

August 2020

Greetings Zephyr Students and Families,

I hope that you are enjoying your summer and this message finds you well. As we approach the start of a 2020-2021 school year, there are many challenges that we face as a school and a district. These challenges will be unlike any that I have experienced in my 33 years of education. Administratively, we have spent a great deal of time over the summer preparing for the upcoming school year in an effort to keep our students and staff safe. Below you will find important information regarding the start of school and some of the changes that are being implemented to assist in providing a safe educational environment for our students. It is important to understand that our plan may evolve as the summer ends and the school year begins. It is crucial that we have accurate contact information in PowerSchool. Please be sure to update your information by the beginning of the school year.

**Student Placements:**

Students are being placed into classrooms according to your chosen program for your child. Next week, parents will receive a letter in the mail with their access information for the Parent Portal. Access to the Parent Portal will begin on Friday, August 21st. When logging into the portal, parents will be able to view their child's classroom placement. You will need to update your child's health information in order to view your transportation information. All students will be assigned to buses; however, you may choose to transport your child to and from school instead of utilizing district transportation.

**Busing:** All students taking the bus will be required to wear a mask and will sit two to a seat wherever possible. Windows will be opened weather permitting. Also, elementary will start dismissal 15 minutes early to accommodate extra bus runs. You will receive more detailed information from the transportation.

**Parent Drop-Off/Pick-Up:** Parent drop off and pick-up will stay the same, but we will utilize additional entries to help adhere to social distancing. Parents will remain in their vehicle for both parent drop-off and parent pick-up. Information for drop-off/pick-up tags will be available on our Zephyr website. Parents will receive a yellow colored tag with a number for their car and students will receive a tag with a matching number for their backpacks. Parents will pull up on an angle (your front tires should be at the white painted line.) As your child exits your car and is safely on the sidewalk, you will be able to pull away WITHOUT PUTTING YOUR CAR IN REVERSE. The procedure will be the same for parent pick-up. A staff member will communicate with the other staff member in the gym through a walkie talkie and this will alert them to send out the students. We will begin dismissal at 3:00P.M. to allow for extra time for the additional traffic we are expecting. Please be patient as we all become accustomed to this process. Thank you for your support.

### New Policies:

Students will be given a new school photo ID card on the first day of school that contains a barcode for purchasing breakfast & lunch. Students will no longer be allowed to enter their pin numbers at the cashier. This is being done to eliminate students from touching common surfaces prior to eating.

Lunch deposits can be made online using myschoolbucks, or by sending cash or checks with your child in a sealed envelope. Please remember to have the student name & grade and/or Student I.D. number on all checks and the front of the envelopes.

There will be no cash accepted at the Point Of Sale Terminals (at the cashiers in the cafeteria.) Students will need to have money in their accounts if purchasing snacks & beverages.

### **Breakfast:**

Breakfast will be “grab and go.” There will be two areas that will serve breakfast once it begins in September. Students will be permitted to purchase breakfast in the cafeteria.

### **Lunch**

There are four lunch periods instead of three this year. There is extra time scheduled between lunch periods to allow for cleaning and sanitizing. Arrival times in the cafeteria have been staggered to help with social distancing. The gymnasium will serve as an additional cafeteria to allow students to be seated 6 ft. apart to be able to remove their face masks to eat. Classrooms will also need to be utilized and food allergies will be taken into consideration.

### **Hallway Travel:**

Hallways will have new markings to designate direction and spacing. We will stagger dismissal times between lunches as needed to limit hallway congestion. We will review these changes with students/parents as we get closer to the start of the school year. Students should also plan on bringing their own water bottles to school. Only the refilling stations will be functional. Water fountains will be turned off to minimize contact with others.

### **Classroom Seating:**

Students will be seated facing one direction in all classrooms. Student desks will be spaced out to the maximum extent possible. Both of these decisions are based on recommendations made by the CDC to provide safe classroom environments.

### **Special Classes:**

Art, Library, Music, and Technology will all travel to the homeroom classes in order to limit transitions and the amount of traffic and movement in the hallways. Gym will also travel to the classroom and hold outdoor classes weather permitting.

### **Cleaning/Sanitizing**

Cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting will be performed in accordance with current CDC, and DOH guidelines. EPA approved products will be used in accordance with labeling requirements and staff will be trained on how to appropriately use these products.

### **Face Coverings K-5**

- Direct instruction will be provided to all K-5 students explaining why we need to wear face coverings, social distance, and wash /sanitize hands frequently.
- Face covering breaks will be scheduled for all elementary students throughout the day.
- Students will be redirected and reminded to follow guidelines associated with face coverings and social distancing. Disciplinary consequences will include parent contacts and/ or conferences and could result in exclusion from in-person instruction if regular compliance is not maintained.

Please see the link for acceptable guidance from PDE for face coverings. A doctor's note will be required in order to be exempt from wearing a mask and will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

[Universal Face Coverings Order](#)

### **Student Supplies**

Students will not be permitted to share resources. Students should be prepared for school and will be permitted to keep their backpacks with them in their classroom throughout the school day.

### **Chromebooks**

Chromebook distribution will occur on the first day of the school year for students who have selected to return to school for face-to-face instruction.

Chromebook distribution will occur prior to the start of the school year for students who have selected the Whitehall "Learn at Home" program.

Students who have chosen the Whitehall Cyber Learning Program will receive devices for that program when meeting with Dr. Chomik.

\*\*\*\*\* Information regarding device distribution will be coming in the next few days.

Additional information will be forthcoming. As things evolve and change, we will be sure to communicate these changes. I look forward to a very successful year. The adage, it takes a village to educate a child will certainly be mirrored in our community (as it was this past spring.) Be safe.