



Grant Community High School District 124

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September 30, 2020

Dear Grant Community High School Staff and Families,

As promised, this letter serves as a formal update on our planning efforts for the 2020/21 school year. We appreciate the patience you have provided as we determined how best to manage a multitude of procedures and protocols that, quite honestly, have been unfamiliar to those of us in education prior to March, 2020. That those procedures and protocols have not been consistent among advising organizations and prone to change frequently, only made the challenge to plan that much more difficult.

However, those details aside for a moment, I am most pleased to report that we are taking steps to increase the number of students on campus beginning October 19, 2020. As mentioned in my mid-September update, we have experienced success in welcoming back small groups of students in the Transitions, Learning Opportunities, Remote Learning Support and Driver Education Programs. We are incredibly excited to begin the process of bringing more students back to school for in-person learning.

As we plan for a more robust transition to in-person learning, we have carefully developed a plan that adheres, to the greatest extent possible, to the safety protocols prescribed by the State of Illinois, Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and Lake County Health Department (LCHD). This plan takes into consideration health metrics, personnel, resources needed to maximize student and staff safety under the established guidelines, including cleaning and sanitization, physical space, transportation, and much more.

Health metrics we are utilizing include [Return to School Metrics](#) developed and provided in recent weeks by the Lake County Health Department and [COVID-19 School Metrics](#) also developed and provided recently by the Illinois Department of Public Health. We will use these metrics in combination with one another, update the data weekly, and provide them as a COVID-19 Metric Dashboard on the [District website](#). While the metrics are just one of the considerations for a return to in-person learning, the metrics, at this time, indicate conditions are favorable to proceed with hybrid/blended learning plans.

Our [Blended Learning Plan 2.0](#) reflects the learning plan put forth in July, albeit modified in order to reduce the number of students in attendance at any given time. Effective October 19, we will begin in-person learning, on an opt-in basis for Phase 1 of the Plan, with approximately ¼ of students present on any given day. Students will be assigned to an in-person learning day in alphabetical groupings by last name, details of which can be found in the [Plan](#). All students from

the same household will be scheduled for in-person learning on the same day. **As mentioned above, returning to campus for Phase 1 is voluntary.**

As such, we are asking families read over [Blended Learning Plan 2.0](#) and then complete this brief [form](#) to notify us if your student(s) would like to return to campus on their assigned day and if District transportation is required. This form is due by 3:00 P.M. on October 7th. Families must opt-in to in-person instruction for Phase 1. For families that do not complete the survey, students will continue with synchronous/remote learning at home. Important for everyone to know, while in this phase, teachers will continue to teach synchronously every period, with some students attending in the classroom and many students attending from their homes.

It may become necessary to return to entirely remote learning if conditions require it. This Blended Remote Learning Plan has been developed to allow for a seamless transition between blended learning and fully remote learning, if needed. Conditions which could require a shift back to fully remote learning include a state-wide mandate, high community positivity rates, a local outbreak combined with the directive of LCHD to close, personnel shortages, or other conditions that make in-person learning unsafe or impractical.

We will be presenting decision making details and highlights of the Blended Learning Plan 2.0 on Monday, October 5th at 7:00 P.M. via Zoom. The link to attend the meeting can be found [here](#). You are encouraged to attend and we will make every attempt to answer any questions you have that evening.

We look forward to learning of your decision after you've had time to review the [Blended Learning Plan 2.0](#) and attend the stakeholder meeting on October 5th. This Plan has been developed with safety in mind, but will require a great deal of cooperation to implement effectively. All procedures fully align with those recommended by ISBE and IDPH, but may not directly align with more stringent recommendations provided by the local health department. We encourage families that feel comfortable with the Plan to return for Phase 1, acknowledging that students will need to cooperate with all safety measures in place to participate.

While this endeavor will take a great deal of communication and cooperation, we are incredibly excited to welcome additional students back to campus on October 19th! So that we can make final preparations to welcome students, Friday, October 16th will be a Blended Remote Learning Planning Day for faculty and staff, with no student attendance in-person or online. This additional planning day will not require any changes to the District calendar. Districts are permitted up to 5 Remote and Blended Remote Learning Planning Days this school year only to plan for transitions among learning options.

As always, if you have any questions feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Christine A. Sefcik, Ed.D.
Superintendent