Return to School

Starting Remotely

The ERPS staff has been working diligently on how we can safely return to school on August 31st. Many learning options have been considered. Administrators have met with Eaton RESA, their peers, health experts, as well as formed committees to design plans in accordance with Michigan’s Roadmap for a Safe Return to School. While always focused on a blended learning model for students, administrators have been swayed by the media and other districts. They have also seen some of their own key stakeholders change their opinions on the best learning option to start school.

Over a period of weeks, ERPS has gone from a school district outlier researching blended learning compared to in-person learning to an outlier in mid-Michigan where most districts have chosen to start the school year in a remote learning mode.

Given direction from this Board, district teams have been steadfast in developing an implementation plan for blended learning using the requirements and recommendations in the Roadmap.

Part of that direction was for our staff to critically review the direction and make sure that we could implement blended learning with fidelity, vibrancy, and safety.

In analyzing their progress and hurdles, our district teams feel it is very challenging to meet the health protocols in the plan with fidelity by the end of August. This information was presented at the Board meeting last night.

We recommended a change in learning environment from the blended learning to remote learning to start the school year on August 31st. We feel strongly that the safety and health risks outweigh the educational benefits of having students return to classrooms.

It is still ERPS’ intent to have students safely return to school in-person but we recognize that parents need some logical dates to plan for work and childcare.

Below is the resolution adopted by the Board last night:

I move that Eaton Rapids Public Schools start the year in remote learning. In doing so, we create in-person opportunities for students and parents to receive appropriate training and establish teacher-student relationships. Remote learning will be in place for the first trimester. The administration will report to the Board at each Board meeting, starting September 23rd. The report format will be set in the August Curriculum Committee meeting but it will include: health trends, demonstration of what students are learning in the remote environment and plans to address gaps in learning, impacts from new legislation/Executive Orders and proposed changes in our framework for student learning.

During this time, we will bring in students needing additional support. ERPS will move to have in-person instruction starting November 18th in a blended learning mode.

Now, that we have a solid direction, we will be in communication regularly with you as we finalize our plans.