

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As our school board and administration continue to work together to formulate the best reopening plan possible I wanted to take the time to touch base with you about several things from this week. On Monday, July 27th the school board passed a few items concerning our face-coverings policy, remote learning, and the opening day of school for students.

The deadline for choosing between in-person or remote learning has been extended one week to Friday, August 7th. Also, the opening day of school for students will now be Monday, August 24th. This now gives us a full week to train our staff on technology, apps, and blended learning techniques that will be utilized throughout the year as well as prepare them for how we will operate. In addition, our hope is the governor and the Wayne County Health Department will give us their finalized guidelines soon and we, in turn, can put the finishing touches on our plan to be shared with you. Many of you have contacted me with some very good questions concerning health and safety that I have only been able to give you partial responses.

One answer I can now give you is in regards to face coverings and their usage. Our district will follow the guidelines set forth by the governor and the health department. In the governor's most recent mandate of masks being worn in public places, he excluded schools as one of those places and has told schools to use his previous guidelines. The guidance from both of these public entities states that face-coverings are only "recommended" for schools and not "required" Therefore, the district is leaving the decision in the hands of each family to make the choice about whether to have your child wear a face-covering and we will not be requiring it to be worn.

Please be aware that we will be putting in place as many of the recommendations as possible. So students will be put as far apart as we can put them in each class. However, the size of the room and the number of students scheduled for that period will dictate this. Those numbers will be affected by the number of students who choose to come back to school or stay online. At times we may be able to get 6 ft apart but in some cases, it may only be 2-3ft. Again we will make every effort to social distance when we can. An example of this will be in the serving of our lunches. We will no longer serve 200 students at a time and will reduce that to 100 or less. That will only leave 4-5 kids per table. One grade level will likely eat in classrooms for lunch where we can space out the desks. Another case will be only traveling the halls in one direction with one grade level at a time rather than all 300 students in the hall together going in both directions. We will provide sanitizer and increase handwashing as well as wiping frequently touched surfaces. Our custodial staff will be disinfecting common areas such as restrooms more times throughout the day and the entire building nightly.

In an effort to help assist you with your decision about remote learning, I want to clarify as much as possible about our use of the online platform called Edgenuity for our middle school learners. We chose

Edgenuity because it allows students and families some flexibility that other programs don't. Students do not have to be on Edgenuity at specific times of the day to complete lessons or watch instructors. Lessons are prerecorded and can be viewed and completed at any time. Students can work at their own pace as long as they are not in the "red" on the pacing guide. If the pacing guide indicates they have fallen behind then they will need to begin spending more time and may be given specific deadlines to complete things. The program allows us to also release the number of assignments at any given time to help them not get overwhelmed. One question I have been getting asked a lot is, "If/when I chose to come back will the remote students be in the same place curriculum wise as the in-person students?" Ideally, that's what we're shooting for and why we have stated that the choice you make has to be for a semester. It will be our goal to end the semester with everyone at the same place or as close to it as we can get. I will be instructing those staff members in charge of guiding the remote program to be aware of what pace our in-person teachers are instruction at and vice versa. It will be critical that we coordinate that effort to the best of our ability to ensure any transition we have to make is as seamless as possible.

While these times have left us wondering about what the future has in store for us and a longing to get back to "normal", I want you to know that no matter what your decision is with regards to your child's education our goal will be to deliver the best learning experience we possibly can. It may not always be perfect but if you're patient and communicate your needs we will work to achieve it. Whatever and however we need to deliver that learning experience I can assure you that my staff and I are committed to that goal.

Thank you for choosing to be a "Bobcat"