Minnewaska Area Schools

Return to School Plan 2020-21





The information contained in this plan will be updated or adjusted as needed due to new information, guidance, and/or requirements. Updated content will be highlighted and dated.

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Introduction

Guidance for Districts

Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) worked with Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to determine how best to keep Minnesota students, families, and staff healthy and safe while returning to school this fall. MDE released initial guidance for districts June 18th, but the document had no final decisions on what districts must do for 2020-21. Final guidance for districts was not released until July 30.

MDE had districts plan and prepare for three scenarios in order for schools to be able to quickly transition between the models during the school year depending on COVID-19 status improving, stabilizing, or worsening.

Each district plan should:

- Prioritize equity to reach all children in each of the three scenarios.
- Focus on continuity of teaching/learning and key operations of each school.
- Be posted to the district website and communicated to stakeholders.
- Include all MDE requirements and consider recommendations in planning.
- Establish a return to school advisory committee and identify a COVID-19 coordinator.

The 3 learning models (scenarios) are:

- 1. In-person Learning Model: All students return to learning at school with space created for social distancing in classrooms and on buses.
- 2. Hybrid Learning Model: All students participate in a hybrid learning of both face to face instruction at school and distance learning instruction from home.
- 3. Distance Learning Model: All students receive remote instruction while at home.

You can find the Guidance for MN Public Schools 2020-21 School Year Planning HERE.

Requirements vs Recommendations

MDE guidance includes required and recommended elements:

- **Required** elements must be included in every district plan and are foundational to minimizing risk of COVID-19 exposure. Districts don't have a choice whether or not to incorporate these items.
- **Recommended** practices are additional strategies to be used as appropriate to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Districts can take these into consideration, but will be able to make decisions and choices on whether or not these elements work for their communities.

MAS Planning & Preparations

Minnewaska Area Schools Leadership Teams began planning for the Return to School in the beginning of July. MAS Leadership met with the Building and District Leadership Teams, Minnewaska Area School Board and the Minnewaska District Advisory Committee. Following Governor Walz's final guidance, MAS Building and District Leadership teams met again to finalize plans.

As a part of MAS preparation and planning, the district conducted telephone surveys to families on August 4. The MAS Return to School Committee used information gathered from the surveys to direct the development of the plan.

For more *return to school information*, please visit our website at <u>www.minnewaska.k12.mn.us</u> Please contact our COVID Team with any questions. You can reach us at 320-239-4800

In-Person Learning Model

Definition

During the In-Person Learning Model, all students return to school for face to face instruction. Schools should create as much space between students and teachers as is possible during the school day, but will not be held strictly to enforce 6 feet of social distancing during instruction in the classrooms.

All activities and extracurricular programs should continue to follow the MDH COVID-19 Prevention Guidance for Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs.

In-person learning may be implemented if COVID-19 status stabilizes or improves. Future decisions on whether to increase restrictions will be made if COVID-19 at the local, regional, or state level worsens.

Academics & Scheduling

During the In-Person Learning Model, education will be much like school prior to COVID-19.

- All students will come to school and participate in face to face learning with peers and teachers.
- There will be some changes depending upon classroom space, subject matter, and grade.
- Transitions may still be limited, cleaning/sanitation will be more in depth, and as much space as possible will be created between people during instruction.
- Arrival and dismissal times may be adjusted during the In-person Learning Model due to transportation limitations. Please see each school's plans for more detailed schedules. Here are start and end times for In-Person Learning Model:

Elementary 8:10 AM - 2:45 PM Middle 4-6 8:00 AM-3:10PM Middle 7-8 8:15 AM-3:10PM High School 8:15AM - 3:10PM



Pre-school, elementary, middle and high school, each has a complete return to school plan for academics and schedules, which can be accessed from the below links. These plans include assessment, intervention, attendance, grading, schedules, and any other relevant information for all three learning models.

Special Education

MAS participates as a member of the Runestone Area Special Education District (RAED). Runestone Area Education District supports and guides member districts on special education programming. In addition, MAS Public Schools employs a special education director who supervises special education services for the district. Students receiving individualized services through special education have important considerations in planning for individualized instruction. MAS has the goal of maximizing the effectiveness of specialized instruction while at the same time minimizing COVID-19 infection risk with safety measures for students and staff.

Planning for students eligible to receive special education services and assessments will be guided by the Runestone Area Special Education District and follow MN Public Health and MN Department of Education guidelines. MAS will work with families to create Individualized Learning Plans (IEPs) based on student needs and provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The service model will include face to face, resource room small group and/or mainstream instruction and related services as indicated on the child's IEP. If families have any questions about their child's IEP they are encouraged to contact their child's case manager.

In-Person Learning Model

Transportation

Bus service to and from school will be offered during the **In-Person Learning Model**. If the bus is transporting only IN-Person students, it may have up to 100% capacity.

If transporting students that include Hybrid Learning students, buses may be reduced to 50% capacity. Here are a few more transportation items:

- Buses may be loaded from back to front.
- Students may have a seating chart to allow for as much space as possible between students.
- Buses may be unloaded from the front seat first to the back seat.
- Students and staff must wear masks on school buses.
- Parents will be responsible for students wearing masks and practicing social distancing at each bus stop.
- Families will be encouraged to consider driving students to school.

Meals

Serving food at school must adhere to guidelines established by CDC and MDH. With this in mind, breakfast and lunch at both the elementary, middle, and high school will be offered to students during the In-Person Learning Model with adjustments.

Please see a more detailed Food Service Plan HERE.

Child Care for Critical Workers

During the In-Person Learning Model, child care during school hours will not be offered as all students will be attending school.

Technology: Internet & Devices

During the In-Person Learning Model, students will have school issued devices they take home with them in grades 7-12 as normal. No distance learning would be taking place for in-person learning students. Although it would be helpful for students to have internet access at home, it is not essential as distance learning is not a part of the In-Person Learning Model.

Device insurance is available for all students with a school issued device that are taking them home. Cost of insurance is \$45/year and details are as follows:

Annual Premium Due at Registration	Deductible	Deductible	Deductible
	Claim # 1	Claim # 2	Claim # 3
\$45 per device	\$0	\$45	\$90

Students that do not purchase device insurance are responsible for the cost of repairs.

Hybrid Learning Model

Definition

Hybrid learning will look different based on the age of your child. Under the hybrid model, students in grades K-6 will continue to attend school on site daily. Students will be placed in half-capacity learning cohorts.

Students in grades 7-12 will utilize the following schedule:

A/B/A/B/A

During hybrid learning, schools and buses must follow social distancing of 6 feet at all times. If 6 feet cannot be achieved with 50% occupancy, the number of people in a space must be reduced.

Hybrid learning may be implemented if Minnesota COVID-19 status stabilizes or worsens at the local, regional, or state level.

Academics & Scheduling

MAS will operate on an A / B weekly schedule.

- Students will be assigned to the A or B group.
 - A/B/A/B/A
 - Siblings will be assigned to the same group unless requested by parents to be on opposite days.
- Arrival and dismissal times must be adjusted during the Hybrid Learning Model due to transportation limitations. Please see each school's plan for more detailed schedules. Here are start and end times for In-Person Learning Model:

Elementary 8:10 AM - 2:45 PM
Middle 4-6 8:15 AM-3:10PM
Middle 7-8 8:15 AM-3:10PM
High School 8:15AM - 3:10PM

Pre-school, elementary, middle, and high school, each has a complete return to school plan for academics and schedules, which can be accessed from the below links. These plans include assessment, intervention, attendance, grading, schedules, and any other relevant information for all three learning models.

Hybrid Learning Model

Special Education

MAS participates as a member of the Runestone Area Special Education District (RAED). Runestone Area Education District supports and guides member districts on special education programming. In addition, MAS Public Schools employs a special education director who supervises special education services for the district. Students receiving individualized services through special education have important considerations in planning for individualized instruction. MAS has the goal of maximizing the effectiveness of specialized instruction while at the same time minimizing COVID-19 infection risk with safety measures for students and staff.

Planning for students eligible to receive special education services and assessments will be guided by the Runestone Area Special Education District and follow MN Public Health and MN Department of Education guidelines. MAS will work with families to create Individualized Learning Plans (IEPs) based on student needs and provide a Free Appropriate Public Education(FAPE). The service model will include different platforms: face to face, virtual synchronous instruction through digital connections, telemedicine and/or indirect services as indicated on the child's IEP. If families have any questions about their child's IEP they are encouraged to contact their child's case manager.

Transportation

Bus service to and from school will be offered for Hybrid Learning. Buses may be reduced to 50% capacity.

Some of the same transportation items are the same from in-person to hybrid learning with a few changes:

- Buses will be loaded from back to front.
- Buses will unload with the front seat first to the back seat.
- Students may have a seating chart to allow for space and consistency.
- Students and staff must wear masks on school buses.
- Parents will be responsible for students wearing masks and practicing social distancing at each bus stop.
- Families will be encouraged to consider driving students to school.

Hybrid Learning Model

Meals

The Hybrid Learning Model must provide meal service for all students each school day whether students are at home or at school. Serving food at school during hybrid learning must adhere to guidelines established by CDC and MDH.

Please see a more detailed Food Service Plan HERE.

Child Care for Critical Workers

Child care for critical workers (including staff) will be provided on distance learning days for district enrolled students in grades K-5 as required by MDE.

- Childcare will take place at the elementary from 7:45AM to 3:15PM.
- Breakfast and lunch will be served to registered students.
- There will be no charge for child care.
- Child care will be staffed by MAS employees.
- Upon arrival each day to child care, students will have a health screening with a school employee asking if the child is experiencing any COVID related symptoms.
- If the answer is NO to ALL questions on the screening, the child can enter the school.
- If ANY answers are YES, the child WILL NOT BE ALLOWED to enter the school.

Technology: Internet & Devices

During the Hybrid Learning Model, 7-12th grade students will be distance learning from home 3 days per week and k-6 will be in-person all week. K-6 Students will have devices to use in their classrooms as normal but they will not be taking them home unless their parents choose to distant learn. Reliable internet will be important during hybrid learning. Students or parents MUST inform the district if

there is no reliable internet at home. Paper copies of all work can be provided to students that cannot access learning materials digitally.

Device insurance is available for all students with a school issued device that are taking them home for distance learning. Cost of insurance is \$45/year and details are as follows:

Annual Premium Due at	Deductible	Deductible	Deductible
Registration	Claim #1	Claim #2	Claim #3
\$45 per device	\$0	\$45	\$90

Students that do not purchase device insurance are responsible for the cost of repairs.

Considerations for In-Person & Hybrid Models

Both the In-Person and Hybrid Learning Models present many challenges in conducting face to face learning. There will need to be additional requirements and considerations when implementing either model if staff and students are to be safe and stay healthy while at school.

This list will be updated and adjusted as necessary.

The following will occur with each model:

- Visual cues provided for social distancing and COVID-19 education.
- Non-essential people restricted from entering buildings.
- Students going straight to classrooms upon entering the buildings.
- Students not being allowed to congregate in large groups.
- Students and staff having a process to self-identify as high risk with a plan for alternative learning or work assignments.
- Distance Learning is an option to enrolled students who are medically vulnerable or unwilling to return to school during the In-person or Hybrid Learning Models.
- Adequate supplies provided to minimize sharing.
- Students, families, and staff educated on:
 - Signs and symptoms of COVID-19
 - When to stay home
 - When to return to school after being sick or exposed to COVID-19
 - How to conduct and comply with health screenings
 - How to access mental health resources and supports
- Schools establishing how to care for anyone sick while at school..



Definition

During the Distance Learning Model, all students have remote instruction, access to instructional materials, and receive daily interaction with teacher(s) from home. Distance learning is not e-learning. Both technology and paper/pencil assignments and delivery of instruction can be utilized during distance learning.

All activities and extracurricular programs should follow the COVID-19 Prevention Guidance for Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs.

Distance learning may be implemented if Minnesota COVID-19 status worsens significantly enough at the local, regional, or state level. Once implementing the Distance Learning Model, decisions on whether to loosen restrictions to the Hybrid Model will be made by the state if COVID-19 at the local, regional, or state level improves.

Distance Learning Handbook

Please click the <u>link</u> for our 7-12th grade Distance Learning Handbook with expectations and protocols and procedures for Distance Learning.

Academics & Scheduling

MAS implemented the MAS Distance Learning Plan spring 2020. The following is taken from that plan, which will be applicable during 2020-21 school year:

K-3 distance learning students will:

- Interact daily with resources, materials, and/or a licensed teacher(s).
- Complete weekly work assigned by teacher(s), which will be grade appropriate with instructions and resources sent home along with possibly having some digital learning elements depending on access
- Receive IEP special education support addressed by their case managers and interventionists in conjunction with their homeroom teacher.
- Contact teachers by email and/or phone on each scheduled distance learning day.
- Seesaw will be the learning platform used for all K-3 distance learning.

4-6 distance learning students will:

- Interact daily with resources, materials, and licensed teacher(s).
- Receive IEP special education support addressed by their case managers and interventionists in conjunction with their homeroom teacher.
- Connect with teachers either digitally and/or phone during daily scheduled "office hours" for students needing more support.
- Google Classroom will be the common education platform for all students in grades 4-6.

7-12 distance learning students will:

- Students in grades 7-12th will be required to attend LIVE class periods via Google Meet according to the schedule below.
- Students will have 5 minutes to join the LIVE class period via Google Meet, otherwise will be marked tardy
- Laker Time scheduled each day to provide students time in the middle of the day to connect with teachers, complete group projects, and/or complete homework.
- Advisory Period for 7-12 students on Friday from 11:40 AM-12:10 PM to discuss grades, attendance and mental health support.
- Google Classroom will be the common educational platform for all students in grades 7-12.

7-12 Distant Learning Daily Schedule

8:15-8:55 AM 1st period 9:05-9:45 AM 2nd period 9:55-10:35 AM 3rd period 10:45-11:25 AM 4th period

11:25-12:10 PM Laker Time

11:40-12:10 PM Advisory (Fridays or last day of week)

12:10-12:40 PM Staff and Student Lunch Break

12:40-1:20 PM 5th period 1:30-2:10 PM 6th period 2:20-3:00 PM 7th period

At Risk Students

• Students who are identified as At Risk of failing or have identified mental health needs will work with Minnewaska Area Schools on an individual basis to determine how to support

Students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP)

 Special Education Case Managers will reach out to students on an IEP to discuss learning options for those with identified needs.

Technology: Internet & Devices

All students in K-12 will have a district device they can take home for full distancing learning. Reliable internet will be very important during distance learning. Students or parents MUST inform the district if there is no reliable internet at home. Paper copies of all work can be provided to students that cannot access learning materials digitally.

Device insurance is available for all students with a school issued device that are taking them home for distance learning. Cost of insurance is \$45/year and details are the same as in person learning and hybrid learning. Students that do not purchase device insurance are responsible for the cost of repairs.

Special Education

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Planning for students eligible to receive special education services and assessments will be guided by the Runestone Area Special Education District and follow MN Public Health and MN Department of Education guidelines. MAS will work with families to create Individualized Learning Plans (IEPs) based on student needs and provide a Free Appropriate Public Education(FAPE). The instructional model will include different platforms: virtual face to face synchronous instruction through digital connections, telemedicine services and/or indirect services as indicated on the child's IEP. If families have any questions about their child's IEP they are encouraged to contact their child's case manager.

Transportation

Transporting students to and from school is not necessary during distance learning.

Meals

For more details on how to request meals and contacts, please reference the Distant Learning Model Food Service Plan HERE.

Child Care for Critical Workers

Child care for critical workers (including staff) will be provided on distance learning days for those ages 3 through 12 as required by MDE.

- Childcare will take place at the elementary from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m (Room: To-Be-Determined)
- Breakfast and lunch will be served to registered students.
- There will be no charge for child care.
- Child care will be staffed by MAS employees.
- Upon arrival each day to child care, students will have a health screening with a school employee asking if the child is experiencing any COVID related symptoms.
- If the answer is NO to ALL questions on the screening, the child can enter the school.
- If ANY answers are YES, the child WILL NOT BE ALLOWED to enter the school.

Optional Distance Learning

The **Optional Distance Learning** will be offered for enrolled students who may be medically vulnerable or otherwise unable or unwilling to return to in-person or hybrid learning. This means that regardless of the implemented plan this fall or at any time during 2020-21, some families may choose to continue to learn at a distance due to health related reasons or preference. Families who choose Optional Distance Learning are asked to:

Here are some things you will need to know about Optional Distance Learning:

- Students opting for the Optional Distance Learning will follow same calendar and instructional hours as regular school.
- Attendance will be taken once per day with daily interaction by a licensed teacher via live interactive video calls, instructional management sites such as Google Classroom, email exchanges, and/or phone calls.
- Each hour of planned instruction and participation generates one hour of attendance.
- Curriculum will follow the same academic standards and pacing.
- Support for special education and social emotional learning will be provided by the school.
- Optional Distance Learning students will participate in state assessments.
- Families must notify the district in writing of their intent to opt for Optional Distance Learning.
- In the elementary grades, designated distance learning teachers will service these students while other teachers will be providing in-person or hybrid instruction.
- Families should plan to have reliable internet to fully participate in the Optional distance Learning, however, paper packets can be provided to students due to not being able to secure internet connection.
- Child Care for critical workers will not be provided for families opting for Optional Distance Learning.

The Minnewaska Area Fall Start Survey was conducted in early August. Families had the ability to share their fall start plans with a Minnewaska School representative. Should a family need to make a change in the decision to send their child to school or participate in the optional Distance Learning experience, they can make a change by calling the office their child attends.

If you were not able to complete the survey, please call your child's school office. You can also visit the COVID webpage at www.minnewaska.k12.mn.us.

Health & Wellness Considerations

When to Stay Home Decision Tree click here

Masks

- Everyone who can wear a mask should.
 - Even if you've had COVID-19, you should still wear a mask because we do not know if people can get sick with COVID-19 again.
- Do not put masks or face covers on children under age 2.
- Do not put masks or face covers on anyone who has trouble breathing, is unconscious, or unable to remove the mask without help.
- People with disabilities or special health needs may not be able to wear a mask.
- Best Practices for Masks:Considerations for People with Disabilities and Special Needs click <u>here</u>

How to Safely Wear Your Mask



Step 1: Wash or sanitize your hands.



Step 2: Make sure the top of the mask is over your nose and the bottom is under your chin.



Step 3: Place the mask over your nose and mouth before you use the ear straps or tie it behind your head.



Step 4: Move the mask around so it covers nose, mouth, and chin completely.



Step 5: The tops of some masks can bend. Press you fingers on the top of the mask to make them fit tight around your nose.



Step 6: Do not touch the mask while wearing it. Use the mask ear straps or ties if you need to make it fit better.



Step 7: Use the mask ear straps or ties to take it off. Do not touch the front.



Step 8: Throw away if mask is disposable.



Step 9: Wash your mask by machine or by hand before you use it again.



Step 10: Wash or sanitize your hands again.







- I have tested positive for COVID now what:
- I am waiting test results to see if I have COVID:
- I have had close contact with someone who is positive for COVID:
- Face Covering FAQ
- Self Health Checks

Building Cleaning & Sanitation

Please see a more detailed Building Cleaning & Sanitation Plan HERE.	

Athletics & Activities

Athletics, Activities, and Community Education Programming

If Minnewaska Area Schools goes to Distance Learning there will be no activity or athletics in person practices or competitions, nor any onsite community education activities or programs

- Virtual Practices Only No organized in-person practices on or off campus
- Online Community Education programming only

If Minnewaska Area Schools goes to Hybrid Learning activities and athletic practices and competitions will be allowed. Community education programs may also take place at MAS facilities

- Athletic and activity practices, scrimmages and competitions can take place onsite at MAS facilities
- All Minnesota State High School League 2020-21 policies will be followed and adjusted as per changes at the League level for athletic, fine arts, and academic activities
- All on-site and in-person community education classes and programs may be held at MAS campus facilities
- All CDC, MDH, and State of Minnesota policies, mandates, and protocols will be followed regarding health and safety procedures concerning Covid-19

If Minnewaska Area Schools goes to In-Person Learning activities and athletic practices and competitions will be allowed. Community education programs may also take place at MAS facilities

- Athletic and activity practices, scrimmages and competitions can take place onsite at MAS facilities
- All Minnesota State High School League 2020-21 policies will be followed and adjusted as per changes at the League level for athletic, fine arts, and academic activities
- All on-site and in-person community education classes and programs may be held at MAS campus facilities
- All CDC, MDH, and State of Minnesota polices, mandates, and protocols will be followed regarding health and safety procedures concerning Covid-19

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Resources & Communication

Timeline & Process for the MAS Return to School Plan 2020-21:

July 13-July 27 Leadership, Building Leadership, District Leadership, School Board

and District Advisory Committee Planning

July 30 Governor Walz's planning release
August 4-5 Staff surveying Minnewaska families

August 10 Minnewaska Area School Board Work Session

August 11 Tentative Release of Minnewaska Return to School Plan

August 11 Teacher Learning Day
August 25-27 Teacher Workshop

September 1 Students return to Minnewaska Area Schools

RESOURCES:

MAS Return to School Website

Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)

Minnesota Department of Health Website

MDH Playground Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs 5/28/20

MDH Tips & Resources for Children & Parents During COVID-19

MDH 2020-21 Planning Guide for Schools: Health Considerations 6/18/20

MDH Prevention Guidance Youth, Students, & Child Care Programs 6/19/20

CDC Checklist for Parents

Center for Disease Control and Prevention Website (CDC)

Willingwaska Area Schools Return to School 2020-21 Quick Reference Guide

In-Person Learnin Model Students are learning school.

Distance Learning Model

K-6 students will attend daily, but may

be moved into various classrooms to

home.

All students learn remotely from

Middle School (4-6) 8 AM-3:10 PM Middle School (7-8) 8:15-3:10PM High School (9-12) 8:15AM-3:10 Scheduling Students will have limited exposure to others

A/B/A/B/A

ng

7-12 students will attend on an

Same start time as In-Person

allow for social distancing.

Students with identified learning

from home full time.

Students will be remotely learning

7-12 7 hours/day

not be offered.

Child care during school hours will

Elementary (K-3) 8:1 AM-2:45 PM

needs may be in person more than others.

Child care offered 7:30AM-3:00PM at

MDE identified essential workers.

elementary for enrolled K-5 students of

Child Care

Learning

K-6 instruction will be in a traditional model, either in smaller classes with a teacher and other adults moving between two rooms

or class having moved to a larger

Grades 7-12 have 1:1 devices

Google products will be utilized.

Option Distance Learning will be

Transition plan for in-person or distance learning ready if needed

family preference

offered due to medical needs or by

Should the elementary school move

to a hybrid model where students

childcare will be available to MDE identified essential workers on their

cannot be present each day,

DL days.

space.

All students distance learning. Grades 2-12 1:1 Devices with K-1 checking out devices if needed.

Google products will be utilized. Teachers interact daily with students.

Teachers available for support. Expectations for learning & attendance required.

Transition plan for hybrid or distance learning ready if needed.

Teaching & learning will occur

traditional methods, in-person.

No non-essential visitors.

No non-essential visitors. Cleaning & disinfecting protocols.

Limited movement in the buildings. Where possible, students remain with the same group of students & teacher most of the day.

buildina. Child care students will be in the buildings. All required safety protocols

Cleaning & disinfecting protocols will be in place when employees are in the

Everyone has a temperature check when entering the building. Cleaning & disinfecting protocols. Health & Safety

Students report to classrooms Regular hand washing reminders and hygiene training Social distancing is encouraged, but 6 ft may not always be possible.

Regular hand washing reminders and hygiene training Social distancing of 6 ft strictly followed.

will be enforced.

Meals	Breakfast & lunch will be served at school. Limited interaction with students in the cafeteria.	Meals served at school for those learning in person. Cafeteria space will be limited, with alternate eating spaces available Meals will be available for curbside pickup for students that request them for distance learning days.	Breakfast & lunch will be available for pick up and delivery.
Transportatio n	Students will have a seating chart that will allow for as much distance as possible, but may not strictly be 6 ft. Buses will load from back to front and unload from front to back. Bus seats will be cleaned & disinfected in between student use.	Students will have a staggered seating chart that will support social distancing. Buses will load from back to front and unload from front to back. Bus seats will be cleaned & disinfected in between student use.	Buses will not transport students on distance learning days.

For more return to school information, please visit our website at www.minnewaska.k12.mn.us
Please contact our COVID Team with any questions. You can reach us at 320-239-4800.