

COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

(Executive Order 2020-142 District Preparedness Plan Template)

Name of District: Farwell Area Schools

Address of District: 399 E. Michigan St., Farwell, MI 48622-8762

District Code Number: 18020

Web Address of the District: <https://www.farwellschools.net>

Name of Intermediate School District: Clare Gladwin RESD

Name of Authorizing Body (if applicable):

Preparedness Plan Introduction

Governor Whitmer's [Executive Order 2020-142](#) "provides a structure to support all schools in Michigan as they plan for a return of pre-K-12 education in the fall. Under the order, school districts must adopt a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan laying out how they will cope with the disease across the various phases of the [Michigan Safe Start Plan](#). In turn, the accompanying Michigan Return to School Roadmap offers a guide to the types of safety protocols appropriate during each phase. There's no one-size-fits-all solution: What works in Lansing may not work in Sault Sainte Marie. Districts will retain the flexibility to tailor their instruction to their particular needs and to the disease conditions present in their regions." (EO-2020-142)

Each district (public, public school academy (PSA), nonpublic, and intermediate school district (ISD) that educates pre-K-12 students) shall submit a single completed Assurance Document and Preparedness Plan to its Board in time for approval by August 15 or seven days before the first day of school, whichever comes first. This template, when completed, serves as a single Assurance Document and Preparedness Plan.

The Preparedness Plan will be collected by the Intermediate School District for public school districts, the authorizing body for public school academies, or the chief/designated school administrator for nonpublic schools for transmission to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Treasurer by August 17, 2020. Additionally, this Preparedness Plan must be posted on the district's/PSA's, or

nonpublic school's public website home page no later than August 17, 2020. A single application should be filed by the district rather than multiple applications for individual schools within a district.

Preparedness Plan Assurances

The District agrees to meet all of the following requirements of Executive Order 2020-142

- The District assures that when it provides in-person instruction to its students without disabilities, the district must also provide in-person instruction to its students with disabilities, consistent with their individualized education programs (IEPs).
- The District assures that when schools are closed to in-person instruction, districts must strive in good faith and to the extent practicable, based upon available resources, technology, training, and curriculum, as well as the circumstances presented by COVID-19, to provide equal access to any alternative modes of instruction to students with disabilities from birth through age 26. This assurance includes the provision of auxiliary services under section 1296 of the Revised School Code, MCL 380.1296.
- The District assures that while any state of emergency or disaster related to the COVID-19 pandemic continues, it shall comply with guidance from the United States Department of Education, including its Office of Civil Rights and Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, and the Michigan Department of Education concerning the delivery of alternative modes of instruction to students with disabilities in light of the impact of COVID-19.
- The District assures that it shall, to the extent practicable and necessary, make individualized determinations whether and to what extent compensatory services may be needed for students with disabilities in light of the school closures during the 2019–2020 school year.
- The District assures that during **Phase 1, 2, or 3** of the *Michigan Safe Start Plan* it will close its buildings to anyone except: (a) District employees or contractors necessary to conduct minimum basic school operations consistent with a Preparedness Plan, including those employers or contractors necessary to facilitate alternative modes of instruction, such as distributing materials and equipment or performing other necessary in-person functions. (b) Food-service workers preparing food for distribution to students or their families. (c) Licensed child-care providers and the families that they serve, if providers follow all emergency protocols identified by the state.
- The District assures that during **Phase 1, 2, or 3** of the *Michigan Safe Start Plan* it will suspend athletics, after-school activities, inter-school activities, and busing.
- The District assures that during **Phase 1, 2, or 3** of the *Michigan Safe Start Plan* it will provide for the continued pay of school employees while redeploying staff to provide meaningful work in the context of the Preparedness Plan, subject to any applicable requirements of a collective bargaining agreement.
- The District assures that in **Phases 1, 2, or 3** of the *Michigan Safe Start Plan* it will provide for the continuation of food distribution to eligible students.
- The District assures that during **Phase 4** of the *Michigan Safe Start Plan* it will prohibit indoor assemblies that bring together students from more than one classroom.

- The District assures cooperation with the local public health department if a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified, and agrees to collect the contact information for any close contacts of the affected individual from two days before he or she showed symptoms to the time when he or she was last present in school.

Preparedness Plan

Every district must develop and adopt a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (“Preparedness Plan”) that is informed by [Michigan’s 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap](#) (“Return to School Roadmap”) from the COVID-19 Task Force on Education and Return to School Advisory Council.

In accordance with Executive Order 2020-142 a plan must include all the following parts:

A. The policies and procedures that the District will follow when the region in which the district is located is in **Phase 1, 2, or 3** of the *Michigan Safe Start Plan*.

1. Describe how the district will offer alternative modes of instruction other than in-person instruction and a summary of materials each student and the student’s parents or guardians will need to meaningfully access the alternative modes of instruction included in the Preparedness Plan. If the Preparedness Plan relies on electronic instruction, the Preparedness Plan must consider how the district will aid students who lack access to computers or to the internet. This is also in the Continuity of Learning and COVID-19 Response Plan submitted in April. You may want to update and link to this plan in your response below.

When the regions in which Farwell Area Schools District is located is in either a phase one, two or three the district will offer a full range of academic services to our students. With the school closures last March, we focused on supporting our learners and families. We did this through on-line classes and educational packets delivered with our meal deliveries.

Approximately 60% of our families have reliable internet connectivity at home. To help overcome the connectivity challenge, The Farwell Area Schools started broadcasting our wifi signal into our parking lots to help students and families gain access to the internet. We have approached our local townships to do the same. Currently 2 of our most remote township halls are broadcasting a wifi signal into their parking lot. We are working with 3 other critical locations to do the same. We are also seeking grants to help them be able to deliver this service to our students and the members of our communities.

FAS continues to explore and develop a plan to help get 1:1 technology into the hands of our students. We have ordered Chromebooks and are anticipating their arrival in early September.

The virtual learning in 2020 will, however, differ in several ways from the Spring. Work will be more rigorous, with new concepts being taught, teachers will be available more hours per day, and the work will have an expectation that it is completed and will be assessed. As a district we have chosen to rely on the same uniform platform of Google Classroom. This will enable parents with students in a variety of grade levels and schools to easily follow along with the assignments and lessons of the students. Additionally, our teachers (in phase 3) will be at school during the normal school hours, thus will be available by phone or email throughout the school day.

In an effort to provide parents and students with choices depending on their comfort level returning to face to face instruction our school district is offering both in person learning in Phase 4 as well as offering a remote learning option for students. Families will be asked in August to declare their preference for the learning mode for their child/children.

B. The policies and procedures that the District will follow when the regions in which the District is located is in **Phase 4** of the Michigan Safe Start Plan. Those policies and procedures must, at a minimum, include:

1. **Face coverings** (p. 22)

a. Please describe how the district will implement **requirements** for facial coverings that at a minimum require the wearing of face coverings, except during meals and unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated, for:

- i. All staff and all students in grades preK-12 when on a school bus.
 - ii. All staff and all students in grades preK-12 when in indoor hallways and common areas.
 - iii. All staff when in classrooms.
 - iv. All students in grades 6 and up when in classrooms.

v. All students in grades kindergarten through grade 5 unless students remain with their classes throughout the school day and do not come into close contact with students in another class.

Face Coverings: All staff who are medically able will be required to wear face coverings, except during meals. All 6-12 students and staff will be required to wear facial coverings, except during meals and unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated. Students in Kindergarten through 5th grade will be encouraged to wear masks as much as possible, but will be required while riding the bus, in the hallways, and in common areas outside of their cohort / classrooms.

School Bus: All students and staff will be made aware of the requirement that facial coverings must be worn on the school bus. This information will be made available through district, school and transportation correspondence over the summer months. The transportation department has procured several boxes of facial coverings that can be provided to students upon entering the bus. At least one fabric, washable mask will be provided to each student and staff member as well. All buses will have spare disposable masks available and hand sanitizer. All riders will have assigned seats. Additionally, we are asking that family members on the school bus sit by each other, so as to limit the number of students that will be interacting with those who are outside of their living environment. Parents will be asked to do a preliminary screening of their children prior to getting on the school bus in an effort to detect symptoms of infection.

Hallways: The school district has obtained facial masks for every student in the district. The expectation will be that the students, and staff, wear the facial covering in the hallways, while using the bathroom, and in any other common area of the school. Teachers and paraprofessionals will monitor and remind students to use facial coverings when it is time to leave the classroom environment. At the Middle and High School levels, students will be expected (and provided with) to use a mask during the duration of the school day - with the exception of eating periods.

Staff: Farwell Area Schools has met with various staff representatives groups and explained the expectation that facial coverings will be worn throughout the school day. Staff members will be provided with masks and facial shields and it is the expectation of the district administration that these will be worn at all times, with the exception of during meal times. For staff that can not medically tolerate a mask, the facial shield will be required at all times.

Classrooms (Grades 8-12) - The expectation is that students in grades 8-12 will be expected to adhere to the facial masking requirements while in the classroom as well. This will be monitored by the classroom teacher, and supported by district administration. Expectations for this will be communicated to families prior to beginning school under a Phase 4 plan.

Classrooms (Grades 4-7) – The expectation is that students in grades 4-7 will be expected to adhere to the facial masking requirements while in the classroom as well. This will be monitored by the classroom teacher, and supported by district administration. Expectations for this will be communicated to families prior to beginning school under a Phase 4 plan.

Classrooms (Grades K-3) – Elementary students will be placed into cohorts by class, students will remain in the same cohort throughout the day. The elementary schedule has been adjusted so that recess and other times where students would traditionally come into contact with other classes will be greatly restricted. In the event that this were to occur, it is the expectation of the district that the students would be masked.

2. Hygiene

Please describe how you will implement the **requirements** for hygiene protocols from the *Return to School Roadmap* (p. 22-23).

Hygiene will be addressed in a number of different ways in the plan.

Hand Sanitizer - Hand sanitizer will be freely available throughout the school buildings as well as on the district school buses. Staff and students will be asked to use the sanitizer frequently. Students will be taught that hand sanitizer is not a replacement for washing hands when a student may have dirt on their hands or after using the bathroom.

Hand Washing - Part of the first day of school protocol will be lessons on hand washing, specifically instructions on the duration needed to properly wash hands. Elementary students will be given the opportunity - a minimum of two times per day - to wash hands. Most classrooms do have sinks and the ability of students to wash their hands more frequently is available to them. Secondary teachers will also instruct students as to the proper method for hand washing and share with them the requirement to do so frequently throughout the school day. Specific attention will be made to hand washing prior to lunch at the secondary level.

District custodial staff members have been instructed that they need to routinely, and frequently, check the status of soap, hand sanitizer, and paper towel stations throughout the school day. Special attention will be made to address and clean frequent touch points throughout the day (toilets, sinks, door handles, etc.) School drinking fountains will be shut off and instead individual water bottles will be provided to each child.

Students at all levels within the district have access to lockers, cubbies or hooks that can contain their items from mixing with other students.

Instructional staff has been made aware of the need to end the practice of having a group supply area but instead will be asked to have students maintain and use their own personal school supply items. The district can help to support the purchase of some of these materials, if necessary.

3. Cleaning

Please describe how you will implement the cleaning **requirements** for cleaning protocols from the *Return to School Roadmap* (p. 27).

In all school facilities within the Farwell Area Schools frequently touched surfaces (light switches, doors, benches, bathrooms, etc.) will undergo cleaning at least every four hours with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or diluted bleach solution.

Classrooms such as libraries, computer labs, art rooms, and other hands-on classrooms will undergo cleaning after every class period with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or diluted bleach solution. At the elementary level student use of the library will be limited, with books being brought to the classroom and returned so that they can be adequately sanitized.

Student desks must be wiped down with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or diluted bleach solution after every class period, by the student at the end of the class period, in the secondary level. At the elementary level student desks (since they are not shared with others) will be sanitized at least once every four hours. Playground structures will be cleaned on a routine basis.

Staff members who are cleaning desks will be provided with gloves, mask and facial shield for cleaning. Adequate training for storing and using the cleaning materials will be provided all.

4. Athletics

Please describe how you will implement the **requirements** for athletics protocols from the *Return to School Roadmap* (p. 27).

The Farwell Area Schools athletic program will adhere to the following guidelines to keep student athletes, coaches and spectators safe and healthy.

Coaches and athletic trainers will conduct daily temperature checks and health screening for any athlete participating in a practice or contest. Athletes will be expected to abide by social distancing guidelines and this will be monitored by the coaching staff to ensure compliance. All athletes and coaching staff will be required to use hand sanitizer before engaging in a practice or contest and again during any break. Coaches will design practices with social distancing in mind and focus on limiting student contact when possible. All athletic equipment will be sanitized before and after use. Sanitization will be done using CDC approved, alcohol-based sanitizer.

In Phase 4, the Farwell Area Schools will maintain appropriate social distancing measures, use of face masks and limit spectator attendance according to the executive order: Outdoor events (100 people) Inside events (50).

FAS athletic departments will continue to follow all CDC, health department and MHSAA guidelines. The district will continue to implement the most up-to-date safety guidelines as the CDC and health department provide updated protocols.

5. Screening

Please describe how you will implement the **requirements** for screening protocols from the *Return to School Roadmap* (p. 24).

Students with a temperature at or above 100.4 will be brought to an isolation area for additional screening, isolation, and contact with parents to make arrangements for medical treatment or follow up care at home.

Staff members, upon entering the building each day, will also be temperature screened. In addition, the staff member will log on to a district site where they will record that their temperature was taken, as well as answer a variety of additional screening questions related to Covid 19 symptoms. This will be maintained by the district should it be necessary for such logs to be examined.

Parents will be asked to monitor their child's temperature and symptoms prior to entering the school bus or driving to school.

Symptomatic students will be sent home from school and will be kept home until they have tested negative or have completely recovered according to CDC and local health department guidelines. Students who are exhibiting signs of illness will be asked to maintain their presence in the "sick" room or area at each school until they are picked up by their parents or another responsible party.

6. Testing

Please describe how you will implement the **requirements** for testing protocols from the *Return to School Roadmap* (p. 25).

The Farwell Area Schools will cooperate with the Central Michigan District Health Department and implement any screening protocols that may be recommended and are not currently reflected in our plan. Students and staff that develop symptoms will be immediately masked and will be sent to seek treatment. Symptomatic students and staff sent home from school will be kept home until they have tested negative for COVID-19, have been cleared by a licensed physician to return, or have been released from isolation according to CDC guidelines (At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared and at least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication and symptoms have improved).

Families will be notified of the presence of any laboratory positive or clinically diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in the classroom and/or school to encourage closer observation for any symptoms at home. In the event of a lab or clinically diagnosed case of COVID-19, immediate efforts will be made to contact any close contacts (those who spent more than 15 minutes less than six feet in close proximity to the student or staff member) so that they can be quarantined for 14 days at home. Students and staff will be closely monitored for any symptoms of COVID-19 both by school personnel and by parents at home.

7. Busing and Student Transportation

Please describe how you will implement the **requirements** for busing and student transportation protocols from the *Return to School Roadmap* (p. 28).

Transportation on the Farwell Area Schools busses will have the following safety protocols:

1. Hand Sanitizer will be stationed within each bus for student and staff use;
2. All busses will be disinfected before or after every run;

3. All riders will be provided a mask for use while riding the school bus;
4. Equipment such as student harnesses will be cleaned with a disinfectant solution at the conclusion of each route;
5. Windows on the busses will be open, when weather is appropriate;
6. Students who become ill will not be permitted to ride the school bus. Each school will isolate the child in the sick room within the school and a phone call will be made to the student's contact asking for the child to be picked up from school;
7. Staff members who are ill will not be allowed to ride the bus and will comply with health department guidance regarding when to return to work.

C. Describe the policies and procedures that the district will follow when the region in which the district is located is in Phase 5 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan.

The Farwell Area Schools is committed to helping in the fight of Covid 19, as well as doing our part to make sure our students can attend school safely, every day. In that spirit, we will adopt the highly recommended guidelines for the schools in Phase 5 of the Return to School Roadmap in an effort to maintain the safety of students and staff alike. The plan naturally reflects the gradual loosening of restrictions that come with less community spread of the Covid 19 virus. It is the intent of the Farwell Area Schools to comply with the Highly Recommended guidance from the Return to Learn committee until an adequate vaccine or other treatment is developed.

1. Indicate which highly recommended protocols from the *Return to School Roadmap* the district will include in its Preparedness Plan when the region in which the district is located is in **Phase 5** of the *Michigan Safe Start Plan*.

At this time, it is the intent of the school district to implement all of the highly recommended suggestions from the Return to School Roadmap.

2. Indicate which highly recommended protocols from the *Return to School Roadmap* the district will not include in its Preparedness Plan when the region in which the district is located is in **Phase 5** of the *Michigan Safe Start Plan*.

At this time, there are currently no Highly Recommended protocols in the Return to School Roadmap that the Farwell Area Schools does not intend to implement. As stated previously, it is our intent to maintain a safe school environment for our students that these guidelines provide clear guidance for our district.

- D. After considering all the protocols that are highly recommended in the *Return to School Roadmap*, please indicate if a school plans to exclude protocols that are highly recommended for any of the categories above in **Phase 4**.

No

Final Steps for Submission

Each district shall submit a single completed Assurance Document and Preparedness Plan to its Board of Education (in the case of a PSA, the Academy Board of Directors; in the case of a nonpublic school, the chief or designated school administrator) in time for approval by August 15 or seven days before the first day of school, whichever comes first.

Date of Approval by the District Board of Education, PSA Board of Directors, or nonpublic school chief/designated school administrator:

Link to the Board Meeting Minutes or Signature of Board President, or signature of nonpublic school chief/designated school administrator:

Link to the approved Plan posted on the District/PSA/nonpublic school website:

The Preparedness Plan will be collected by the Intermediate School District for public school districts, the authorizing body for public school academies, or the chief/designated school administrator for nonpublic schools for transmission to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and State Treasurer by August 17, 2020. Additionally, this Preparedness Plan must be posted on the district's/PSA's, or nonpublic school's public website home page no later than August 17, 2020.

Name of District/PSA/Nonpublic Leader Submitting Plan: Steven L. Scoville

Date Received by the ISD/Authorizing Body/Chief or designated School Administrator: 9/14/2020

Date Submitted to State Superintendent and State Treasurer: 9/17/2020



Steven L. Scoville
Farwell Area Schools
Superintendent