



Remote Services Action Plan
 Helena Public Schools
 Date of Initial Plan: Friday, March 27, 2020

OVERVIEW

On Sunday, March 15, 2020, Governor Bullock ordered all K-12 public schools in Montana closed starting Monday, March 16, 2020, through Friday, March 27, 2020. This closure was extended by Governor Bullock on March 24, 2020 through Friday, April 10, 2020. Pursuant to Governor Bullock’s March 19 directive, requirements for pupil instruction from Monday, March 16, 2020 through Friday, March 27, 2020 were waived with Montana’s public schools receiving full funding, including the state transportation reimbursement. The Governor further directed that during the mandated school closure from March 16, 2020 to March 27, 2020, school districts were to plan and begin implementation on the following:

1. Offsite learning instruction and structure;
2. School meals, consistent with what the District regularly provides;
3. Services for students with disability; and
4. Other services customarily provided to students.

Through his March 19 directive, the Governor stated that districts will receive full funding and all requirements for pupil instruction will be waived if the following conditions are met:

1. The District creates a Plan of Action to address those specific areas identified above;
2. The Board of Trustees approves the District’s Plan of Action;
3. The Governor, in consultation with OPI, approves the Board of Trustees’ endorsed Plan of Action and waives all requirements for pupil instruction. The Governor’s March 19, 2020, directive provides that: “Presumptively, the Governor will approve waiver requests that are approved by school boards.”
4. The District will submit periodic reports to the Governor addressing those specific areas identified above.

PLAN OF ACTION

Upon announcement by Governor Bullock that all public schools in Montana were to close, the Helena Public Schools initiated a plan that involved several phases, each designed to bring remote services online in the most expedient manner possible. An outline of that plan, by-date, is included in the below graphic.

Day #1 Monday, March 16	Day #2 Tuesday, March 17	Day #3 Wednesday, March 18	Day #4 Thursday, March 19	Day #5 Friday, March 20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Campuses Closed to Students · Classrooms open to pick-up supplies · Teacher Planning Day #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Campuses Closed to Students · Classrooms open to pick-up supplies · Teacher Planning Day #2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Campuses Closed to Students · Chromebook distribution at all schools · Teacher Planning Day #3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Campuses Closed to all non-essential personnel · Remote Learning Day #1 · Remote student services begin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Campuses Closed to all non-essential personnel · Remote Learning Day #2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Breakfast/Lunch service at each school (to-go) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Breakfast/Lunch service at each school (to-go) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Regional Grab & Go Sites Open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Regional Grab & Go Sites Open 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Regional Grab & Go Sites Open · Helena Food Share Food-Pack Delivery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · District/Home Communication Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Principal/Home Update Email · SPED/Home Update Email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Teacher/Student-Family Overview Email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Teacher/Student-Family Day #1 Email 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Teacher/Student-Family Day #2 Email

This five-day plan provided an overview of daily deliverables that allowed us to shift from our traditional, in-person service environment to a remote services environment. Prior to this closure, parents/families received several updates including decisions to cancel out-of-state travel, school events, etc. District/Home communications increased with two messages being sent on Sunday, March 15th and one each of the following two days. By midweek, communication to our families shifted from being district-wide to school specific. This allowed families to reconnect with their principal and teachers as we prepared for our first day of remote instruction on Thursday, March 19, 2020. The Helena Public Schools have utilized a remote learning environment, provided services for students with additional needs, provided ongoing food services, and provided remote student services continuously since Thursday, March 19th.

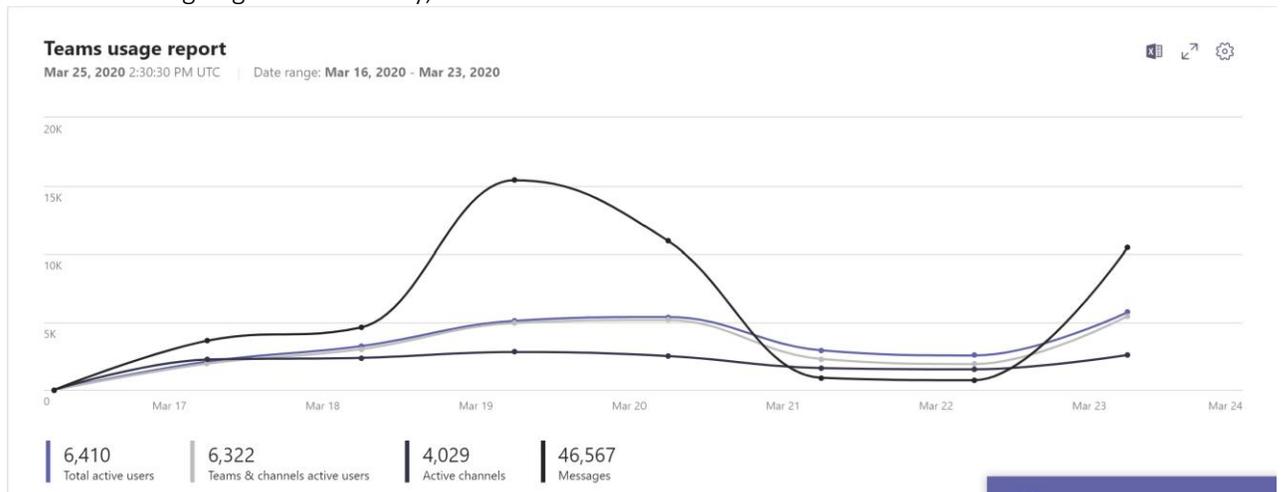
The following represents remote services currently being provided by the Helena Public Schools. In accordance with Governor Bullock’s directive, each of our plan’s four areas are described below:

1. Offsite Learning Instruction and Structure:

The Helena Public Schools are utilizing a remote learning environment designed to accomplish two daily goals: 1) remain connected to our students (socially, emotionally and academically) and 2) provide every student with a remote extension of our classroom teaching/learning environment. Students/Families were provided an [overview](#) of our remote learning environment on March 17, 2020, prior to the initiation of remote learning on March 19, 2020. Below are specifics related to our remote learning environment:

- Daily Connections: Our educators strive to connect with their learners each day whether through email update, class meetings, online instruction, feedback on assignments, video “office hours,” online tutoring/differentiation, or an individual phone call.
- Academic Content: While the initial days of remote learning primarily focused on the reinforcement and application of previously learned content, new learning will become a more prominent part of remote learning instruction beginning on April 6th and will continue as long as school closures continue. Our educators will work together to consider which of the identified essential standards remain as needing to be taught/mastered. Regardless of continued closure, identified essential standards will serve as our primary content focus by grade level, school and classroom as we progress towards the conclusion of the 2019/2020 school year.
- Platforms: Clever serves as the district’s single sign-on platform which connects students to district, school and teacher-specific resources. The Helena Public Schools utilize the Microsoft Office 365 Suite as a backbone to our offered digital tools and programs. This suite includes Microsoft Outlook for student email and scheduling and Microsoft Teams as a platform for digital learning and collaboration, and Microsoft Stream for Videos. We also support Moodle as a learning platform for some of our classes.

As illustrated in the graphic below, usage of Microsoft Teams has grown to over 6,400 active users since remote learning began on Thursday, March 19.



- Teacher Planning: Just as they do when schools are open, teachers meet weekly for designated Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. During these meetings, educators review student data, discuss plans for teaching essential standards and collectively share instructional strategies. These collaborative opportunities remain an important part of our shared instructional framework and are now taking place in a remote manner.
- Using the [Very Good Online Teaching Standards](#) developed by the Montana Digital Academy, we have created learning frameworks for K-1, 2-5, Middle and High School. These efforts ensure consistency, communication and common expectations across the district.

Through this plan, the Helena Public Schools are continually working to ensure the continuity of educational services for all of our students, regardless of resources available at home. The strategies identified below are available to all students and customizable according to the unique needs of specific students.

Examples to include:

- All certified and classified employees are utilizing a digital, online work environment to connect and provide educational services to our students. Resources utilized to accomplish these daily objectives include the following.
 - Daily/Multiday Schedules: Teachers work to provide daily and/or weekly learning schedules to students that provide our learners with suggested windows of time for learning. These schedules include many components of the traditional learning day but are adapted to meet the asynchronous needs of this new learning environment. As part of our remote learning environment, schools/educators are working to provide access to all curricular areas, including physical education, library, music, art, and social-emotional learning. That noted, the Helena Public Schools understand that online learning schedules must be flexible to meet the needs of students and families as they balance work, study, and family life during this time.
 - Update Emails: Teachers/Principals connect with students/families via student email addresses with class/course updates, schedules and resources.
 - Class Meetings: Teachers utilize Microsoft Teams to connect with their classes as general, daily check-ins or to discuss specific academic content.
 - Recorded Lessons: Teachers may record specific direct instruction portions of their lessons as a resource to support remote learning.
 - Online Tutoring: Teachers primarily utilize Microsoft Teams to connect with specific students or small groups of students to focus on specific content or questions.
 - Accessibility Tools: All Microsoft Office tools include accessibility features to improve access for students with disabilities
 - School/Home Phone Calls: Teachers, counselors and administrators reach out via phone to students who have been absent/offline for several days. These calls allow schools to remain connected to students and gauge their ongoing needs (physical, social, emotional and academic).
 - Digital Resources: Using our single login site, Clever, teachers load educational resources (programs, articles, websites, etc.) in one common place for easy student access. Teachers group resources into “teacher pages” that students are able to access. Additionally, district-wide programs/resources are pre-loaded into every student’s account. Many of these include options for enrichment for students who would like to expand their learning.
 - Traditional Textbooks, Digital Textbooks and Other Associated Resources: Prior to closure, students (K-12) were able to take needed texts home for remote use. However, many district curriculum resources are also available online. Digital textbook supplements aid in supporting deeper learning through expanded access and content. Teachers are able to cite/link these resources into student plans and students are able to access all of these online materials from home using the Clever portal.
- In order to ensure that all students have access to online coursework, the Helena Public Schools are providing the below-listed supports:

- Chromebook Checkout: Through several structured Chromebook opportunities, the Helena Public Schools have been able to provide over 1,500 Chromebook devices to students for use throughout this closure. Multiple distribution dates will occur for the first two weeks of closure. Should closure continue, weekly distribution will occur each Friday in concert with regional food service sites and/or individualized home delivery. We will use a similar system to replace any Chromebooks that malfunction on a weekly basis.
- District Support: Our Helena Public Schools IT Department has rapidly retooled to provide online support for students and staff.
- Service Connection: The Helena Public Schools are working to pair families with available internet services via media providers. One example includes Charter Communications offer to provide free Spectrum broadband and Wi-Fi access for 60 days to households with K-12 and/or college students who do not already have a Spectrum broadband subscription (up to 100 Mbps).
- Hotspot Checkout: The Helena Public Schools have purchased internet hotspot devices through T-Mobile. These hotspots will be provided to students in situations where Wi-Fi internet remains unavailable.
- Reimbursement: As needed, through the use of transportation funds (pursuant to 20-10-101(5)), the Helena Public Schools may be able to reimburse parents for the costs of internet access. However, through services provided by media companies (including the above-referenced) and the use of hotspots, we believe that we can aid most of our families with devices and connectivity.

2. School Meals, consistent with what the Helena Public Schools regularly provide:

Access to needed school meals has been a regular part of our remote services environment from the first day of school closure. Over the first week of closure, the Helena Public Schools through our partner Sodexo, phased breakfast and lunch meal services from individual school sites (3/16 and 3/17) to eight regional meal sites beginning Wednesday, March 18, 2020.

In addition, the Helena Public Schools continue to partner with the Helena Food Share to provide Food Packs to students and families in need. Made possible through the Helena Food Share, meals are provided to sustain families over weekends and breaks. First Student, our partner in student transportation, will begin delivery of Food Packs on Friday, March 27, 2020. Students and families will be able to receive their Food Packs from our buses at designated stops near/at their places of residence.

Through these two collaborative food service methods, students and families are provided breakfast and lunch each weekday and Food Packs for meals over weekends and breaks. For additional information, please see the examples below.

Examples may include:

- During every scheduled school day, the Helena Public Schools/Sodexo provide free, grab-and-go breakfasts and lunches to any child, ages 1 to 18. Food service is provided daily at eight regional sites (listed below). Students are provided with lunch for the day and a breakfast for the following morning. In addition, parents are able to reserve meals via an online [link](#). While not required, this link helps our kitchens better predict daily meal needs. To date, the Helena Public Schools/Sodexo are serving over 800 meals a day with numbers having steadily increased across each day of this closure.

8 Regional Grab & Go Meal Locations/Times:

- Rossiter Elementary: 11:00 am to 11:30 am
- Four Georgians Elementary: 11:00 am to 11:30 am
- Broadwater Elementary: 11:45am to 12:15 pm
- Warren Elementary: 11:50 am to 12:20 pm
- Bryant Elementary: 12:30 pm to 1:00 pm
- Smith Elementary: 12:45 pm to 1:15 pm

- Central Elementary: 1:15 pm to 2:00 pm
- Kessler Elementary: 1:30 pm to 2:00 pm
- The Helena Public Schools are fortunate to partner with the Helena Food Share to provide Food Packs for students/families in need. These resources target weekends and breaks to ensure that students have needed food when traditional school kitchens are not open. Beginning Friday, March 27, 2020, First Student Transportation will partner to deliver Food Packs to students via our school buses. Friday deliveries will continue each week for the remainder of this school closure. Additional Food Packs will be provided to students over the upcoming Spring Break (March 30 through April 3).

3. Services for Students with Disability:

The Helena Public Schools have implemented the following strategies to ensure that each student being served through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan continue to receive the educational and related services required to make progress towards their individual goals. Throughout this school closure, the Helena Public Schools will continue to provide a Free and Appropriate Education for students with disabilities. However, in upholding the safest possible environment for all involved, the Helena Public Schools will be conducting IDEA and 504 meetings via electronic means and/or meeting in person, but complying with CDC Guidelines, State Guidelines and/or local health guidelines.

In addition to the above-described services, associated with the section entitled Offsite Learning Instruction and Structure, the below services are being offered to every student currently receiving special education services. The identified strategies below are customized and differentiated to meet the individual needs of every student in association with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

- The provision of Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) may include, as appropriate, special education and related services provided through remote instruction provided virtually, online or telephonically.
- Our special education staff continue planning and providing special education, and related services, to students with special needs.
- Special education staff are reviewing IEPs to determine what, if any, accommodations are necessary in order for students to access our remote learning environment.
- Through examining the individual needs of each child in relation to provided services, special education staff will consider and implement alternative modes of instruction that serve to meet the intent of student's IEP goals through a remote learning environment.
- Services and related services that can be offered for each child may include paper packets, online resources, remote instruction and support through a virtual learning platform.
- If a child with a disability who is at high risk of severe medical complications is excluded from school during an outbreak of COVID-19 once schools re-open, the exclusion will be considered a change in educational placement subject to the protections of the Code of Federal Regulations.
- A continually evolving FAQ document has been created/posted for parents/families - [Link](#)

Examples may include:

- In addition to the above-described services, associated with the section entitled Offsite Learning Instruction and Structure, the below examples are specific to meeting the needs of students who are receiving services associated with special education including related services.
 - Online Learning: Special Education Teachers are utilizing a host of online resources to engage students in new learning. Resources include but are not limited to Freckle for Math, Spelling City, KHAN Academy, and Read 180
 - Video Student/Class Meetings: Special Education Teachers are working to convene their students in a digital format as a way to continue the social/emotional connection of school. Teachers work to provide an overview of the intended learning content before working (digitally) in small groups or individually to address specific needs.

- Conferencing with Students and Families: Staff are interacting remotely with students and families using Microsoft Teams, Class Dojo and other live conferencing platforms. Conferencing typically occurs either in small groups or through individualized interactions.
- Hard-Copy Resource Packets: In the initial days of remote learning, special education teachers sent home resource packets associated with student IEP Goals. Teachers then worked to follow-up remotely in support of learning.
- Textbook Guides: Special Education Teachers utilize traditional texts as appropriate while providing accommodations and modifications. Supports are aligned to student IEP goals but limited to what is available given the distance required during this closure.

4. Other Services Customarily Provided to Students:

With the exception of services that cannot be provided in a remote manner, the Helena Public Schools will continue to ensure that student needs are met through needed resources and support. These continued services include counseling, social/emotional support services, health and medical services, library/media services, technology services and driver's education. While listed below, our before/after school program (SACC) and student athletics/activities have largely been suspended as these services/environments are limited for health reasons.

Examples include:

- Counseling and Social/Emotional Support Services: Student support services have transitioned to a remote platform that include a variety of methods.
 - Counselors and social workers are reaching out to students and families to address lack of academic progress or other struggles with the online environment (calls and emails)
 - Counselors, social workers, administrators and technology personnel are working to assist students and families with technology needs including devices and internet access
 - Counselors and educators are working to provide support and assistance to our students who have active 504 Plans
 - Counselors and social workers are connecting with teachers and administrators to address specific student needs
 - Counselors and social workers are continuing to assist students remotely with college/career questions, plans and needs
 - All student support personnel are meeting weekly as professional learning communities
 - All student support personnel are meeting weekly with grade level groups
 - Counselors and social workers are participating in remote IEP meetings
 - Counselors and social workers are conducting regular check-ins with student through emails, phone calls and Microsoft Teams appointments.
 - All student support personnel are meeting weekly with their school's administrative team
 - Student support personnel are working to provide a variety of resources on school webpages focused on coping skills, time management, technology help sheets, etc.
 - Counselors continue to work with students to finalize registration for classes next fall
 - Counselors and social workers are continuing to provide support and process/connect referrals for current mental health needs including new needs that arise during the time of school closure
 - High school counselors continue to provide current seniors (12 graders) with college and scholarship support
- Health and Medical Services: Our school nurses continue to support students, families and colleagues through a variety of remote services. These services include all of the following.
 - Continuing to manage medication needs (e.g. returning medication to families, etc.)
 - Providing COVID-19 Prevention Practices to principals for staff and student newsletters
 - Working with families to provide medical consultation via phone or email
 - Participating in Lewis & Clark Public Health(LCPH) COVID-19 contact tracing training

- Participating in Response Team support and training with the LCPH department during the COVID-19 Outbreak/Pandemic
- Providing support to students and staff as requested/needed
- Library/Media Services: Our K-12 Librarians are working remotely to provide continued services to our students, K-12. Remote services may include:
 - Developing standards-based information/media lessons to be delivered during weekly “specials” at the K-5 Level
 - Integrating library lessons into classroom instruction and collaborating with students and teachers by joining their online classes
 - Providing digital resources and support to students and staff
 - Helping manage Chromebook distribution and provide technical support to students, staff and families
 - Meeting weekly in PLC groups to plan together to provide support and materials for instruction
 - Collecting and curating resources appropriate for age level and school culture
 - Providing links to reading and technology resources that vendors are providing at no cost during pandemic closure
 - Connecting with students through various online tools and providing technology support for online tools for staff, students, and parents
 - Serving as moderators during virtual classes
 - Facilitating online book clubs/groups (e.g. One Book Activity, etc.)
 - Running extracurricular activities like Spirit Week, etc.
 - Assisting counselors who are checking on students
 - Managing remote learning platforms for schools
 - Creating and sharing daily videos and video story times via numerous platforms (e.g. ClassDojo, Clever, YouTube, Teams, etc.)
 - Frequently adding resources to the District’s COVID-19 Learning Bridge
 - Helping develop take-home packets for primary students
 - Managing Audible accounts for students
 - Locating and sharing resources with teachers to use for online instruction, such as anchor text, tech tutorials, best practices using tech tools
 - Assisting students with logging in to classes, receiving communication, and submitting work to classes
 - Facilitating communication between administration and teachers for our English Language Learners (ELL). Librarians have a relationship with these students as they work regularly in the library.
- Technology Services: As noted above in the section entitled Offsite Learning Instruction and Structure, the Helena Public Schools will continually work to ensure that every student’s technology needs are being met in relation to our remote learning environment. Ongoing services include Chromebook checkout/exchange, internet acquisition, and technology support/problem solving.
- Drivers Education: Our Drivers Education program continues to provide digital classroom instruction that will count towards required hours. However, non-classroom driving hours have been suspended as there is no feasible way to provide such opportunities in a manner that is consistent with the guidance of state and local health officials.
- SACC Before/After School Program: Our before and after school programs were closed as a result of school closures. However, staff members continue to reach out to students in their program and as school closures continue, will be providing after-hours academic support to available, enrolled SACC students.
- Athletics and Activities: All school-related athletics and activities were suspended with the announcement of school closures. The Helena Public Schools are strictly following the expectations of the Montana High School Association (MHSA) in prohibiting practices, meetings or gatherings of any sort. Coaches remain in contact with their student athletes strictly to provide support during this challenging time. Student-athletes are encouraged to continue their workouts individually but only in a manner consistent with the guidance of state and local health officials.

CHECKLIST OF ACTIONS:

During the planning and implementation of the District's Plan of Action, the Helena Public Schools implemented the following processes/mechanisms to ensure compliance with the Governor's March 19, 2020 Directive. These actions include ongoing collaboration with all stakeholders and effective communications with our community, staff, parents and students.

- ✓ On Tuesday, March 24th, the Board of Trustees for the Helena Public Schools made a Declaration of Unforeseen Emergency pursuant to 20-9-801 through 20-9-806, MCA
- ✓ At a properly noticed meeting (Friday, March 27th, 2020), the Helena Public Schools Board of Trustees reviewed this Remote Services Action Plan. This review included dialogue and deliberation by Trustees in an open meeting format. Prior to approving this plan, the public had an opportunity to provide input and feedback. The plan was posted publicly on our district website on Wednesday, March 25th in association with the called Board of Trustees Meeting that occurred on Friday, March 27th, 2020.
- ✓ The administrative staff of the Helena Public Schools have taken the lead in coordinating meetings with parents, certified and classified staff while maintaining the social-distancing, self-isolation and other guidance of the CDC, the State and local health officials.
- ✓ The certified and classified employees of the Helena Public Schools have participated in the development and implementation of this Remote Services Action Plan. All employees were informed of our need to develop a plan via email on Monday, March 23rd, 2020. The plan was drafted through feedback shared from school principals as a result of staff and departmental meetings. All of our Helena Public Schools Employees were provided a draft of this plan on Wednesday, March 25th, 2020. Feedback was gathered and incorporated into the final, presented plan.
- ✓ All parents/guardians of our students have been informed of our Remote Services Action Plan for the continuity of educational and other services to their children.
- ✓ The Helena Public Schools have maintained regular contact with our community during this time of uncertainty to provide our community that we are providing for the needs of students and families and doing our part to minimize the impact of COVID-19 on our community, staff, parents and students. Please see the above-referenced communication and the below-referenced appendix for specific updates.
- ✓ The Helena Public Schools have adopted a policy protecting students and student information when engaged in online learning ([HSD Policy 7065: Contracts with Third Parties Affecting Student Records](#))
- ✓ The Helena Public Schools have taken measures to ensure that all communications relating to the provision of programs and services for students and families are accessible to individuals with disabilities. This includes ensuring that all messages are available in both audio and visual formats.
- ✓ The Helena Public Schools leadership team has reviewed COVID-19 basic information provided by the CDC.
- ✓ The Helena Public Schools have established a point of contact with local and state health authorities to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on their community.

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools have provided students, staff, and parents with COVID-19 fact sheets from the CDC including citations/links to online resources from the CDC, the Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services, and Lewis & Clark Public Health

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools have communicated information for staff and students on common preventative measures for COVID-19 prevention including:
 - Washing hands with soap for at least 20 seconds
 - Avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth
 - Covering coughs and sneezes with tissues and throwing away tissues
 - Avoiding contact with others when sick

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools will continue to comply with FERPA in reference to any student who may be identified as having COVID-19

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools will continue to comply with HIPAA Privacy laws in reference to any staff member who may be identified as having COVID-19.

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools have taken safety measures to comply with CDC guidelines on social distancing (6-feet of distance between individuals), limiting large groups of individuals from being together, and provided disinfectant wipes, etc. to regularly sanitize surfaces within the school, including but not limited to: door handles/knobs, restrooms, surfaces and electronic devices shared by staff and others, etc.

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools have adequately equipped maintenance and cleaning staff with personal protective equipment gloves and gowns that are appropriate for the cleaning products used and to minimize having contact with potentially contaminated surfaces.

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools maintain a cleaning schedule that is updated daily based on school/building activities during this closure.

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools have worked to educate all staff to recognize the symptoms of COVID-19 in case they become exposed to the virus themselves.

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools have cancelled all school sponsored events/travel of students and staff.

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools will utilize twice monthly Board of Trustee Meetings to regularly review and refine our Remote Services Action Plan to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our students throughout this school closure.

- ✓ The Helena Public Schools Board of Trustees will review and when necessary approve any updates to this Remote Services Action Plan for submission to the Governor's Office.