



Wednesday, July 8, 2020

RE: Return to School

Dear Parents, Students, Staff and Community,

First we must start with a "Thank-You!" to each and every one of you as we have tried to work through all of the changes that have occurred in our school setting since March 13, 2020. No tasks seem easy anymore and what we know one day seems to change by the next. Regardless of our role or position in life, these days have been a challenge, and planning for where we go next seems to be just as challenging. What I do know is that if we continue to work together as a community to help each other, we will move forward.

The Clearfield Area School District Board of Directors approved a Health and Safety Plan for summer activities at their June 22, 2020 meeting that has allowed some return to normal on our school campuses. Slowly we are starting to see more students present for a wide variety of activities while we constantly monitor and adjust what we are doing to try our best at keeping everyone safe. Seeing kids on campus doing the things they love does start to kindle a hope that school may be able to return this fall.

With that being said, we are going to try to answer some questions that get asked on a regular basis. ***It is important to note that our answers are based on what we know today based on the guidance we have.*** Additionally as we continue to work towards our first day of school, our next Health and Safety plan continues to evolve and become more refined. So please take the time to review the information below. If you have specific questions or concerns not answered at this point we encourage you to please reach out to the school principals and myself so that we can address the concern. We all have a vested interest in making sure we do the best we can to get our children back in school as safely as possible.

Thanks,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Terry W. Struble". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Terry W. Struble, Superintendent

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. ***Are we starting school on time and are the students going to be back every day?*** With our current designation as “Green” we are planning to return to school on time and every day with our students. If the county would change back to “Yellow” we would need to move to a modified schedule that would decrease the amount of time the children are in school, with a focus on our youngest learners being in school as much as possible and then decreasing the time the students would need to be present in school as their online capabilities improve by grade level.
2. ***What have you done to help address some of the health concerns?*** We are looking at a number of things to address the overall health safety of our students and staff. These include such things as:
 - a. Every student in grades 4-12 will have their own laptop so as to not be touching multiple keyboards in a school day. Grades K-3 will have a device assigned to them but it will not be meant to go back and forth between home and school.
 - b. Temperature screening for all staff and students will occur upon arrival. Temperatures above a set point will be referred to the nurse for further review as to whether the individual can stay at school or go home.
 - c. The restroom faucets at the elementary school are being changed to motion sensors to help reduce the number of things kids touch.
 - d. Hand sanitizer will be available in every classroom.
 - e. Group movements of students is being reviewed to see what can we limit or change so as to keep the amount of interactions limited if possible.
 - f. Limiting visitors to the school to essential staff only.
 - g. Reviewing class arrangements and furnishings to try to provide more space in our classrooms.
3. ***Will the staff and students have to wear a facemask?*** As of the most recent information from the PA Department of Health everyone is to be wearing a facemask when they are outside of their homes and in contact with other people. We are monitoring this guidance, but prior to this new order, we were looking at facemasks as being required for on the school bus and large transition times between classes. Once students were in classrooms and maintaining a recommended distance of at least a meter between one another, our guidance was to wear one as it is comfortable for each student. Again this is a recent change and we will continue to monitor and adjust as the guidelines change.
4. ***Will there be fall sports and activities?*** At this point in time we don’t know. It is our hope that as our students get to practice and develop their skills from the field to the stage that they will get to compete and perform this fall as well. What will be permitted as far as playing other schools, if schools in another county change to “Yellow” but we are still “Green”, can fans be present? All are questions we have no guidance on at this time.

- 5. How will the school help my child catch up from the spring?** We are recognizing, along with most of the nation that every student had a very unique situation since March. Some were able to do extremely well with remote learning, while others found it very challenging. As such our first step is to recognize, now more than ever before, the need to identify where each student is with their ability upon returning to school. This will be done in a variety of ways and may show a very consistent starting point for an entire class, or a need to help each student get to where they need to be individually. This will look different by grade level and by subject, but we do realize that this will be a process that will take time. We will not fully recover the time kids were not with us in a week or two, it will take time to reestablish routines, processes, and what it is like to be back in school.
- 6. Back to School Evenings and Orientations?** We know our Back to School evenings and orientations for our students are important to help them be prepared and ready. We will be scheduling those dates and times in August and more information will be forthcoming when we know how we can handle them and the amount of people that is normally associated with these important nights.
- 7. What are the signs and symptoms we should be watching for to help determine if our child should stay at home on a particular day?** The most common signs and symptoms include the following: fever greater than 100.3 degrees, cough, shortness of breath, headaches, body aches, fatigue, loss/altered sense of taste or smell, diarrhea, and runny nose/congestion. Communications with your child's doctor and discussing concerns with the school nurse may help to identify what could be a concern.
- 8. What can we do to help?** The return to school is going to be a challenge for everyone involved and we know emotions will be high. It will be important though to show our children that we believe school will be safe and that they should be excited to return to school. May there be new rules and expectations that we don't like or completely understand? Quite possibly, but if we are to have our children in school, learning academically, interacting and growing with their peers, then we need to be patient with one another and set forth positive expectations. Listen to what your child is apprehensive about and share those concerns with us.
- 9. Will more information be shared and how can I ask a question that may pertain to only my child or family?** As we continue to map out a plan towards the start of school, more information as it becomes available will be shared. It is important to remember that our planning is contingent on the guidelines we received from the PA Department of Health and the PA Department of Education.

For specific questions not addressed above, please reach out to your school principals or the district administration staff. Calls can be placed to 814-765-5511, extension 1000 will reach the elementary school, 2000 the high school, and 6000 the district office.