

Rush City Community,

I appreciate everyone's patience as we continue to develop and refine our back to school plan. I greatly appreciate the survey participation and feedback we have received from our families. Our plan is being developed in alignment with the guidance we are receiving from State and County agencies, our District's Strategic Action Plan, and feedback from all constituent groups. I am very proud of the hard work and dedication that our staff have put into developing this plan. Our plan will ensure all of our students maintain relationships with their teacher(s) and their fellow students while progressing through the same curriculum regardless of the learning scenario. This will enhance not only the academic progress of our students but also social and emotional learning.

I anticipate being able to share a detailed document outlining the full plan next Friday, August 14th. A survey, similar to the one recently sent out will also be shared at that time. This survey will ask each family to indicate their definitive plan on how their children will start the year. The information collected will assist us in planning as we prepare for the return to school. Once school begins, we will routinely gather feedback and adapt as necessary to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students and community.

Academics

The guidance that came out last week added two more scenarios. The two new scenarios allow the opportunity for elementary students to attend school while high school students move to a more restrictive scenario. Please keep in mind all students PreK-12 are required to wear a mask when they are attending in person and while using school transportation. A basic overview of the tentative plan for the five scenarios is as follows:

Scenario 1: All students may attend in person four days per week. Wednesday's will be distance learning; therefore, students will not receive in-person instruction on Wednesdays. However, students are able to come to school to access technology, do their homework, get help with their academics, study, and/or attend free childcare. Busing, and school lunch will be provided. The purpose of this is to allow teachers time to connect with their students who are full-time distance learning, and to provide time for creating digital lessons.

Scenario 2: All elementary students may attend in person four days per week. All high school students shift to a hybrid model where they will attend in person two days per week and distance learn three days per week - doing the exact same lessons as the students who are here in person! Students will be split into two predetermined groups:

Monday/Tuesday In Person - Blue Group
Thursday/Friday In Person - Gold Group

Childcare will be available on Wednesday's for elementary students.

Scenario 3: All students attend in person Monday/Tuesday (Blue Group) or Thursday/Friday (Gold Group). The other three days of the week will be distance learning days - doing the exact same lessons as the students who are here in person! Childcare will only be available for elementary students who are children of essential workers.

Scenario 4: Elementary students attend in person Monday/Tuesday (Blue Group) or Thursday/Friday (Gold Group). The other three days of the week will be distance learning days - doing the exact same lessons as the students who are here in person! Childcare will only be available for elementary students who are children of essential workers. High school students will be in distance learning five days a week.

Scenario 5: All students are in distance learning five days a week. Childcare is available for elementary students who are children of essential workers. Distance learning will look much different than in the Spring. Daily lessons will be delivered digitally on one platform, instruction will be more rigorous, attendance and participation expectations will be higher, and more support for all learners will be available. Any family may choose to have their child(ren) distance learn regardless of the scenario we are using. Students switching from one learning model to the other may only be allowed to do so at the end of each quarter.

Our tentative plan is to follow the guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health indicating what scenario we should operate in. I am recommending we primarily use the Chisago County data. The guidance is updated each Thursday and can be viewed at <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/stats/wschoo.pdf>. The current data indicates that if school started today, we could be in Scenario 1. Please note that the case rates have been climbing in recent weeks, which may warrant that we start in a more restricted scenario. Deborah Meissner and I, our School Nurse, will maintain regular communications with our County health officials. We will discuss the most recent data and whether we should switch scenarios.

It is important that everyone understands families need to plan for all five scenarios and be prepared to shift to a more restrictive scenario at short notice. One of the hallmarks of our tentative plan is keeping the entire Rush City family connected regardless of the scenario. If a student needs to quarantine for 14 days, they will be able to shift to distance learning and stay connected with their teachers and peers until they are able to return.

Activities

On Tuesday, August 4, 2020, the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) Board of Directors made their decisions regarding sport activities for the 2020-2021 school years. You can find detailed information by clicking below:

[Tiger Student-Athletes and Families](#)

Again, I thank you for your patience and look forward to sharing the full plan in about a week. Thank you for making Rush City Schools your school of choice.

Best regards,

Brent Stavig
Interim Superintendent