

July 21, 2020

Dear USD #365 Parents and Students:

USD #365 has been working on plans and procedures for the 2020-21 school year. Many of the following items came as recommendations from the federal, state and local levels. The safety precautions and requirements we are obligated to follow will change the school environment at all levels for the coming year. **More information will be coming in the next few weeks!**

Our main focus is on student and staff safety as we go through this pandemic period. As we prepare for the next school year, I want to provide you with a glimpse of how learning will look different for USD #365 during the 2020-21 school year:

Academic Schedule

The goal of USD #365 is to offer **Traditional in-classroom instruction** that will take place in the school building (s). As an alternative, Remote Learning (classes outside the school facilities), will be available to assist our students and families who may be dealing with health issues and other concerns. Those who would prefer their student (s) be in the remote learning environment for the 2020-2021 school year should consult with their school's principal. Building Principals will be available beginning August 3, 2020. If school facilities are shut down during any part of the coming year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all students will move to a remote learning environment (there could be some limited in school building programs) for a specific period of time.

Transportation

The issue of safe transportation is probably one of the biggest concerns we have as a school district. Our focus is on how to safely transport students and provide safety to our transportation personnel. **Bus riders may be required to wear a face mask while being transported.** Temperature screening will also take place before boarding the buses. We will also encourage siblings (families) to sit next to each other on buses. Buses will be full, so to ensure safety we are asking all riders and families for your patience and cooperation during these unusual times.

Food Service

An alternative breakfast and lunch schedule may be implemented in each building in order to comply with six (6) foot distancing guidelines, where applicable.

Technology

USD #365 has purchased additional technology to allow students to revert to more remote learning throughout the year, if necessary.

Athletics

At the present time, the fall activity season (cross country, golf, volleyball, football, dance, cheerleading, etc.) will begin as scheduled. Questions on spectators at contests, snack bars and other safety measures will be distributed during the month of August or as soon as possible.

Safety Concerns

USD #365's number one goal is student and staff safety. Temperature checks will take place each morning as students and staff enter the school facilities. **Any students with a fever will be immediately sent home.**

Symptoms of COVID-19 (KDHE)

- Fever (common<measured at 100 F or higher)
- Headache
- General Aches/Pains
- Fatigue/Weakness
- Extreme Exhaustion
- Cough (common)
- Shortness of Breath
- Diarrhea

Parents: if your child (ren) develop symptoms or are exposed to COVID-19 you should immediately communicate with their health care provider, the county health department, and their school (s) to initiate quarantine or other recommended procedures.

Safety Procedures

- Face Masks or Face Shields will be required in student occupied school buildings for a period (s) of time. This is based on the present Governor's Executive Order 20-59. There may be some exception to the governor's order, such as while eating, individual health issues, etc. **Parents are asked to provide their student (s) with a face mask or shield for school.**
- All facilities will be cleaned throughout the day based on CDC and guidance from the State Health Department.
- Parents and visitors are asked to call or e-mail the school when needing assistance. We will limit the number of outside individuals and visitors entering the schools.
- All visitors allowed in school buildings will be required to wear a mask while in the building (s).
- Water fountains will not be accessible, except for the bottle filling stations. We encourage students to bring a water bottle from home.
- The only outside food that is permissible will be student lunches. No food for parties will be allowed in the buildings during the year, unless approved by the building principal.
- Recess time may be staggered to allow smaller groups of children on the playgrounds. Field trips will be limited and encouraged to be virtual.
- The use of school facilities during the 2020-21 school year by outside organizations or groups will be limited.

These changes and others, in response to COVID-19, will enable us to provide the very best education and one that is safe and rewarding for each and every USD #365 student. The changes outlined above are how we will begin the school year, but it is our great hope that these restrictions will not be permanent. USD #365 will continue to monitor the mandates issued by state and federal agencies and we will respond accordingly as we plan for the new school year. Regardless of what "normal" will look like in the future, USD #365 will continue its mission of preparing our students to be successful young people.

More information will be coming in the days ahead as we prepare to begin the new school year. The starting date of school is To Be Determined, based on a final decision of the State Board of Education.

If you have any questions, please contact USD #365.

Sincerely,

Don Blome
USD #365
Superintendent of Schools