



# COVID-19 Update

8.24.2020

Fargo Public Schools Staff, Families, and Community,

The purpose of this message is to inform you that an updated [FPS Smart Restart Plan](#) was posted to the district website earlier today. Specific updates in the plan include:

- Revised protocols in relation to possible or confirmed cases of COVID-19 based on updated guidance from Fargo Cass Public Health,
- An update to the symptoms to screen for at home, and
- An additional clause specifying required documentation for students or staff that cannot wear a mask.

Additionally, on Monday, August 24, the FPS COVID-19 Instructional Plan Committee held their second meeting. At this meeting, they discussed utilizing a model to help decide the appropriate Level for FPS based on localized COVID-19 data. It was decided that in conjunction with other pieces of data such as the number of cases impacting Fargo Public Schools staff and students, staff leave data, and substitute teacher fill rate, the committee will be using one specific model to help guide the determination of the FPS Instructional Plan Level beginning Monday, September 21.

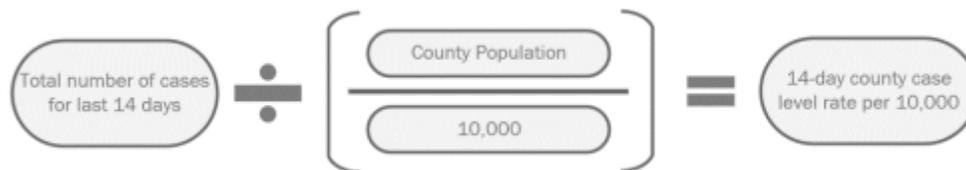
By beginning to use the model at their September 21 meeting, the FPS COVID-19 Instructional Plan Committee can consider data specific to Fargo Public Schools and study the impact the start of school has had on the spread of COVID-19 and mitigation strategies specific to our District. Since the first day of school is September 2, students and staff will have gone through one and a half incubation periods (the time from exposure to development of symptoms) prior to September 21, allowing the FPS COVID-19 Instructional Plan Committee to make a more informed decision about a possible change in instructional level. The committee also decided that when possible, it will work to provide at least two-weeks' notice prior to making a change in Level for Fargo Public Schools. Therefore, the FPS COVID-19 Instructional Plan Committee's decision determined on September 21 will begin on Monday, October 5. The 18 members of the FPS Instructional Plan committee are committed to meeting every two weeks, reviewing COVID-19 specific data in Cass County and making the best decision for Fargo Public Schools using the four guiding principles stated in the FPS Smart Restart Plan.

Information about the model and how it will be used to assist future decision making is below. For reference, this is the same model outlined in the Minnesota Department of Education's Safe Learning Plan.

### ***The Model***

In order to determine the Instructional Plan Level, Fargo Public Schools will use the bi-weekly case rate (over 14 days) for Cass County. This data, also known as the county transmission level, is the number of cases by residence in Cass County over 14 days per 10,000 people by the date when a person was tested (equation below).





The most current county transmission level calculations are distributed weekly to local public health agencies by the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH). The NDDoH plans to have this data on its website’s [COVID-19 dashboard](#) soon. Based on the county transmission level, the following parameters will be used to assist with the determination of Fargo Public Schools’ Instructional Plan Level:

#### Instructional Plan Level Guidance

Number of cases per 10,000 over 14 days, by residence in Cass County	FPS Instructional Plan Model
0-9	In-person learning for all students (Level 4 or 5)
10-19	In-person learning for elementary students (Level 4 or 5); hybrid learning for secondary students (Level 3)
20-29	Hybrid learning for all students (Level 3)
30-49	Hybrid learning for elementary students (Level 3); distance learning for secondary students (Level 2 or 1)
50+	Distance learning for all students (Level 2 or 1)

Thank you for all that you are doing as we embark on a new school year. Though this year will be different, we know that the ability to change lives and improve student outcomes remain the same.

Sincerely,

**Rupak Gandhi, Ph.D.**  
Superintendent

