

DEVILS LAKE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1

1601 College Drive North, Devils Lake, ND 58301
(701) 662-7640 (FAX) 662-7646

August 12, 2020

Dear Parents/Families,

Devils Lake Public Schools continues preparations for the 2020-2021 school year and items are starting to come together. At our school board meeting on Monday, August 10, 2020, our school board approved our Health & Safety Smart Restart Plan which can be accessed by going to our district website at <http://www.devils-lake.k12.nd.us/>. The plan is under the new COVID-19 tab on the very top of the page. It is important to note that this plan will continue to be a working document that will be reviewed and updated according to the most current guidance on COVID-19 from the Department of Health and our local health organizations. Additionally, this plan is not going to be able to cover every single situation or scenario that may come up, however, we will attempt to provide guidance to some situations that may arise. The overall goal is to provide a safe and thorough reintegration plan for our students and staff.

I will now share some very important information as it pertains to where we are currently. Again, I want to reiterate, this is where we are as of August 12, 2020, and we will adjust to the state, county, and community needs.

As determined by our Assessment Team and recommended by our School Board, the Devils Lake Public Schools will start in instructional phase #3. High school and middle school students will be attending school on an alternating schedule between in-person and distance learning. This is to limit daily enrollment, accommodate for physical distancing and allow for easier contact tracing. Students will be placed in groups A or B. Group A will attend school in-person on Monday, Wednesday and every other Friday. Group B will attend school in-person on Tuesday, Thursday and every other Friday. On the days that the students are not in-person, they will be expected to attend school at a distance using their devices. More information about what group your child is in will be shared by individual school buildings.

In our instructional phase #3, elementary school students will have school in the building with new health & safety requirements, which are further outlined in the plan. I will cover some of the key points in this letter. Elementary students have different needs and the elementary configuration does not have students moving from classroom to classroom, making contact tracing much easier. As the situation changes, our instructional phase will change. You can get more information regarding the different instructional phases within our plan on page 12 of the document.

When looking at our instructional phases, you will see that **every** family will have the option for Virtual Learning at every grade level. All instruction would occur through an online educational platform, using a third party program and monitored by district staff. If you decide to opt-in to Virtual Learning, it will be a semester commitment. The students/families will have the option to rejoin the class in the school setting at the end of the semester but not before the semester is over. Parents/families interested in this option will need to make that commitment by Friday, August 21st. For more information regarding the Virtual Learning option, please contact your child's school building.

More information regarding in-person learning in instructional phase #3 is below. Please carefully read and review this information.

What to expect: In-Person instruction in Phase #3:

- **Increased safety procedures will be implemented at each building.**
 - **Health Screenings** - Parents are asked to screen their children each day before sending them to school. Staff are asked to screen themselves each day before coming to school. Please use the screening guidance sheet that is provided in this plan and in the email that was sent out to all parents.
 - **Hand Hygiene** - hand washing and hand sanitizer will be used during specific times throughout the day which are outlined in our plan. Students will be expected to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer throughout the day.
 - **Face Coverings** - Families will be responsible for providing and washing face coverings. Face coverings will be required of students and staff in all situations where social distancing is not possible. For example, transitioning between classes, using the bathroom, attending classes outside of designated class/grouping, and in breakfast and lunch lines. Firebird face masks will be available for sale at each one of the buildings for \$5 each.
 - **Cleaning and Disinfecting** - students & staff will be asked to sanitize/wipe their shared working spaces and materials throughout the day. Additional procedures/protocols surrounding cleaning/disinfecting routines can be found in the district's health and safety plan.
 - **Building** - Access to our buildings will be limited throughout the school day. We are asking parents NOT to enter the building when dropping off or picking up their child. Each building will have a designated sick room for situations where students or staff will need to be quarantined.
 - **Classrooms** - Your child will keep personal supplies to themselves. Students will be placed in similar groups whenever possible. Additional procedures / protocols surrounding building/classroom routines can be found in the district's health and safety plan.
 - **Transportation** - Distancing on a school bus will be unachievable. We encourage parents to consider alternate transportation for their children. Students and drivers are ***required*** to wear face coverings when on the bus. Students are ***required*** to use hand sanitizer when getting on and leaving the bus.
 - **School breakfast/lunch** - we will have new procedures when serving breakfast/lunch. These will accommodate physical distancing, eliminate self-service, and move from touch-pad to scanning at checkout. Students may be assigned to eat in rooms other than the lunchroom or commons areas to allow physical distancing. These locations will vary by school.
- **Technology** - Each student in grades 1 - 12 will be provided a personal electronic device to use on a daily basis, which will either be an iPad or Chromebook. This will allow students and teachers to transition smoothly between face to face and distance learning as needed.
- **First Four Weeks Focus** - The first four weeks of school we will be focused on establishing strong student relationships / social-emotional learning and teaching students digital competency skills so they can effectively learn both at school and home. Additionally, each student will be assessed within the first four weeks of school as required by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
- **Parent Expectations**
 - **You are expected to keep your student(s) home** if they are displaying any illness **OR** COVID-19 related symptoms as defined by the NDDoH, **OR** if a member of their household or a close contact has been quarantined or has tested positive for COVID-19.

- **You are expected to notify your student's school immediately** if your student has COVID-19-related symptoms, has been tested for COVID-19 and is awaiting results, or is in self-quarantine because of their household or close contact's COVID-19 status.
- **You are expected to pick up your student(s) from school immediately** if requested by school officials due to COVID-19 symptoms, close contact, or emerging scenarios.
- **Activities and Athletics** will follow our DLPS Return to Play guidelines and Eastern Dakota Conference guidelines for participation and competition. Decisions on practice, competition, and spectatorship will be made according to local and regional data and health official guidance.
- **Statement of Best Intentions:** Despite taking every reasonable precaution, there is no guarantee that our schools, students and staff will be without risk as it relates to COVID-19. If a class/school closure is necessary, that decision will be made in consultation with the Department of Health and Ramsey County Health. If this happens, the district will provide information to the parents/families of this closure using the instant alert system. Families should prepare in case their child's class/school is temporarily closed. For information regarding our Classroom and School Closure Matrix, please refer to page 18 of the plan.

Additional information to consider:

- All students need reliable access to the internet at home in the event of learning remotely at any point during the 2020-2021 school year. For those families who do not have access, please visit gondtc.com/lifeline or www.Midco.com/Lifeline and apply for the Lifeline Assistance program. More information is also available on our district website.
- Ensure your contact information in PowerSchool is up-to-date. If your information needs to be updated, please contact the main office at your child's school.
- Stay up-to-date on student vaccinations. The North Dakota Department of Health reported a decrease in the number of vaccinations administered during COVID-19. You can find more information about which vaccines are required for school at health.nd.gov/immunize.
- It is important to continue safety precautions, including social distancing, wearing masks in public settings, etc. Each of these steps help to reduce transmission and keep the number of cases low.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we all work together to plan for the upcoming school year while keeping our students, families, and staff healthy and safe. If you have any questions, please feel free to call your child's school or the district office. We are here to support you and your child and are willing to do everything we can for the safety of our students and staff.

Sincerely,

Matt Bakke
 Superintendent
 #gofirebirds