Dear Nevada City School District Families:

The COVID-19 pandemic affected the world and led us on a journey none of us thought we would experience. Our communities and families have experienced physical, emotional, health, and financial strains. The high levels of stress and trauma during this time have highlighted the importance of our school communities. Nevada County Schools are all working collaboratively with our local county health officials and community partners to plan on how to safely reopen schools.

The emotional well-being and safety of our students, staff, and families is at the forefront of our decision making. Nevada City School District created a School Planning Committee which held meetings from March-June. In addition, subcommittees were formed to examine the specific requirements of school reopening. Each committee had representation from the various community stakeholder groups.

**Stakeholder input:** (parents, teachers, board members, classified staff, students, and administrators)

- School Planning committee
- Deer Creek scheduling committee
- Seven Hills scheduling committee
- Special Education committee
- Health & Safety committee
- eLearning committee
- Nevada City Faculty Association and Classified School Employee Association
- Site Staff meetings
- Board meetings
- Two additional subcommittees are being formed: Budget and Mental Health

Although our goal is to have 100% of the students back on campus, it is possible that school will look much different than it has in the past. Based on the current California Department of Education and Nevada County Health Department guidelines, additional options have been developed. The CDE guidelines require schools to consider hybrid schedules in order to limit the total number of students on campus at one time and ensure that students are kept at least 6 feet apart where practical.
In 2nd-8th grade, this hybrid schedule would combine a two day a week on campus instruction in smaller groups and at home distance learning on the other days. Our goal is for daily student connection during the distance learning portion. The Nevada City School District understands the importance of more frequent connection and in person instruction with teachers in the early literacy years. To accomplish this, one proposal is for TK-1st graders to be on campus four days a week either in the morning group or the afternoon group. Our committees have done a lot of research and support the proposed options. We will continue to monitor the situation as it progresses, taking reasonable steps to ensure we get kids back to school 100% when we can.

We acknowledge that the draft student schedules may create additional challenges for all stakeholders, but they are created to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. All parents and guardians who are not comfortable sending their children physically back to school will have the option of selecting a full-time, robust distance learning program to meet their student's needs. An eLearning committee is currently working on the structure of this program. Among the topics they are discussing and planning for are how to provide instruction to students while at home, the virtual platforms that will be consistently used across the district, and the support we can offer families.

Other Impacts:

- Due to physical distancing requirements, home to school general education transportation (bussing) may be severely limited.
- Any person with COVID 19 symptoms will be asked to stay at home.
- Per State guidance, all students and staff will have a symptom check which may include temperature taking.
- Classroom volunteers and visitors will be minimized.
- In order to maintain physical distancing, entry, exit and walking on campus will be structured to minimize congestion. Students, staff and parents will be taught expectations and signs and markers will be installed to remind students and staff of procedures.
- Per State and local health guidance, classrooms will be arranged so that students can seat at least 6ft apart unless protected by a face shield or partition. When possible, classes will be held outside with physical distancing maintained.
- Students will be at recess/breaks together with their classmates to minimize mixing of student groups.
- Meals from the School Lunch Program will be served in the classroom or will be eaten outside with students maintaining physical distancing. Meals will be prepared in a “grab and go” manner to reduce spread of germs.
● NCSD will ensure all disinfectant guidelines are met by disinfecting frequently high-touch surfaces and disinfecting surfaces and materials between uses. Additional handwashing time will be regularly scheduled.

● Sites will identify an area for students to isolate if feeling sick

● NCSD will focus on structured opportunities to support parents and families to ensure they can better support their students while engaged in distance learning.

Next Steps:

- Wait for local updated information near end of July from NCHD
- Negotiation with labor unions both teachers and classified
- Work with insurance carrier to ensure coverage
  - Send a parent/family questionnaire
  - Hold parent/family Zoom nights to answer questions and get further input

Our first evening Zoom will be held Tuesday, June 30th from 6:00-7:00. All members of the community are welcome to join. Use the following link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84559785553 Questions can be submitted to: Schoolreopening2020@ncsd.k12.ca.us by 5:00 p.m. June 29th. The purpose of the meeting is to give our school community an opportunity to ask questions regarding school reopening. A second Zoom will be held at the end of July.

On the district website you can find the COVID Operations Report which notes changes made to programs as a result of the school campus closure.

Be assured that we will provide families more specific information as we get further in the process. We appreciate your patience as we navigate this challenge and look forward to a continued partnership in providing the best opportunities for the students of our district.

Respectfully,

Monica Daugherty
Superintendent, Nevada City School District