

# March 2022 BlueSky Online Newsletter

## Director of Student Support Message

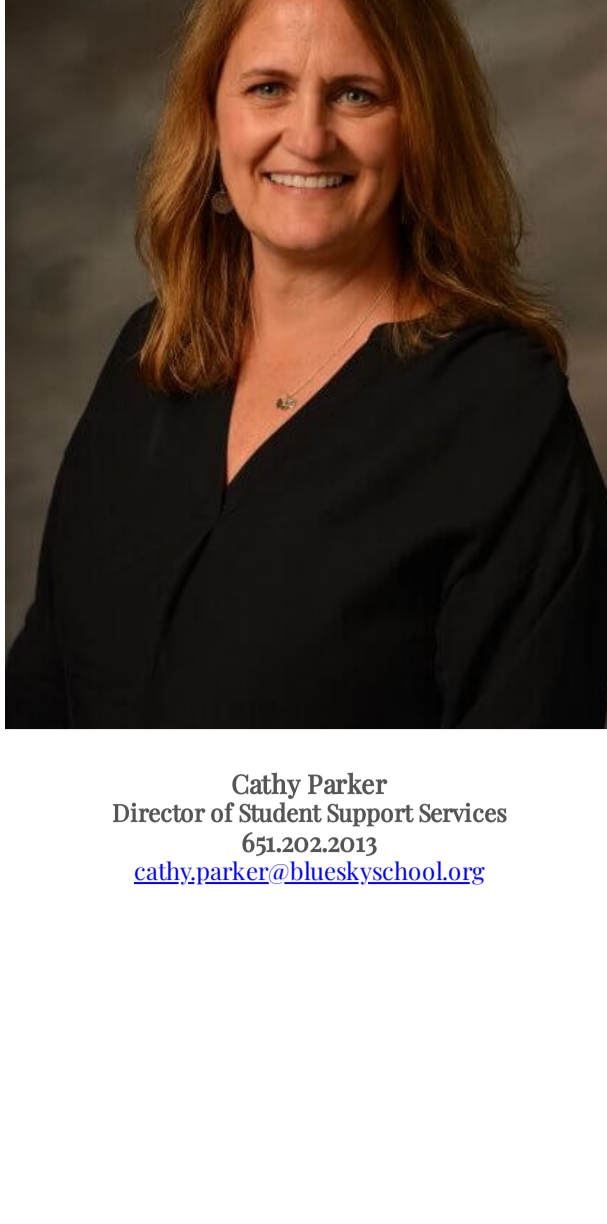
After this month, three quarters of the school year will be completed. Remember to reach out to your student's support team and teachers with any questions or concerns you may have regarding your child's progress. We are here to support your child and we want to help them in their success.

**Spring Break:** As you look outside, it is hard to believe that spring is right around the corner! Students are off of school for BlueSky's spring break from **March 28th through April 4th**. Moodle will be unavailable on **March 28th and 29th** as there are some mandatory Moodle updates happening during that time. This would be a great opportunity to take a couple days off from school and do something you enjoy.

**22-23 School Calendar:** The BlueSky Board of Directors has approved the 22-23 School Calendar. You can also find a printable copy of the calendar on our [website](#).

**Internet Security:** Technology is a wonderful tool for communicating and information sharing, but like all tools children learn to use, parents must provide supervision and limits to ensure children have a safe and rewarding experience. During March, **Safe Harbor** will be presenting information about internet safety to BlueSky's 6th graders during their advisory time. These sessions will be recorded for all 6-12th grade students and parents to view at a later date. We will send a follow up communication to let you know when they are available for your viewing. For now, here are some sites for you to review with your child to help keep them safe.

- Parent/Family Sites (MDE)**
- The Facebook [Put a Stop to Bullying](#) site includes tools, tips and programs that help people stand up for themselves and each other. There are also resources for parents, teens and educators on the site. Facebook also has protocols for reporting suicidal threats or content.
  - The [Microsoft Site Safety and Security Center](#) has internet safety tips for parents and families, including a section entitled "Help Kids Stay Safer Online."
  - [iCommons](#), the web site of the Internet Safety Education, is a non-profit foundation for internet safety education. It is dedicated to educating and empowering young people to safely, responsibly and productively use the internet.
  - [NetSafe](#) is a website based in New Zealand which provides practical information and tips on types and sources of sexually explicit content, ways that inappropriate material can reach children and teens, the threat of cyber stalking and other issues involving internet safety.
  - [Common Sense Media](#) has several family tip sheets that address multiple age groups.
  - [Cyber Safety Com](#) provides tip sheets, advice and blogs on cyberbullying and internet safety.
  - [Web Wise](#) provides how-to's, publications and "explainers" on apps and social media.
  - [National Child Protection Training Center](#) provides trainings, handouts, education and prevention awareness for internet safety.
  - [Safe Kids](#) provides posts, safety advice and guides to parents and students on internet safety issues.
  - [iKeep Safe](#) has educational materials, blogs, videos and programs to help promote the safe use of technology and the internet.
  - [Get Net Wise](#) education materials, articles and advice on connecting safely.



Cathy Parker  
Director of Student Support Services  
651.202.2019  
[cathy.parker@blueskyvschool.org](mailto:cathy.parker@blueskyvschool.org)

## Counselor Corner



### Featured Occupation: Computer Network Support Specialist

- Education Required:** Associate's Degree
- Outlook:** Growth in the next 10 years
- Median Wages:** \$65,080 per year

Computer network support specialists analyze, troubleshoot, and evaluate computer network problems. They play an important role in the routine maintenance of their organization's networks, such as performing file backups on the network. Maintenance can be performed daily, weekly, or monthly and is important to an organization's disaster recovery efforts. Solving an information technology (IT) problem promptly is important because organizations depend on their network systems.

**2022-2023 Class Registration is underway:** Students are able to register for classes for next year. If you would like input regarding your child's schedule, you can assist them in filling out the registration form, or contact their BlueSky Counselor. **NOTE:** Some elective classes are very popular and fill up quickly. The registration form can be found in the "Register for Classes" assignment in the Required Career Portfolio class.

**ACT Testing:** If you are a junior planning to attend a 4-year college, we recommend that you sign up to take the ACT this spring/summer (if you have not yet tested this year).

### ACT Registration Information

High School Code: BlueSky Charter School 242228

### Test Dates:

- April 2nd, 2022
- June 11th, 2022
- July 16th, 2022

### Regular Deadline:

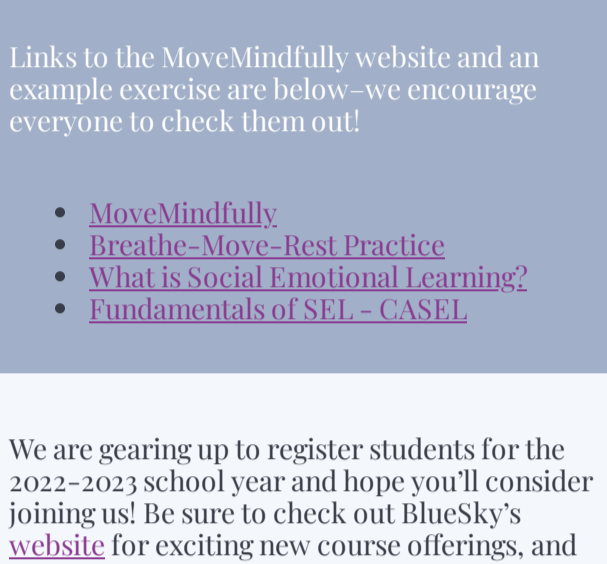
- February 27th, 2022
- May 6th, 2022
- June 17th, 2022

### Late Fee Deadline:

- March 11th, 2022
- May 20th, 2022
- June 24th, 2022

## Social Work Spotlight

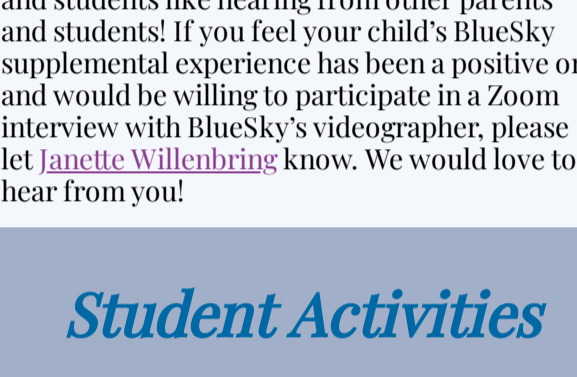
BlueSky is continuing to incorporate Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into our work with students. SEL is a practice that integrates social and emotional skills into the class curriculum and has been shown to greatly benefit student attendance, academic achievement, graduation rates and improve students' moods. This month, staff will participate in a training from MoveMindfully in SEL practices.



Links to the MoveMindfully website and an example exercise are below. We encourage everyone to check them out!

- [MoveMindfully](#)
- [Practical Move-Best Practice](#)
- [What is Social Emotional Learning?](#)
- [Fundamentals of SEL - CASEL](#)

## Supplemental



We are also looking to spread the word about BlueSky as a Supplemental option for other students in our great state, and, well... parents and students like hearing from other parents and students! If you feel your child's BlueSky supplemental experience has been a positive one and would be willing to participate in a Zoom interview with BlueSky's videographer, please let [Janette Wilkibring](#) know. We would love to hear from you!

We are gearing up to register students for the 2022-2023 school year and hope you'll consider joining us! Be sure to check out BlueSky's [website](#) for exciting new course offerings, and email [Heidi Housh](#) with course preferences. We will start adding students to classes after March 15. Once we do, we will notify you and your student's counselor with an email and paperwork to make the arrangement official. Remember that some classes fill quickly, so it's to your advantage to reach out as soon as possible. In addition, we can't guarantee course spots until the week of March 15, so thank you for your patience!

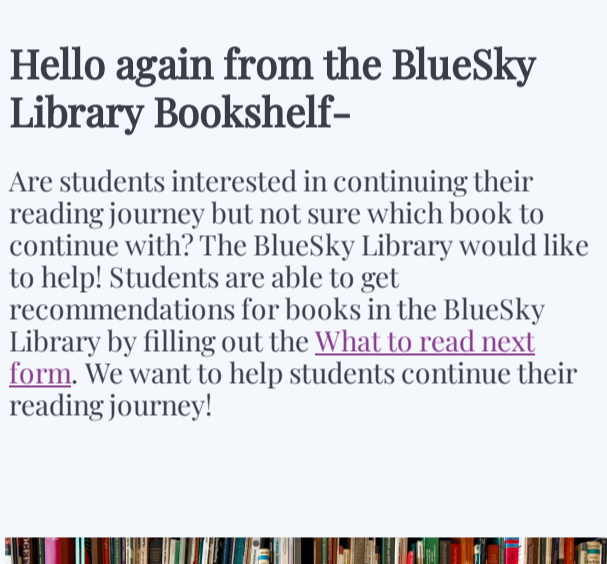
March is Motivation Monday Month for BlueSky's Supplemental Program. Heidi and Janette will be emailing a Newsletter each Monday in March highlighting the benefits to starting your school work early in the week, as well as outlining organization and planning tools that set you up for success.

## Student Activities



More details coming soon!

**Lunch Bunch** - On select Thursdays at noon, staff will be hosting Lunch Bunch. This is a great time to hang out and get to know other BlueSky students in between classes. Each Zoom session will have a theme, so be on the lookout for what you can learn and participate in!



**BlueSky Clubs** - We are offering a few student clubs this year. Club activities will be virtual for the time being, but we would like to have more opportunity for on-site blended clubs when COVID-19 guidelines allow. If you are interested in participating in one or more clubs, please fill out the Google forms:

- [GSA](#)
- [Book Club](#)
- [Yoga Club](#)
- [Cooking Club \(The Gouda Life\)](#)
- [Travel Club \(BlueSky's Travel Tribe\)](#)

## BlueSky Library Bookshelf



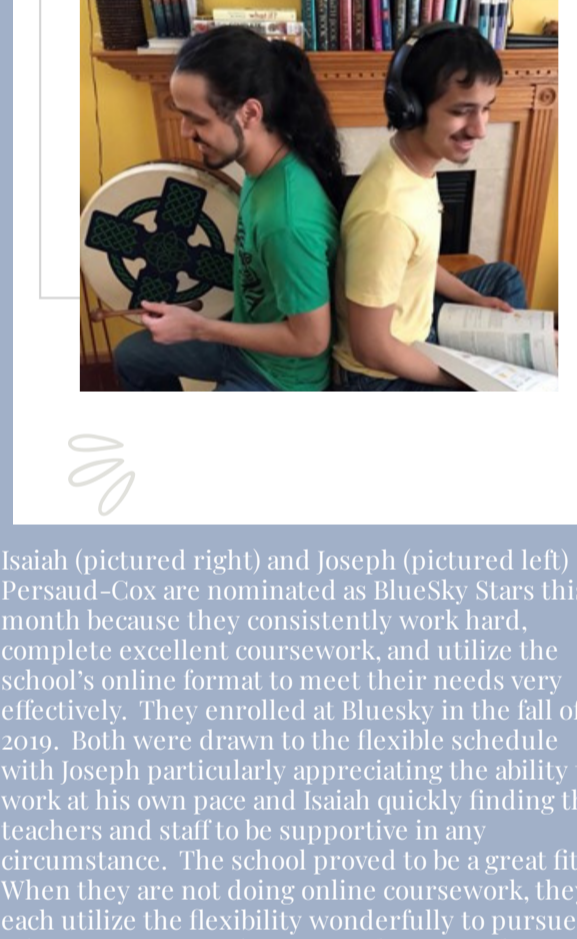
Are students interested in continuing their reading journey but not sure which book to continue with? The BlueSky Library would like to help! Students are able to get recommendations for books in the BlueSky Library by filling out the [What to read next](#) form. We want to help students continue their reading journey!

## Hello again from the BlueSky Library Bookshelf



Are students interested in continuing their reading journey but not sure which book to continue with? The BlueSky Library would like to help! Students are able to get recommendations for books in the BlueSky Library by filling out the [What to read next](#) form. We want to help students continue their reading journey!

## BlueSky Stars



Isaiah (pictured right) and Joseph (pictured left) Persaud-Cox are nominated as BlueSky Stars this month because they consistently work hard, complete excellent coursework, and utilize the school's online format to meet their needs very effectively. They enrolled at BlueSky in the fall of 2021. Both were drawn to the flexible schedule with Joseph particularly appreciating the ability to work at his own pace. Both quickly found the teachers and staff to be supportive in any circumstance. The school proved to be a great fit. When they are not doing online coursework they each utilize the flexibility wonderfully to pursue other interests. Both enjoy reading, spending time with family, and listening to music. Isaiah additionally enjoys playing tennis, practicing ASL, and exercise, and Joseph also enjoys spending time outdoors, practicing archery, and practicing on his football team. To encourage other BlueSky students to find success, they both recommended setting a schedule for oneself with Joseph reminding students of the importance of having a continuing plan when life happens, and the regular schedule is disrupted, and Isaiah encouraging students to make the flexibility work for them based on their daily scheduling requirements. Congratulations to both Isaiah and Joseph for their continued success as star students here at BlueSky.

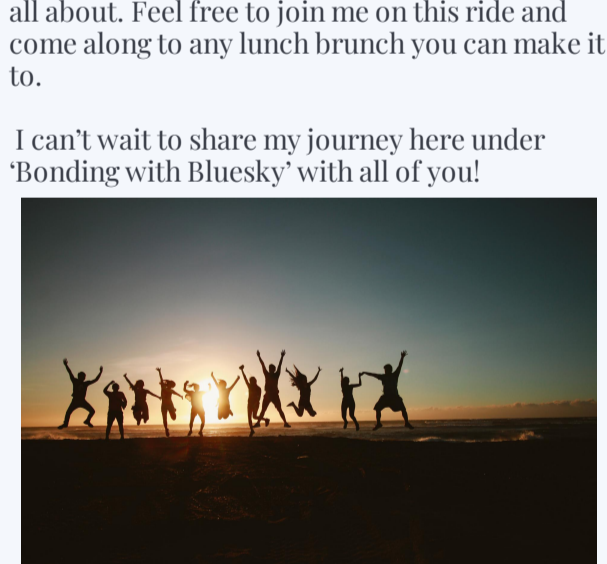
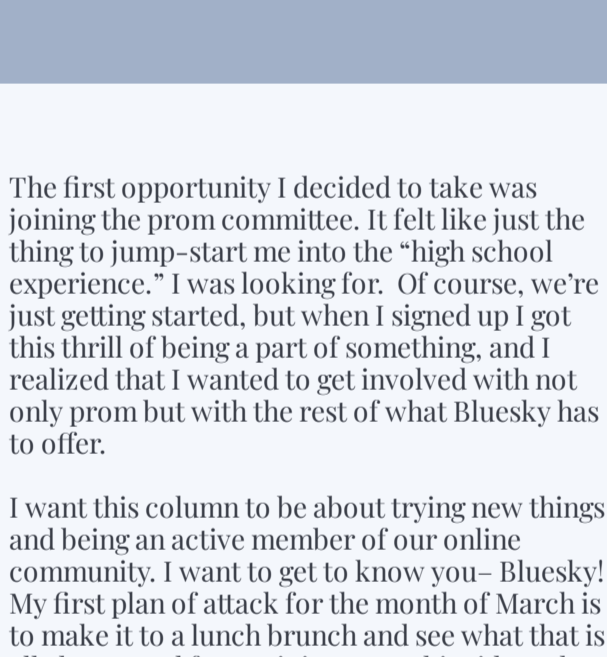
- Nominated by Laura Wieleck

## Shoutout to our awesome students!

Brody and Mackenzie Murray are not only co-BlueSky Stars this month, but they are also siblings. Brody is an 8th grader and Mackenzie is in 6th grade. Mackenzie is part of our inaugural 6th grade class and has been a wonderful addition to this program. Brody came to BlueSky last year as a 7th grader because of our flexibility and supportive teachers. Mackenzie joined us in part due to her brother's positive experience and shared that the "classes are really fun".

Both Brody and Mackenzie are active in their free time. Mackenzie enjoys gymnastics, and tennis; Brody plays football and soccer. Both kids are also avid swimmers. When asked the best thing about BlueSky, Brody said he "loves the nice teachers and flexibility." Mackenzie shared that she loves knowing how many assignments she has to do for the week and how many are left as the week goes on. They shared their keys to success are being on time to class and completing your assignments each week. I am grateful to have these two students in our Middle School program!

- Nominated by Dawn Mensing



## Bonding with BlueSky

by Alex Galvan

**Hello BlueSky,**

I have been given the amazing opportunity to write for this newsletter, and I want to use this opportunity to talk about community. As an online student, it can be easy to forget that there are hundreds of students who you don't meet, attend BlueSky. It's something that I myself forget about a lot. Sometimes it feels like our classmates are just names on discussion posts, but they are so much more than that. As I am a senior and these are my last few months of high school, I want to make the most of the experience and venture out of my comfort zone.

During the two years I have spent online I have not been social at all. I was working a full-time job and I didn't feel like socializing was all that important. I had this idea that it wasn't worth trying to get to know my classmates or participating in any type of get-together whether it be field trips or the weekly lunch bunch. I didn't think it would be my scene, and I feel that some of you may feel the same way or have felt that way at some point or another.

For the last few months of my high school career, I will not be taking these opportunities for granted and I will be participating in what I have dubbed "bluesky bonding activities." I want to get to know the community and hopefully influence some of you to do the same.

The first opportunity I decided to take was joining the prom committee. It felt like just the thing to jump-start me into the "high school experience." I was looking for. Of course, we're just getting started, but when I signed up I got this thrill of being a part of something, and I realized that I wanted to get involved with not only prom but with the rest of what BlueSky has to offer.

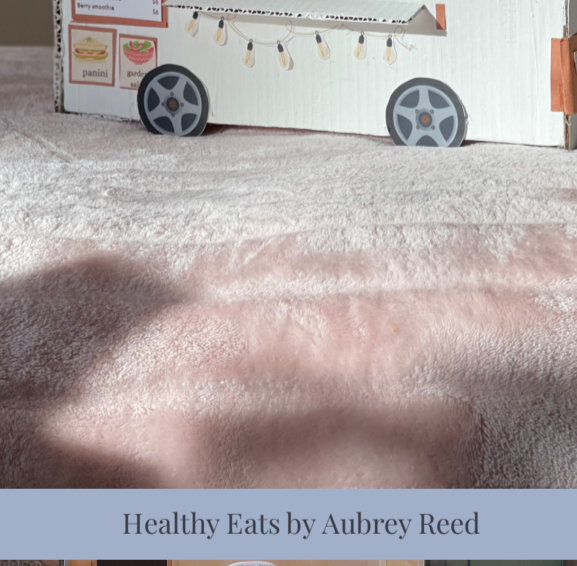
I want this column to be about trying new things and being an active member of our online community. I want to get to know you- BlueSky! My first plan of attack for the month of March is to make it to a lunch bunch and see what that is all about. Feel free to join me on this ride and come along to any lunch bunch you can make it to.

I can't wait to share my journey here under "Bonding with BlueSky" with all of you!



## Student Work

Food trucks from the 8th Grade BioVenture class



Healthy Eats by Aubrey Reed



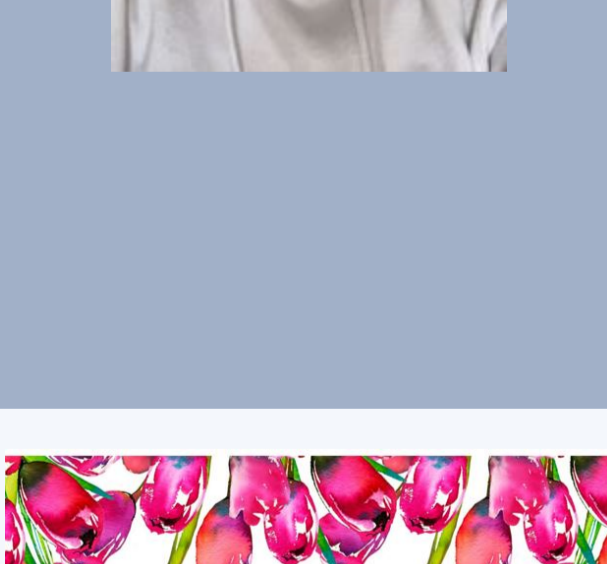
The Pizza Truck by Gracie Mart



The Cheesery by Sam Madison

BlueSky offers service learning through its [Honors English](#) course.

[Service Learning by Chelsea Orzoff](#)



## Mark Your Calendar

- March 20-31, 2022: No school (staff only)
- March 24, 2022: Last day of third quarter
- March 25-April 3, 2022: No school
- April 4, 2022: First day of fourth quarter
- May 10, 2022: Junior/Senior Prom
- May 16, 2022: No school
- June 3, 2022: Last day of school
- June 11, 2022: Graduation

[READ MORE](#)

## Resources

Contact Information for Questions and Resources  
Main Line: 651-642-0888  
[Staff List with Contact Information](#)

Authorizer - [Clariv Schools](#) (651)-234-0900  
Innovative Quality Schools

- Office - enrollment, transcripts, record requests  
Amy Larsen - *Superintendent/Executive Director*  
Luan Duich - *Principal Assistant Director*  
Cathy Parker - *Director of Student Support Services*  
Beth O'Connell - *Director of Students*  
Heidi VanderHoven - *Director of Special Education*  
Katie Lee - *Student Information Specialist*  
Tina Heston - *Registrar*  
Melissa Vahr - *Testing Coordinator*  
Sarah Mincer - *Admin Assistant*

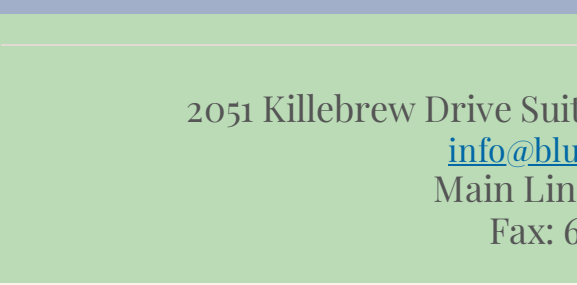
- Counselors - scheduling and class changes  
Dawn Mensing  
Grant Cameron  
Amy Chisling  
Heidi Anderson  
Cathy Anderson-Bickmann

- Advisors - navigating school  
Laura Wieleck  
Heidi Housh  
Diana Nicol  
Carrie Chisling  
Sean Miller  
Nath Hansen  
Hanna Coleman  
Karen Kraco  
Patrick Karr

- Social Workers - school, family, and personal concerns, well-being, crisis assistance  
Carolin Elsch  
Crista Hamrad  
Casha Reher  
April Schauberg  
Lynn Biche

- Supplemental  
Heidi Housh  
Janette Wilkibring

## COVID-19 Updates



### Staying Sanitary

Staying healthy and safe is one of our top priorities for staff, students, and parents and guardians. At the office, we are practicing social distancing and keeping surfaces and offices sanitary.

Remember to check the CDC's guidelines and Governor Walz's regulations to stay safe!

- <https://www.governor.gov/covid-19/news/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>



### Coming to BlueSky

If there is a need to come in, there is a form on Moodle for students to fill out. If you are coming in, it is called "Learning Center Registration" and it is on the homepage under the "Student Learning Center" tab. Once they have filled it out, Katie Shealy will reach out to you to confirm if the time and date will work. Katie will also send out a reminder of the COVID protocols and other information for the Learning Center.

We will be requiring masks, six-feet, and pre-screening for symptoms for everyone's safety!

[BlueSky 2021-2022 COVID-19 Plan](#)