EWRSD Community Update: July 20, 2020

Dear EWRSD Families:

This communication will serve as an interim update regarding our district’s reopening plans. The information contained in this week’s update reflects the feedback and guidance provided by stakeholders via recent community forums, surveys, Board of Education meetings, and the New Jersey Department of Education’s Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education. The district’s administration and reopening subcommittees have been working diligently to develop the plans necessary to safely restart the school year.

As you know, the district’s vision for reopening is focused on the collaboration with community stakeholders, to develop a plan to safely reopen schools in September that best fits the district’s local needs. The community feedback and input received thus far has been instrumental in the planning process. One aspect of the feedback received from our families identifies a preference for approximately 35% of our parents expressing the preference for their children to maintain a 100% remote learning option in the fall.

It is our intent to make every effort to honor the requests and concerns expressed by our families. It is also important to note that NJDOE Road Back guidance indicates that absent a shift in the public health data, school buildings will open in some capacity for in-person instruction and operations in September. It also informs districts to be prepared to “pivot” to full remote instruction at any time during the 2020-21 school year. However, the NJDOE Road Back document does not appear to explicitly state whether an all remote option can coexist with a hybrid option. We are currently seeking greater clarity and guidance from the NJDOE and Governor’s Office to permit parent requests for an all remote/virtual option to be approved. At this time our plans include the requests of our parent community.

As shared during the June 15 and July 13 Board of Education meetings, we are faced with the 3 following options for the reopening of school in September:

- **Hybrid Learning Model**: Synchronous and asynchronous learning for classroom instruction. This will consist of students receiving instruction in-school with social distancing measures and instruction while they are at home.

- **All Remote Learning (100%)**: Students continue to engage in distance/virtual learning from home.

- **All Students Return**: All students are invited to return to school for in-person instruction everyday with social distancing measures.
Please click [here](#) to view the Reopening of Schools Update presentation from the July 13 Board of Education meeting.

Based on current social distancing recommendations and capacity limitations due to COVID-19, we need to restrict the number of students attending each of our school buildings in the fall. Therefore, the option of expecting the return of all students in schools is not a feasible option at this time. Our planning to date has focused on the expectation that students will receive a combination of in-person and remote learning in the fall. In addition, we recognize that there may also be the need for some of our students to continue to receive all of their learning remotely.

In order for the district to effectively plan individual schedules for the fall, we need to ask families to indicate preferences for their child(ren). At this time, parents/guardians are being offered a choice between a **Hybrid In-person Learning Model and an All Remote Learning Model**. A brief description for each model is indicated below:

**Hybrid Learning Model**
- Students will be organized into two groups (Cohort A and B) in an effort to reduce the capacity of students in each classroom/building. Class sizes will not exceed 12 students.
- Students in Cohorts A and B will attend school in-person for two or three days a week according to an early dismissal schedule.
- When Cohort A attends school in-person, Cohort B will attend remotely via a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities. Whether a student attends in person or remotely, the expectation will be that students receive daily live interaction with their teachers.
- All students attending in person will be required to wear a face covering. The district plans to issue washable, cloth face coverings to all students and staff.
- Every effort will be made to enable siblings to attend school in-person on the same day.
- We have not fully determined what lunch will resemble with this model. We are currently considering a grab and go boxed “Type A” lunch that students will eat in the classroom or take with them when leaving school.
- A tentative framework for the Hybrid Model is included below:

**Tentative Hybrid Framework (subject to change)**

**EARLY DISMISSAL IN PERSON W/LIVE REMOTE (K-12) WITH 12 OR LESS STUDENTS PER CLASS:**
- In-person instruction and live remote support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K-5</th>
<th>6-8</th>
<th>9-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A/B DAYS - 50% Capacity</strong></td>
<td><strong>A/B DAYS - 50% Capacity</strong></td>
<td><strong>A/B DAYS - 50% Capacity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-person instruction for half of the class: 8:45-1:25</td>
<td>In-person instruction for half of the class: 7:55-12:30</td>
<td>In-person instruction for half of the class: 7:30-12:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes do not exceed 12</td>
<td>Classes do not exceed 12</td>
<td>Classes do not exceed 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A and B Day attendance will be determined by last name (A-L; M-Z - 50%)

A DAY: M-Z will receive live remote support from 2:15-3:45
B DAY: A-L will receive live remote support from 2:15-3:45

Grab and Go/Boxed lunch or bagged lunch from home

All Remote Learning Model

- As educators, we have learned a great deal from our spring version of the remote learning experience that was enacted in an abrupt manner in March 2020. That version of remote learning primarily served as a crisis educational plan due to COVID-19.
- Students in the All Remote Learning Model will engage in a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences that will include daily live instruction with their teachers.

We recognize that families need to consider a multitude of factors when thinking about school in September. To that end, we need all families to complete a survey for each school-aged child in their households. Please click here to access the parent survey that needs to be completed by Thursday, July 23 at 4:00 p.m. Upon selecting an educational model, parents are expected to have their child commit to that option for the first marking period of the 2020-21 school year.

As always, I thank you for your continued support as we strive to meet the needs of our students during these unprecedented times. Please access ongoing updates via the district’s 2020-2021 Updates page on the district’s website https://www.ewrsd.org/. I intend to present the district’s reopening plan to the Board of Education for approval during its August 3 meeting.

Stay safe and stay well.

Sincerely,

Mark Daniels
Superintendent of Schools