

Reopening and Path Forward Distance Learning Plan Summary

Nevada Prep Charter School

Revised July 14, 2021

Disclaimer: This document is a summary intended to:

- 1) meet the requirements of the information requested by the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA); and
- 2) communicate this information in summary form to interested external parties. More detailed information about specific staff procedures, routines, and training is not included here but is available for review upon request.

In an effort to directly respond to all requirements from the SPCSA, this document is structured to include the SPCSA's headers and sub-questions for reference. Throughout the document, the SPCSA's criteria and questions are highlighted in yellow, and the school's responses to the questions follow in plain text.

In-Person Learning: Health and Safety:

- How will the school maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school staff?

Student and staff safety is our top priority. We will continue to monitor guidance from federal and local officials. We will also continue to gather feedback from our community to ensure that people *are* safe and *feel* safe. The responses below provide more context on specific actions the school has taken or will take to reduce risks and promote health and safety of our community.

How is the school addressing key CDC recommendations including:

- Use of face coverings;

As long as mask-wearing is required or recommended by the CDC and local health authorities, NV Prep will require mask wearing in accordance with federal and local guidelines. The school will indefinitely continue to allow mask wearing for any individuals who feel more comfortable wearing a mask.

- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;

Handwashing signage will remain posted in all restrooms, and handwashing reminders will play an increased role in student and staff orientation for 2021-22.

As long as mask wearing is required for some or all individuals, up-to-date signage confirming expectations will remain posted at prominent locations throughout campus, and these expectations will be communicated to parents and included in staff and student orientation for the 2021-22 school year.

- **Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;**

NV Prep will operate from a new campus for the 2021-22 school year. Each classroom has an external door that can be opened to the outdoors to improve ventilation. Each classroom also has its own, independent A/C unit, which increases ventilation and reduced potential contamination across classrooms.

Nightly cleaning and sanitation by a full-time custodian will continue to take place as long as it is recommended by health authorities. Regular sanitation of workspaces and computers will continue to take place during the school day, especially during transitions. Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes will continue to be provided in all rooms.

- **Contact tracing; & Diagnostic and screening testing;**

The school will conduct contact tracing in line with CDC guidelines and local requirements, as they change throughout the year. Weekly, school leadership will send an informational blast to staff and students to keep our community apprised of updates. Sources consulted will include the following:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/contact-tracing.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

- **Efforts to increase access and awareness to vaccinations; and**

Regular email and text blasts to families will continue to include information on vaccination events and resources in our community.

- **Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.**

The school has hired a new, experienced student success director. This leader has been charged to review all IEP and 504 documents and to communicate with all affected families prior to the start of school in August to ensure that all required accommodations are in place and to provide direct recommendations if any students have needs not addressed by whole-school, global health and safety protocols or existing ADA compliance measures on campus.

In-Person Learning: Student and Staff Wellbeing

- **How will the school meet students' social, emotional, mental and physical health needs and provide access to a safe and inclusive learning environment?**

Scholars will continue to have access to an experienced school counselor who is also a licensed youth and family therapist. Appropriate relationships with teachers are a tremendous source of strength for scholars. Scholars will continue to build these relationships during intentional lessons with an explicit focus on SEL. Consistent routines and structures including weekly community circles will allow for opportunities for human connection, even if these events need to occur in a virtual or hybrid format.

Scholars will continue to have access to on campus nursing services, as needed. The school has transitioned to a new nursing services provider for the 2021-22 school year. All staff will again receive first aid training, including CPR, as part of summer professional development.

During summer professional development, teachers will receive at least 2 hours of training on trauma-informed practices. Additional training will be scheduled based on individual staff needs.

- **How will the school support educator and staff well-being?**

For the 2021-22 school year, the school has introduced a number of new, meaningful wellness benefits, including the following:

- A generous Lifestyle Spending Account (LSA). This can be used for a variety of purposes including fitness memberships or equipment, or a broadly defined category of other wellness-promoting activities or products.
- Maximum employer contributions and matching contributions to a Flex Spending Account (FSA) as allowed by federal law. These funds will reduce the stress of any anticipated medical, dental, and vision expenses.
- Increased training on mental health benefits already offered through the school's insurance plans.
- Addition of a new Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefit, with extensive supplemental mental health supports.

In addition, the school will continue to monitor employee absences and personal day use to encourage that all employees take the time off they need, and that employees who do not historically use their personal days without reminders feel empowered to use the time to promote mental health.

In-Person Learning: Accelerating Student Learning

- How will the school address the impact of COVID-19 on students' opportunity to learn, including implementing strategies for accelerating learning, effectively using data, and addressing resource inequities?

Fortunately, the school's model was initially developed with the goal of devoting increased resources to students who have fallen behind academically in order to accelerate their learning. This commitment is evident in many ways including the current practice of providing in-home summer tutoring for our scholars most affected by COVID-19, in addition to face-to-face summer school offerings.

During the full school year, our investment in interventions to address learning loss is most evident in the structure of our school day. For two hours each day, scholars who have not yet exceeded standards in math and/or ELA participate in a supplemental course called ELA power hour or Math power hour, depending on the scholar's needs. In these power hour classes, teachers rely on student achievement data to provide targeted interventions through intentional use of specific online learning activities and teacher-led small groups or 1:1 tutoring. Power hour classes usually have 2-4 adults in each classroom, based on the group's needs.

The school intends to use a good share of upcoming ESSER funds, for example, to hire additional support teachers to further enhance the attention scholars can receive during power hour classes.

The school will also continue to invest in Friday collaboration time for teachers to analyze student achievement data and optimize instruction for students with the greatest academic needs. To enhance this collaborative process, the school works with outside experts like Data Insight Partners who can provide one more perspective on relationships and trends between the following data points: interim assessment data, unit assessment data, lesson-level assessment data, attendance, student grades, etc.

Distance Education: Students unable to participate in-person

- How will the school ensure that any student who falls into the one of the categories listed below is able to participate in distance education that meets the requirements established for a Path Forward Programs of Distance Education?
 - Students who have documentation from a medical professional related to a condition that would be compromised by attending school in-person

One of the few benefits of being forced to adapt to the COVID-19 Pandemic has been that the school has learned invaluable lessons about adaptability and virtual instruction.

The school has the resources and capacity to deliver instruction to scholars anywhere with an internet connection. If students need to receive instruction from home, the school has ensured that each scholar will have a Chromebook and all learning materials needed to learn from home. The school also continues to support all families in securing high-speed internet access at home. Even when scholars are attending classes on campus, it is a matter of equity to ensure that they have access to the internet at home.

If a scholar is unable to attend classes on campus, for a short or extended period, the school will take the following steps:

1. Ensure the scholar has a device and internet connection
2. Ensure the scholar has two-way communication into the classroom (e.g., through Zoom and Swivl)
3. Ensure that teachers focus explicitly on inclusion and classroom culture so that the scholar feels welcome and others in the class take steps to make the scholar feel welcome
4. Communicate at least weekly with the family about the scholar's progress
5. Send a staff member to the home for check-ins, as needed.

The school is prepared to make individualized accommodations as needed, including in cases where the child's medical needs or treatment schedule make it unfeasible for the child to join live classes virtually.

○ Students who are quarantined on the advice of local public health officials

As long as a child who is quarantined is physically well enough to join classes virtually, the same steps described above for students with documented medical needs will be taken.

In cases where students are physical not well enough to join live classes virtually, teachers will meet with the child and the parents individually to develop a plan for acceleration to receive content missed during the period of quarantine where the child was unable to participate in classes.

Distance Education: Emergency Closure

- How will the school ensure that all students are able to continue to learn through distance education in the event that school must be closed due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic or another major emergency that necessitates the closure of school?

Fortunately, the past 18 months have provided a blueprint for how the school can respond if another emergency closure is necessary. Families, scholars, and teachers are now proficient in joining virtual classes.

To be clear, the school has no intention of ever returning to a fully virtual model, but if that becomes necessary, the school would return to established practices and routines and would develop an emergency action plan based on the prior transition to virtual learning in March 2020. In 2020, the school transitioned to a virtual model within 72 hours of receiving notice. Now that routines are established, and we maintain our focus on ensuring all families have high speed internet access at home, the school is prepared to transition to a full virtual instructional model immediately, if needed. Our scholar and family handbook has been revised to include a disclaimer about the return to virtual learning as well. Our employment agreements have also been revised to provide clarity around any potential return to virtual learning.

As with the prior emergency closures, the school understands that no two families have identical needs, so the school will be ready to support individual families as needed with critical needs such as childcare.

Distance Education: Supporting Students

- How will the school ensure continuity of services, including access to necessary technology and resources, special education and EL services, and nutrition services, for students participating in distance education?

The school is committed to equity, so access to technology and resources is not dependent on COVID-19. All scholars receive all required learning materials. In 2021, we believe this includes providing each scholar with a Chromebook or similar device. As part of the student enrollment process, the school assists new families with securing high-speed internet access, usually through the Connect2Compete program.

Special education and EL services will continue to be provided. This may mean home visits must be conducted or scholars with IEPs are invited to campus in a modified setting with increased social distancing and minimal direct contact. Some special education services can also be provided virtually, if this is required or preferred by the family.

Nutrition services were uninterrupted during the prior transition to virtual learning. The school's transportation team delivered hundreds of breakfasts and lunches per week throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. As the situation evolves in 2021-22, the transportation team is committed to ensuring that scholars continue to have access to free, nutritious, compliant meals.