

17 July, 2020

Dear Parents and Community Members:

As a follow up to last week's *Update*, we have now received over 150 pages of guidance from the Governor and the State Education Department and we are continuing our group work on developing three reopening models – fully open, fully closed with remote learning, or a hybrid of these two models. We will be communicating with you in the days ahead as to what each of these models looks like, but for each of the plans that include in-person attendance, you can safely assume the following conditions will be in place:

1. Continued attention to ***safety and security*** of students, staff, and, visitors (where they are allowed in our buildings.)
2. ***Health checks/screenings*** of students at various times using various methods throughout the day (please be sure to follow the usual guidelines as to when to keep your child home. See <https://www.bscsd.org/health> for more information);
3. Advanced and more frequent ***cleaning and disinfection*** of buses and buildings;
4. Protocol for how we will address and ***isolate students or staff who become ill*** during the school day;
5. Students and staff ***wearing of masks/face coverings*** on buses and in our buildings with certain exceptions;
6. ***Social distancing*** requirements and guidelines at bus stops, on buses, when entering the school building, in the school building, and in our classrooms/labs;
7. Restrictions on ***how and where breakfast and lunches will be made available/served***;
8. ***Training availability for students, staff, and parents*** on health and safety protocols and effective components of remote learning; and
9. ***Continuous communications*** through consistent form and various means including website, email, social media, direct mailings, voice/text messages, video messages and presentations.

The determination for which plan(s) we will implement will depend on:

1. The Governor's decision during the week of August 1-7 as to whether we will be allowed to reopen for in-person instruction. This will depend on whether the daily infection rate for our state-designated region – the Capital District Region - remains below 5 percent using a 14-day average; and
2. If the Governor allows schools to be reopened, whether he will then determine at a date prior to September 5 that we must close again. This will depend on whether the Capital Region Infection Rate rises over 9 percent after August 1.

So what can be done in the meantime? As noted last week, I ask that you please continue to work with your children on practicing the following:

- Proper handwashing techniques, including the amount of time
- Properly containing a cough or a sneeze into their elbow
- Wearing a mask in required places for their protection and the protection of others
- Distancing themselves from others when in public settings

Also, as there is the possibility/likelihood that at least a portion of our students, particularly our elementary students, will eat in classrooms, I would ask that you stress the importance with your children of not sharing food with others during breakfast and lunch. Under this model, for those who send your child(ren) to school with snacks and lunch, I would ask that you ensure that no peanut-based products are brought to school given the number of students who have various levels of sensitivities to these foods.

One last item that I am confident that we can anticipate as we move through the coming weeks and months of schools is the likelihood of having to change models based on the health measures noted above. While limited in-person schooling may be allowed in September, this may change in October. This is certainly not something that any of us are looking forward to, but we will nonetheless be as prepared as possible. To that end, we will give you as much advanced notice as possible of any such changes and what the implications will be. We are hopeful that businesses and employers will join with us in being as flexible as possible and assisting all of you to the extent that they are able with child care options, flexible hours, and work-from-home options. Managing our way through a pandemic is a team effort that will rely on each and every one of us to play our part in taking care of ourselves and of one another.

Wishing you all good health.

Ken Slentz
Superintendent of Schools
Ballston Spa CSD