

WORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT 127

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



Friday, July 17, 2020

Dear Worth 127 Parents and Guardians,

As you are probably aware, some, but not all, districts are in the process of publishing **tentative** Return-To-Learn plans. Although my team and I are working daily on different options for returning to school, we are not ready to share a specific plan. There are multiple reasons for not sharing a plan at this time. One reason is that the Illinois State Board of Education, in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Health, continues to make revisions on guidelines for returning to school. Another reason is to allow the COVID Advisory Committee comprised of teachers, support staff, parents, and administrators more time to process what seems to be never-ending information. The COVID Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, July 8, and will be meeting two more times over the next two weeks. A final reason for not publishing a plan yet is because Worth's first day of school, August 26, is about a week later than most schools in the area. The later start date was intentionally planned to allow as much time as possible for the Worthwoods renovation summer project.

One tentative option being developed for parents is full-time Remote Learning. This option is for parents that do not want their child to wear a **face mask**, which **will be required for all in-person learning**, or any other reason for not wanting their child to attend in-person learning. For planning purposes, next week, a **Remote Learning Request** form will be emailed to parents and posted on the website. This form will be for parents choosing Remote Learning over any type of in-person learning for any reason whatsoever. The form will not ask parents to provide a basis for choosing Remote Learning. The primary purpose of the **Remote Learning Request** form is to determine how many students will attend school via Remote Learning, which will allow the administrative team to develop plans for other tentative options.

Options for returning to school will be based on the Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE) guidelines. **IF** in-person learning remains an option at the start of the school year, school hours will possibly be shortened, and students attending in-person learning will possibly be split into two groups, such as A and B groups to meet ISBE guidelines.

The reason for stating **IF** in-person learning remains an option is because there is the possibility of all students learning remotely at the start of the school year. During Governor JB Pritzker's press conference on Wednesday, July 15, he announced new health region boundaries. There are now eleven health regions instead of four. I find the timing of this precarious as COVID cases across the country increase, and schools are starting to make plans to start the school year. In other words, will Governor JB Pritzker mandate remote learning for school districts in regions with a high number of COVID cases? I don't know, but I do know that Governor JB Pritzker made a statement informing parents to prepare for a school year like none other the day after releasing

the new health regions. Please consider reviewing the Governor's reports by clicking on the following links:

[Pritzker warns parents to expect a school year unlike any other](#)

[Thursday, July 16: Coronavirus Illinois: IL reports 1,257 COVID-19 cases, 25 deaths](#)

I realize this letter leaves you with more questions than answers, but please know that every possible scenario is being reviewed. We need to take the time to collaborate and consider the health and safety of all students, families, and staff. Unfortunately, there is not an ideal scenario for returning to school, but I do know that we will continue to do our absolute best, given the current circumstances. My plan now is for next week's update to provide more specifics on the Return-To-Learn plan. Still, please remember any plan may need to change based on the number of COVID cases and guidance from Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois State Board of Education.

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

Sincerely,

Dr. Mark T. Fleming
Superintendent