

To: USD 461 Patrons & Parents
From: USD 461 Superintendent, Juanita Erickson
Date: 07-28-2020
Re: School Re-Opening

We hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer so far and is preparing to return to school. Our Neodesha Leadership Team is also making plans, and we want to let you know where we are in our planning today.

At yesterday's USD 461 Board of Education meeting, our board discussed reopening our schools. Topics included bussing, building entry, food service, academics, activities, while also meeting the educational, physical, and mental needs of our students and their families in a challenging time.

Please know we are using guidance from the Kansas Department of Education, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and the Wilson County Health Department.

Final plans will address three distinct areas: Academics, Operations, and Activities. Our greatest aim is to be thorough and to remain flexible, because we know the COVID-19 situation is likely to change.

Academics

We are offering two options which we feel is most appropriate for Neodesha Schools.

- 1) Family choice of either "In School" using current 461 Curriculum and Instructional Strategies;
or
- 2) "At Home" remote learning with versions of the "Competency-Based; Grade-Banded" format from the Kansas Department of Education.

Both options must take student attendance and must take state assessments.

Information on each option as we currently understand it is below. This information remains subject to change.

- **Option #1 In School**
 - **Families may have the choice of having their child(ren) attend school in our school buildings.** Our learning focus would be on the current USD 461 Curriculum, Instructional Practices, Assessments, and Expectations.
 - **All students, at school would be expected to be engaged in the learning process for a full day.** Those at school will see changes in the way they enter, operate during the day, and leave the school. (See Operations, below, for more information.)
 - **Students who are at school will be recorded as normal attendance in PowerSchool.**
- **Option #2 At-Home Competency-Based; Grade-Banded Instruction**
 - **Families will have the choice of having their child(ren) attend at home through a distance-learning format.** If opting for an at home version, each child(ren) would have to keep a daily log of class activities signed by both the child and the parent to record school time on task. These forms would be emailed weekly to the child's school (Heller Elementary, North Lawn Elementary, and/or Neodesha Middle/High School). Each at-home student would receive daily contact from a teacher during school hours. Parents need to enroll in Neodesha Schools and contact the building principal for more details.

Operations

- Student Attendance Location
 - In School: Length of term designated by grading periods—If families choose the In School option, they need to be at school for a semester before switching to an At-Home model or vice-versa. (Unless the student becomes ill with COVID-19)
 - In the event of a school closure, all students would move to the At-Home model.
 - Schools will refrain from recognizing “perfect attendance” awards.
- Bussing
 - Children will be bussed, but maintaining social distancing on busses is not feasible.
 - Masks will be required of all drivers, paras, & students riding a USD 461 bus.
 - Children will have their temperatures taken before getting on a bus; a bus para may help with this process.
 - Students will have assigned seating.
 - Windows will be lowered for ventilation.
 - Hand sanitizer will be available.
 - Students will load the back of the bus first.
 - Busses will be disinfected daily.
- Building Entry
 - Everyone entering USD 461 schools will be required to wear masks and have temperatures checked.
 - Our schools will determine the safest way for our students to enter the buildings. This may be at the classroom outside door, through a larger number of common doors, or at the current one-entrance system. We’ll use what is considered the best-practice and adjust as necessary.
 - Adult access to our buildings during the school day will be extremely limited. Drop-off of younger children will be either in the parking lots or at the door. Our staff will model appropriate hand-washing procedures and use of hand sanitizers.
 - Staff/students will have access to hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) and disposable gloves.
 - All students will be expected to follow personal hygiene protocols.
 - Daily temperature checks of children, teachers, administrators, and all staff will be taken upon entry.
- Facilities Cleaning
 - Surfaces/classrooms as well as commonly used areas will be disinfected each evening using EPA-registered disinfectants.
 - Custodial staff will enhance the focus of disinfection on common spaces such as gyms, commons, cafeterias, restrooms, etc.
 - Custodial staff will disinfect high-touch surfaces, such as door handles, light switches, faucets, and toilet seats routinely.
 - Equipment used in schools is not shared and is cleaned between uses.
 - Materials and furniture that cannot be washed or disinfected are not used.
- Food Service
 - Meals will be predetermined and provided on a tray that has been pre-filled. (No student self-serve buffet items.)
 - Meals may be served as a grab and go option so students can return to the classroom or other designated location to eat.
 - Additional meal periods may occur to provide social distancing.
 - Cafeteria spacing may occur with one class only.

- Consider the use of additional space for breakfast and lunch service like commons areas and gyms.
- There may be an increase in the number of lunch periods to accommodate spacing protocols.
- Eating breakfast and lunch in the classrooms will be considered but additional cleaning requirements will need to be considered.
- Food Service staff must wash hands before and after meal preparation and feeding, wear gloves and wear a mask.
- Hygiene
 - Students will bring and use personal water bottles.
 - Students will have access to personal school supplies.
 - Restroom breaks will be scheduled and monitored.
 - MS/HS School lockers will not be used. 6th Grade students may use student lockers if staggered times are used to access materials.
 - Staff and children will wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or use hand sanitizer). Particularly upon arrival to school, before and after eating, using the restroom, before and after playing outdoors or using shared spaces, following any contact with bodily fluid, and before exiting the building.
 - School nurse should have personal protective equipment (PPE) that includes gloves, N95 masks, surgical masks, and face shields or other eye protection.
- Symptom Screening
 - Teachers and staff should be provided with education and information on the symptoms of COVID-19 in children so that appropriate and timely recognition may take place if a student develops symptoms during the school day.
 - Families will be empowered by placing the responsibility of screening on the parent/caregiver. Families will be provided a checklist for daily screening prior to school entry. Families will receive clear communication on expectations of self-monitoring and the expectations of students staying home if they have a positive screen.
 - Screen workers and visitors for fever and symptoms of COVID-19 with a questionnaire. Individuals who indicate symptoms on the screening should not report to work. Individuals who start to experience symptoms during the day will be referred to the school nurse. Individuals should be fever-free for 72 hours, without the use of fever reducing medicines, before returning.
 - Employees and children with COVID-19 symptoms should be denied entry to the school and should be sent home promptly for COVID-19 testing at the Public Health Department or their primary care physician's office.
 - Children who start to experience symptoms of respiratory illness, including a fever of 100 degrees F or above and symptoms of other infectious illnesses while at school will be sent home immediately and are advised to get a COVID-19 test at the Public Health Department or their primary care physician's office. While waiting to be picked up, the student will be isolated from other children. Children should be fever-free for 72 hours, without the use of fever reducing medicines, before returning.
 - Upon a positive COVID-19 test of a person associated with the school district, consult with the Public Health Department to determine next steps, including when the person who may be infected, can return to the classroom or work.

Activities

- USD 461 Activities (both extra-curricular and co-curricular) will continue as allowed by KSDE, KDHE, the Wilson County Health Dept., KSHSAA, and the USD 461 School Board.

- The USD 461 Board of Education has determined that students and families who choose the At-Home option for school will NOT be involved in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Look for further updates from the USD 461 athletic director and building principals.

Technology

- All students have access to a personal technology device from Pre-Kindergarten to grade 12.
- In classroom lab settings, disinfectant spray will be used for keyboards between each class period.
- All technology units that come from home will need to be wiped down daily with disinfectant wipes to be used in the classrooms.

After School Program (ASP)

- The ASP program will adhere to all District policies and procedures listed above.
- Classrooms will need to be disinfected and wiped down before ASP students enter the room.
- Some of the routine processes will need to be adjusted due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Additional Information

- Maintenance personnel have increased school cleaning and will use electrostatic sprayers upon their delivery.
- Nurse will develop a detailed protocol for dealing with illnesses.
- USD 461 faculty and staff will follow preventive practices, and will wear masks.
- Age appropriate signage will be displayed throughout the school and classrooms as visual reminders for hand hygiene and social distancing.
- All staff will sign in at the building office and get temperature checked **prior** to reporting to classroom or work area.
- 4 masks will be provided by the District for each student.
- Parents may send masks for their child if they so choose.
- An enrollment link will be released on Monday, August 3rd. We encourage all parents to enroll online.
- Students must be enrolled in USD 461 schooling options of the following: 1. **In school** or 2. **At-Home through a distance learning format**, in order to sustain participation in the Neodesha Promise Scholarship.

We will continue to keep you updated as our plans and protocols develop further. Please know the safety of our students and staff is our top priority as we continue to determine ways to deliver a high-quality education that best prepares our students for the future. We appreciate your support as we work to achieve those goals.