

WORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT 127

DISTRICT OFFICE DR. ROSEMARY LUCAS ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER 11218 SOUTH RIDGELAND AVENUE, WORTH, IL 60482



Thursday, July 23, 2020

Dear Worth 127 Parents and Guardians,

Over the past week, the administrative team has received numerous valid questions about the start of the school year, which tentatively starts on Wednesday, August 26. As a way to share the questions with answers, the COVID Advisory Committee compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions and developed the best answers possible at this time. Please remember, the answers are tentative due to COVID information changing rapidly. In addition, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) just today published a new 130-page document pertaining to Return-To-Learn planning that I will need to review with the administrative team in order to be sure that we are interpreting ISBE guidelines appropriately. Please review the FAQ's below, which includes an overall summary of the parent survey published in June.

Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support and patience.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mark T. Fleming
Superintendent

Return-To-Learn Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- 1. Is District 127 planning for all Remote Learning to start the school year?** Our plan is to offer a choice of Remote Learning or Blended Learning. Tentatively, both options will be available.
- 2. What will be the school hours?** Our Remote Learning and Blended Learning plans will ensure 5 clock hours of a combination of live and recorded instruction and school work. The school day will start at 8:20 a.m. for junior high students and 8:30 a.m. for elementary students. On in-person instruction days, junior high students will be dismissed at 11:50 a.m. and elementary students will be dismissed at 12:00 p.m.

- 3. Why will students not be in school for a full day?** One reason is to eliminate large crowd gatherings for lunch periods in which all students would have masks removed. Another reason is to minimize the number of hours students have to be confined to one location while wearing masks.
- 4. Do students and have to wear masks in the buildings at all the times?** Yes, all students, staff, and visitors must wear a mask that covers both their mouth and nose at all times.
- 5. Can students wear a face shield instead of a mask?** Generally, no. Face shields are not effective protection against coronavirus and should only be used in situations when other methods of protection are not feasible.
- 6. What if I do not want my child to wear a mask?** The Illinois State Board of Education requires all occupants within a school building to have a mask covering mouths and noses. If a student does not feel comfortable wearing a mask, then you should opt for Remote Learning.
- 7. Will the school offer masks to students that forget them?** Yes.
- 8. How will lunch periods be handled?** Breakfast and lunch will be eaten at home. Families that participate in our breakfast and lunch program will be asked to pre-order meals on a monthly basis. Lunch and breakfast will be bagged together to take home at the end of each day. If your child is Remote Learning, we will have designated pick-up times.
- 9. Will classrooms have hand sanitizer?** There will be a touchless hand sanitizer station in each classroom.
- 10. Can instruction be live-streamed?** No, not as a general practice.
- 11. Is it possible to block some of the streets to provide an open learning environment?** No.
- 12. Regarding the Remote Learning Request form due on July 26th. It states that if a parent chooses remote learning, it will have to stay that way for trimester 1 but what about the flip side (can parents opt for remote once hybrid starts)?** Yes.
- 13. What will Blended Learning look like?** The student population choosing Blended Learning will be divided into 2 groups. This will reduce class sizes by 50%. Each group will be assigned 2 days of in-school instruction and 3 days of remote instruction.
- 14. How will attendance be taken?** Teachers will take attendance every morning. If a student is not present in-person or not present in the Google Classroom, then the student will be marked absent. Parents must continue to call school every day that their child will not be participating class, whether in-person or remotely.

- 15. What is the current percentage of positive people in Worth?** Please check the IL Department of Public Health website.
- 16. If we choose In-person Learning, how are we accounting for people who have traveled?** The district will clearly communicate our safety guidelines and trust that families and staff will be honest in their responses.
- 17. What is our threshold for closing schools and going to all Remote Learning?** the district will follow guidelines from the IL State Board of Education and the IL Department of Public Health.
- 18. If it is on the horizon for remote due to an uptick in cases. Will teachers have enough time to plan lessons that go along with grade-level curriculum?** The district will be offering a minimum of 10 days of summer professional development prior to the first day of school. The district will also provide articulation time for teachers to plan together.
- 19. Is there a safety sanitation class that teachers and staff will take in order to learn the proper safety precautions to take regarding our students for handling COVID-19?** All staff members are required to participate in all state-mandated trainings.
- 20. Will temperature screenings be required and documented to enter the building?** Parents will be required to self-certify on a daily basis. Temperatures will only be taken at school as needed.
- 21. If so, will the temperatures be documented? If they are documented, where will the information be kept, and for how long?** Information will be stored and maintained as a student record.
- 22. Is there any plan for outdoor education- possibly setting up tents outside for outdoor learning so students can be exposed to fresh air learning rather than indoor recirculated air?** Outdoor spaces will be utilized as much as possible.
- 23. Will the district properly filter the air systems in the building? Is an update needed, or upgrade to current systems?** All schools have newer HVAC systems. The air filters have been upgraded and are regularly maintained.
- 24. Will there be any sports or gym classes? If so, how will we handle the proper sanitation of equipment that will be used?** This has yet to be determined.
- 25. Will junior high students be using lockers?** Per the IL State Board of Education guidance, student lockers should not be assigned since it will create large clusters in the hallways. Instead, we plan for students to carry their belongings with them to class.
- 26. Will classrooms, lockers, surfaces, computers, etc., be sanitized on a daily basis? If so, what chemicals will be used?** The district will follow sanitation procedures per recommendations of the CDC and IL Department of Public Health. All areas will be

cleaned and sanitized on a daily basis. Only EPA-approved cleaners and disinfectants will be used. Every student will have their own Chromebook. Sharing of supplies will not be allowed.

- 27. If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, will I be informed?** Any person identified to have been in close contact (within 1-5 feet) of a person who tested positive will be notified. The school nurse, in collaboration with the administration, will notify those individuals of the need to quarantine. Students may participate in Remote Learning during a quarantine period.
- 28. If a student or staff member becomes symptomatic, how will the district handle quarantine?** Each building will have a designated quarantine area.
- 29. Will temperature checks be required of all students, staff, and visitors?** Parents will be required to self-certify that they have checked their children for symptoms before sending them to school each day. The district will provide a self-certification form that each child must have in their hand every day in order to be allowed into the building. Parents will be checking for a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. Individuals who have a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or any known symptom of COVID-19 may not enter the building. Individuals who exhibit symptoms should be referred to a medical provider for evaluation and treatment and be given information about when they can return to school. A self-certification may **not** be completed at the beginning of the year for the entire year.
- 30. Will the school require all students to receive a vaccine? If not, will the students that don't have the vaccine be allowed into school?** When a vaccine becomes available, the district will follow guidelines from the IL State Board of Education and the IL Department of Public Health.
- 31. Does the school have adequate nursing staff and mental health staff available for the challenges that the students will be encountering during this procedure?** Each school has a nurse and a social worker.
- 32. I have read reports that the NFL will be doing COVID testing daily on their players, as they are concerned about the health and safety of the players. Will the school also offer COVID testing or partner with an organization that offers this?** We do not plan to do COVID testing at school.
- 33. Are school physicals still required?** Yes, physicals are still required whether students are In-person Learning or Remote Learning.
- 34. Are we offering extracurricular sports?** The South Suburban Junior High School Conference has temporarily postponed fall sports/activities.

35. What were the results of the Parent/Guardian Return-to-School Survey sent out in June? We had 390 responses to the survey. The following is a summary of the results as of July 10, 2020.

What is your first choice for returning to school this fall?

390 responses

