



August 7, 2020

Spectrum Community,

On behalf of Spectrum administration, I would like to express our appreciation for the support and patience you have extended over the last six months. Spectrum students, parents, and staff are amazing and we feel blessed to lead and serve this community. It is our hope and desire to offer the same support and grace to each of you as we navigate uncharted waters together.

Thank you to all parents/guardians who shared your preferences over the past week in response to the fall scenarios survey. The information you provided was extremely valuable in helping the school to determine whether we have the facility, transportation, and staffing capacity necessary to implement the scenarios.

While Spectrum is prepared to implement each of the three scenarios, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) have laid out specific guidance for public schools to follow in determining which scenario or safe learning plan it must choose for the fall. As a public charter school, Spectrum is required to abide by and follow this guidance.

The first step required by MDE to determine the safe learning plan or scenario is for the school to consult the MDH learning model selection parameters as indicated by county-level data to determine the base learning model.

The county level data is based on the number of positive COVID-19 cases per 10,000 people within that county over a two-week period (updated weekly). The current county level data can be found [here](#). Once the county level data has been analyzed, the school must determine which base safe learning model/scenario is to be implemented. While a more restrictive plan could be implemented (i.e. hybrid model is recommended, but the school chooses to implement distance learning), the school cannot choose to be less restrictive (i.e. hybrid model is recommended, but the school chooses to have all students back in-person on campus at the same time). The chart provided by MDH for determining this model can be found below.

Policy Option	Range (14-day case rate per 10,000 people)
In-person learning for all students	0 to less than 10
Elementary in-person, Middle/high school hybrid	10 to less than 20
Both hybrid	20 to less than 30
Elementary hybrid, Middle/high school distance	30 to less than 50
Both distance	50 or more

The county level data updated on Thursday, August 7 (covering the two-week period of July 12-25), indicates the following:
Sherburne County = 23.28 per 10,000 people
Anoka County = 17.33 per 10,000 people
Wright County = 12.96 per 10,000 people
Hennepin County = 23.24 per 10,000 people

As determined by the data from all surrounding counties, Spectrum is required to implement a hybrid model as its base level model. In addition, the trend data for Sherburne County (where Spectrum is located and draws the majority of its students) has continued to show increased cases weekly since May.

The second step required by MDE is to consult with health officials (local public health and/or state officials) as needed to examine the local epidemiology behind county-level data to assess whether increases or higher numbers of cases are likely the result of isolated outbreaks or whether they may be indicative of more widespread community transmission. While there are a couple of anomalies in the Sherburne County data, all counties from which Spectrum draws the majority of its students have shown a consistent increase in numbers since May.

The third step required by MDE is for the school to evaluate the ability to implement required and recommended health best practices to inform decision-making at the school or district level.

The leadership team at Spectrum has been working hard to implement best practices and have plans in place to address all areas found within the school's preparedness plan. This plan has been posted at each building and many of the details have been laid out in the scenarios document sent to all families and staff. Details of implementing best health practices continue to evolve as information becomes available.

The fourth step required by MDE is for the school to determine the learning model to begin the school year (and its ability to address all areas necessary to implement that model safely).

The hybrid model at Spectrum is a 2-day a week model where up to half of the students are on campus together on a Tuesday/Wednesday schedule and the other half are on campus Thursday/Friday. Students attend synchronously via distance learning the other three days. Mondays are advisory only (unless otherwise noted). This model allows all students to connect in-person with all of their teachers at least once a week (on an A and B day). Of course, parents still have the option of choosing synchronous distance learning on all school days, where students connect at their regular class times via distance learning following their daily schedule.

Based on guidance provided by MDE (see below), when considering implementing a hybrid model, Spectrum needs to determine its ability to ensure social distancing while also addressing facility (at 50%), transportation (at 50%), and staffing capacity. Utilizing the data provided in response to the scenario preference survey, Spectrum has been able to determine that classrooms and facilities can accommodate students at 50% capacity while ensuring social distancing. Infinite Campus (Spectrum's student data management system) allows the school to schedule students 2 days on campus and 3 days synchronous distance learning while balancing class sizes to account for limited room capacity. In addition, transportation can accommodate 22-25 students per bus (one per seat), which will allow Spectrum to transport all of the students who indicated the need for busing in order to attend on site 2 days a week. Based on feedback received from staff prior to this communication being sent out, the school feels confident it will be able to sustain sufficient staffing levels to accommodate a hybrid schedule.

MDE Requirements for Implementation

The image contains two light blue rounded rectangular boxes with dark blue headers. The left box is titled 'Required for In-Person and Hybrid Learning' and lists ten requirements, each with a small square checkbox. The right box is titled 'Required for Hybrid Learning' and lists five requirements, each with a small square checkbox.

Required for In-Person and Hybrid Learning	Required for Hybrid Learning
<input type="checkbox"/> Masking Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Social distancing of 6 feet at all times in school buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> PPE for direct support student services	<input type="checkbox"/> School facilities at 50% capacity
<input type="checkbox"/> Build routines of hygiene education & practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation at 50% capacity
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily cleaning and frequent cleaning of high touch surfaces throughout the day	<input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient staffing levels to meet the requirements of the model
<input type="checkbox"/> Building level COVID-19 program coordinator, with optional student counterpart	
<input type="checkbox"/> Limiting nonessential visitors/volunteers/external groups	
<input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue large gatherings/activities that do not allow for social distancing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring and excluding for illness	

Based on the data provided and Spectrum's ability to currently meet the requirements of MDE and MDH, Spectrum will be implementing a hybrid learning plan for the first quarter of the 2020-2021 school year.

Phase One: Parents will receive a survey link on Monday, August 10 (due by Wednesday, August 12) for them to choose between having their students on campus 2 days a week (while distance learning synchronously for the other 3 days) or distance learning synchronously for all school days. The survey will also ask parents to indicate transportation needs based on their chosen model.

Note - Parents will be committing for the first quarter (through October 30). Spectrum will monitor county level data closely to determine any changes in the delivery model for second quarter with the intent to move toward having students on campus more often. If the county (or school) level data indicates a significant increase in COVID cases (30 or more per 10,000 people in the county), Spectrum may be required by MDE/MDH to move more quickly into a full distance learning model.

Phase Two: All information will be compiled from the parent survey. Students' schedules will be finalized and sent out the week of August 17. In addition to classes scheduled, information will be provided at that time regarding which days of the week they will be scheduled on campus.

Note: While initial thoughts were to split students alphabetically, Infinite Campus will actually determine schedules based on households (not necessarily by alphabet), prioritizing building and classroom capacity. This will allow households to stay together (grades 6-12), while meeting the 50% transportation and facilities capacity requirements for a hybrid model.

Phase Three: Transportation routes will be determined based on needs and schedules the week of August 17 – with the goal to have routes to parents by the end of the week.

Phase Four: The school will finalize preparations for implementation of the hybrid model and continue to monitor county level data.

The last step required by MDE is for the school to continue monitoring the community and school-level impact of COVID-19 on a regular basis in consultation with public health to determine if adjustments are needed.

Note: Case numbers may fluctuate weekly at the county level. Spectrum will communicate, as directed and in consultation with MDE and MDH, regarding any possible cases at school and/or potential exposure.

These are unique times for everyone across the Spectrum community. While Spectrum is implementing a hybrid model based on the numbers and requirements, we are looking forward to a time (hopefully, in the near future) when we can all come together on campus in-person. We recognize that the hybrid model presents unique challenges to families. We want to be part of the solution, so please let us know if there is anything we can do to assist in the decision-making process. We value each of our families, students, and staff.

With great appreciation,



Dan DeBruyn
Executive Director
