



**THE PROMISE OF RUSH CITY SCHOOLS IS TO CREATE
GLOBAL CITIZENS WHO ARE LIFELONG LEARNERS**

September 17, 2020

Rush City Community,

This message is to inform you of some important information regarding our response to COVID-19. Effective tomorrow, September 18, 2020 we will implement Scenario #5 - District Wide Distance Learning. We have been in close consultation with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) as well as our local public health department. They strongly recommend that we switch to the Distance Learning model for at least the next two weeks based on the following criteria:

- There have been multiple-positive COVID-19 cases identified in our school community.
- We currently have 63 members of our school community who need to quarantine including a significant number of staff members.
- High school and elementary students ride school buses together in our district, making transmission of illness possible between buildings.
- A two-week "reset" as strongly recommended by MDH will prevent continuous instances of large groups of people in our schools who need to quarantine, potentially spanning several months.
- Our county case data is trending increasingly higher.

Our primary goal is student, staff, and community safety. By switching our scenario now, we can prevent prolonged absences from school, and return to in-person learning as soon as possible. Please treat the next two weeks as an informal quarantine, as our public health associates have stressed that wearing masks, social distancing, and staying home will best prevent further outbreak. **We anticipate a potential return date of Monday, October 5th, but will give final guidance on Friday, October 2nd using the latest data.**

We have worked with the MDH to identify those who had close contact with a positive COVID-19 person in our facilities and have communicated with them individually.

- If you are in immediate need of a device (this means your family does not have a device that students may access for Distance Learning at all), please contact [Julie Risland](#) at the high school or [Tabitha Pillar](#) at the elementary school.
- Wednesday childcare is suspended during this Distance Learning Scenario and will shift to childcare for Tier 1 Critical workers as outlined below.
- As Jacobson Elementary switches to a Distance Learning Scenario, childcare for school age children ages 12 and under will only be provided for children of workers listed in the state's "Tier 1 Critical Worker List." Children of these workers who need childcare can receive care at no cost from 8:00 am - 3:00 pm beginning tomorrow, September 18. Buses will run on the regular Wednesday childcare schedule for families who meet the Tier 1 criteria, which will also begin tomorrow. The school-age care for children of critical workers is intended for extreme circumstances in which no parent or guardian is at home, due to the employment as a critical worker. Both parents or guardians must have a letter from their current employer indicating they are employed under the Tier 1 criteria. Employer letters must be on business or company letterhead, be dated, and include the employee's full name. Please contact [Carrie Kirchberg](#) if you are in need of this service.
- Tiger Care will not be offered during the time that Jacobson Elementary is in a Distance Learning Scenario.

We also have an important update on school meals, which took effect today. The USDA has announced that they will extend the meal waiver for schools, which will allow for FREE breakfast and lunch for all children until further notice. It is still important that families who may qualify for free or reduced-price meals complete the [Educational Benefits](#) form as soon as possible to ensure uninterrupted meal service when funds are depleted for this meal waiver. The Educational Benefits application not only qualifies your family for free meal benefits, but also determines different funding sources for your child's school.

As always, when your student is in Distance Learning, they will have access to school breakfast and lunch. These meals can be picked up every Wednesday between 9:30-11:30 am at door #10 in the back of CE Jacobson Elementary. Please note that all children under 18 living within our school district are eligible to receive these meals under this special waiver. You must contact a school office in advance to be added to the list for these meals.

We will continue to communicate with families as we navigate this unique school year. Please refer to our [K-12 Reopening Schools Plan](#) and the Distance Learning Model for more complete information.

Brent Stavig
Interim Superintendent