March 14, 2020

Dear Riverside USD 114 School Community,

As of March 14\textsuperscript{th}, at the time of this communication, USD 114 is planning to have school on Monday, March 16\textsuperscript{th}. The Kansas Department of Health & Environment as well as the Doniphan County Health Department have indicated that according to the best medical information, schools should remain open at this time. They have been in contact with the CDC and other national medical experts.

For the past three days, including today, USD 114 representatives have attended meetings with the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), the Kansas Department of Health & Environment (KDHE), and others to receive daily briefings on the COVID-19 pandemic. We also consulted the Doniphan County Health Department today on a phone call. Going forward, we will continue to work collaboratively with KSDE, KDHE, and the Doniphan County Health Department to monitor and assess the situation as it progresses. We will continue to rely on the advice of medical experts to help us make decisions moving forward.

The health experts recommend that medically fragile students and staff or those with a compromised immune system, such as asthma, COPD, heart disease, diabetes, etc., consult with your primary care provider about whether attending school next week is advisable. In cases where physicians do not advise attendance, please have them submit the proper paperwork to the school office or in the case of employees to your immediate supervisor. This will allow the absence to be marked excused.

For students and staff who have recently traveled outside of Kansas, KDHE suggests you call the Doniphan County Health Department at 785-985-3591 prior to returning to school or work for medical screening.

Please continue to observe the USD 114 policy that students and staff must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school. If students present symptoms at school, they will be isolated until parents are able to pick them up. Staff will be providing extra hand washing time during the school day and we will be disinfecting surfaces, including school buses on a daily basis.

KDHE has recommended the following new guidance for school operations as students come to school next week:

- Allow gatherings of up to 100 people. Gatherings of more than 100 should be avoided.
- Interactions with others where a 6-foot perimeter between individuals is not maintained should last no longer than 10 minutes.
- Classroom size should be limited based on the size of the classroom and the ability to provide 6-foot spacing between each person in the room.
- Cafeterias should limit the number of individuals being served on the ability to provide 6-foot spacing between each person.

Based on the above recommendations and other advice from medical experts, our school will be implementing the following proactive steps effective immediately:
1. Students will be instructed about social distancing and continued instruction on hygiene and highly encouraged to maintain 6-foot spacing with others while at school. Teachers will space students out in the classroom and lunchroom, where additional seating space will be provided.

2. All school activities are suspended until further notice. This includes field trips, home events, away events, and prom, as well as parent-teacher conferences. High school and middle school athletic practices are not suspended and will continue as normally scheduled.

3. All school facilities, including gyms and weight rooms will be closed to the public after school hours and on week-ends until further notice. This includes all previously approved groups to use gyms and other parts of the building. We apologize for any inconvenience.

4. Bus Routes 4 and 5 will be split in the afternoon (morning routes will remain the same) with West Campus students riding one bus home and East Campus students riding a different bus home. In the event that a younger student from either campus typically rides home on the same bus with an older sibling from the opposite campus, parents will need to either make other transportation arrangements, meet the younger child at the bus stop, or understand they will be dropped off at a slightly different time than their older sibling. This will serve to limit the number of students in close proximity to no longer than 10 minutes. Furthermore, students who are not assigned bus riders on a route who sometimes are allowed to ride home with other students with a parent note, will not be allowed to ride until further notice. All morning bus routes will remain the same.

5. Visitors are discouraged to come into our school buildings at this time. If you are coming to school to pick up sick children, the school can walk your child out to the car, if needed. If you need to conduct business at the school, we will be happy to permit you to enter the school office area.

I have received a few inquiries from parents regarding the possibility of educating students at home in the event that our school is closed sometime in the future by the county health department due to COVID-19. On Thursday and Friday, the Kansas State Department of Education informed schools they would need to have an electronic learning plan approved by KSDE, however, they did not believe any schools could meet the E-learning requirements currently in place. During the KSDE briefing today, we were informed by the Kansas Commissioner of Education that KSDE would begin working on new E-learning guidelines on Monday that could possibly meet all state and federal laws and regulations. Therefore, our school is in a wait and see mode with all of the other 285 Kansas school districts.

I realize that this is a challenging and uncertain time with new and evolving information coming to us almost on an hourly basis. The number one concern of USD 114 is the safety of all students and staff as well as to minimize any negative impact on student learning. Our intent is to make timely and informed decisions based on the most recent and accurate information available to us. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we respond to this challenge.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Blair, Superintendent
Riverside USD 114