the District and your child’s school will be providing you additional information regarding the 2020 – 2021 school year.

FPS Virtual Academy Option

An option for families to consider for education this year is a Virtual Academy for students in K-12, as detailed in the *FPS Smart Restart Plan* (see Section 10). Families may choose to register in the FPS Virtual Academy for the fall semester or the full school year. This option is available to all students for the 2020 – 2021 school year. Students who choose this option will participate in courses online in synchronous (scheduled) video conference sessions and complete asynchronous (unscheduled) activities. **Registration for the FPS Virtual Academy opens tomorrow, Saturday, August 1, through PowerSchool.** Families can register by logging into [PowerSchool](#) and clicking the Forms link on the left side of the page. The FPS Virtual Academy Registration form will appear on the top of the forms list, under a heading called “Academy.” A separate form will need to be completed for each child being registered. **FPS Virtual Academy registrations are due by Saturday, August 8.** Please note, PowerSchool maintenance is occurring on Friday, July 31; therefore, online registration will be temporarily unavailable on Friday. More information about the FPS Virtual Academy is available in [this Frequently Asked Questions document](#).

Please keep in mind that our *FPS Smart Restart Plan* is subject to change *at any time* in response to the rapidly changing and evolving local and regional health situations regarding COVID-19. Any adjustments to our *FPS Smart Restart Plan* will be communicated as quickly as possible.

I know our *FPS Smart Restart Plan* is long and information filled. More information will be communicated with you in the coming days and weeks that details the execution of the plan. Please watch your email and our website, www.fargo.k12.nd.us/smartrestart, for additional information.



I thank you for your passionate input as we built the *FPS Smart Restart Plan*, your patience as we unveil the plan, your understanding as we execute the educational model differently during the 2020 – 2021 school year, and for your continued interest in educating our future generations to the best of all our abilities.



Rupak Gandhi, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Fargo Public Schools

