



August 20, 2020

Dear Families,

It is so hard to believe the end of August is upon us already. First, I would like to thank you for your responses to our survey on your preference for remote or in-person learning. We were close to getting 100% returned. In addition to informing us of your choice, we were able to update your email addresses making communication easier and more efficient. Next, I want to update you on some of the changes you will see for those of you who will be in-person in just a couple short weeks.

As you can imagine, our school day will look very different than it has in the past. In order to follow the guidance recommended from the state, and do our part in helping to keep our community safe, we have put many new procedures in place. I will start by telling you about our arrival and dismissal procedures. Before students even enter our building, whether they come to school by bus, car, bike or walk, they will need to have their temperature checked by a staff member and answer two screening questions.

- All bus riders, since their screenings will be done at their bus stops, will enter the building through our main doors on Library Avenue. We are strongly encouraging students have an adult wait with them at their bus stops. Also, due to the screenings being done at the bus stops and the traffic patterns in the city, please be understanding that times given are only a best estimate. Upon arrival at school, students will be able to take a bagged breakfast waiting for them at the door and head directly to their classrooms.
- Car riders will follow our normal procedure when entering our semi-circle, **BUT**, students are to **REMAIN** in their vehicles until a staff member comes to the vehicle and takes their temperature and asks the two screening questions. Assuming they are good to go, 3rd and 4th graders will enter the building using the stairs on our Church Street entrance. Students in 5th and 6th grade will use the handicap entrance (door to the right of semi-circle on Church Street). They, too, will have bagged breakfast available at their entrances to grab and take to class with them.
- Walkers will also need to wait and be checked before going into the building through their respective entrances (based on their grade level) where they will then head straight to their class after grabbing a breakfast.
- Dismissal will be through these same exits based on grade levels. We anticipate arrival and dismissal taking additional time. In order to stagger the number of people leaving the building at the same time, dismissal will be done by grade level and means of departure. (i.e. 3rd grade car riders, 5/6 walkers.) We are asking for your patience and understanding as we all try to navigate these new procedures together.

Some other key points to know as you prepare to return to school:

- We are asking that every student come to school with 2-3 masks labeled with their name and in a case or paper bag. This will provide back up if a mask gets ripped, soiled or lost.
- Practice wearing the mask for longer periods of time. Wearing a mask in and out of a store is much different than having to wear it for long periods of time and having to hold conversations with the mask on. Like anything, practice will make it better!

- We once again had to restructure our classrooms to accommodate our families and teachers choosing to participate in our Remote Learning Academy. If your child's teacher was changed as a result, you will see that change with this mailing.
- All families should expect two Google Meeting invites prior to September 8th. One invite will be coming from RIS Administration to offer time to hear updates and answer questions. This is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 2nd starting at 5:30pm. The second invite will be to your student from their teacher. Whether this is a change or the same teacher from Step Up Day, it will be a good time to connect before students are back to school (in-person or remote).
- We need to continue to restrict visitors from coming into our building. If there is a reason you need to pick up your student before dismissal time, or you need to bring them late to school, we will continue to use the one point of entry located near the cafeteria and Keefe Gym on Library Avenue. However, this too may take longer than usual. The lobby area will only be staffed until 9:00am and then again from 2:00pm to 3:00pm. If you arrive between 9:00am and 2:00pm, you will need to ring the buzzer and wait for someone to come to you. Expect a longer than usual wait. If you are picking up a student for an appointment, know that this will take longer and account for that when you are planning your pick up times.
- If you have committed to and are participating in our Remote Learning Academy, know that this will look differently than it did when we went remote in the spring. Our school day will mimic the schedule of a "typical" school day, meaning the expectation is that instruction occurs between the hours of roughly 8am-3pm. Individual teachers will be explaining specific parameters with their classes and families.
- Some quick answers to some common questions: Yes, students will be eating in their classrooms. Yes, students are able to use the playground (with additional cleaning guidelines) and yes, they will be going outside for recess weather permitting. Yes, students will be staying in their own classrooms for the majority of their day. Yes, we will still be having school pictures, likely outside and will include our remote learners. Yes, all students will have a Chromebook issued by the school with the expectation that they are brought back and forth each day. Chromebooks should be charged nightly at home.
- Open House will be done virtually on Tuesday, September 29th at 5:30pm. More information and link to the meeting will be coming.

Again, I thank you for your patience and understanding during this time of such uncertainty. If you have any specific questions I can answer for you, please don't hesitate to ask. Enjoy your last couple weeks of summer vacation. We are excited to be able to all be together again in some fashion! Know that I will be smiling under my mask!

Best,

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