July 23, 2020

Dear SJPS Community,

As we approach the starting date for school, there have been many concerns and questions regarding the plan for St. Johns Public Schools (SJPS). This letter is to provide a preliminary outline of our plans at this point. As you can imagine, any plan may change depending on the status of the pandemic and directives we receive from the State of Michigan. We are preparing for face-to-face instruction within our school buildings. For families not comfortable sending students back to school, we will offer an online instruction option. The current draft plans are below. Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for all students and staff.

Face-to-face, in the building instruction:

- SJPS will follow all safety requirements set forth by the state as outlined in Michigan's 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap.
- Facial coverings will be required for staff and students in grades K-12 while at school. Those who cannot medically tolerate a mask will not be required to do so. There will be opportunities for “mask breaks” at all levels, including while eating meals and at times when students and staff are socially distanced appropriately. The district has ordered two reusable masks for every student and staff person. We will provide disposable masks when needed.
- Hand washing will be reinforced and scheduled for every 2-3 hours. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed in every bus and classroom as well as common areas throughout the buildings.
- Social distancing will be practiced, when feasible.
- Frequently touched surfaces such as light switches, door handles, and bathrooms will undergo cleaning at least every four hours. Student desks will be wiped down after every class period.
- Adult guests/visitors to the school will be restricted.
- Staff and students will be expected to conduct daily self-examinations for COVID-19 symptoms before coming to school.
- Sharing of materials and resources will be limited. Every student will be assigned a chromebook to use for the school year. In grades 6 through 12, a chromebook will be assigned for the student to take home and carry with them on a daily basis much like a textbook. Elementary students will keep their assigned chromebook in the classroom. In the event school must close, students will take their chromebook home for at-home instructional purposes.
- We are working in coordination with the Mid-Michigan Health Department to establish protocol for action if someone in our facilities tests positive for COVID 19.

Online Instruction Option:

- We currently have a team of teachers and administrators working to develop various ways for online instruction. This may vary based on grade level.
● An internet connection will be required for each student.
● The online instruction will be more rigorous and robust than what was expected last spring.
● Students enrolled in online instruction will have similar accountability as expected in face-to-face instruction.
● Student work will receive “letter grades” as opposed to pass/fail grading used in the spring.
● Students choosing online instruction will be expected to remain online for the entire trimester.

There are still many details to be determined, however, we thought it important to inform our families on what to expect from SJPS as the school year draws near. In the near future, you will receive more information, including the process where you will select one of the two instructional methods for each of your students. We are excited to get back to educating the young people of our community!

Respectfully,

Mark Palmer
Superintendent