

To: Families and students of USD 364
From: Mike Couch, Superintendent
RE: School Reopening
Date: July 16, 2020

I hope each of you are having a great summer. As the new Marysville USD 364 superintendent, I can't express enough how much I have appreciated such a warm welcome from the community and from the USD 364 staff. Marysville Schools have a strong tradition of excellence, and I am proud to be a part of this district and community.

The teachers and administrators at Marysville Schools are looking forward to having our students back to school. We miss them and look forward to serving them as we facilitate their learning. I should share that due to the lingering challenges that Covid-19 offers, it will be necessary this year to offer instruction in two different formats: Direct Classroom Learning and Remote Learning. Both approaches will be delivered at our highest degree of excellence. Thanks for reading this message carefully which will go onto share: 1. A glimpse of what those modes of instruction might look like, 2. A response to the Governor's executive order that most likely will push back the first day of school until September 8th, 2020, and 3. How this executive order may impact activities and athletics.

2020-2021 Learning Options:

KSDE has offered guidance for schools to develop routines that establish a safe environment for our students in the following areas:

*Transportation *Medical/Health *Classroom *Common Spaces *Transition
Times *Extra and Co-Curricular Activities *Facilities *Food Service and more.

This document from KSDE also will establish guidelines for our instructors as they prepare to offer our best academic lessons to our students. A glimpse of both learning options to be offered at USD 364 follows:

Direct Classroom Learning:

This learning and instruction will be delivered in the traditional classroom. Safety precautions will be taken to ensure that this learning option is safe for both students and educators. I believe that students will find much security and comfort returning to the routine a traditional education can offer. Safety regulations will cause some complications to the "normal" school day; however, I have full comfort that the administration team and our Building Leadership Teams will craft plans to make our students' days very enjoyable. We hope to have the majority of our students attending school in this setting. However, we do know that some families may want to take stronger precautions and might wish to pursue an alternative approach to learning for their children. We will label our alternative learning process: Remote Learning

Remote Learning:

This instruction will be delivered by your local teachers who will be primarily utilizing the district's Chromebooks to deliver engaging lessons to students who are participating off campus. The goal will be to have each student contacted daily by their teacher for one on one interaction. Admittedly, the manner in which the district was forced to deliver instruction last spring would not be developed enough to qualify for acceptable instruction for the long-term. Therefore, in order for remote instruction to attain the depth necessary for students to show true academic gains, we will need to require that support be offered directly to the students for 3.5-4 hours a day. This supervision at home will allow parents or another adult to participate in zoom lessons

with their child and to assist them as they complete their homework. Again, we have set a goal of having each of your child's teachers meet with your them individually each day through a personal, one-on-one zoom. However, one would be mistaken if they concluded that learning off campus this year would appear similar to what our students participated in last spring. That plan fit those circumstances. These circumstances are different, and expectations will be higher. There will be more rigor involved and an expectation of significant parent/adult supervision is required.

The district's actual models of instruction will be crafted by our Building Leadership Teams and administrators. Input along the way will be sought from teachers, teachers' union, health officials, students, and parents. We can't wait to be able to work directly with our students again soon, in the meantime we will be giving our best so our students can have the best.

Response to Governor Kelly's Planned Executive Order:

I believe one of the Governor's primary objectives for striving to push back the start date of school this year to September 8th is due to the fact that she really wants to put forth a strong effort in flattening the curve of Covid-19 related cases in Kansas. These cases have been on the rise lately. After the Kansas State School Board of Education reviews the Executive Order and makes a recommendation, district administration will review our school calendar and develop recommendations for the USD 364 Board of Education that put us in compliance with both the Executive Order and the school attendance requirement of 1,116 hours for a school year. It is our goal to have this plan approved at a special board meeting to be held on July 31st.

USD 364 ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES:

I jest by sharing that I placed this note at the bottom of this letter to keep you reading to this point. I recognize that the engagement of our parents and students in the district's activity and athletic programs help to make graduating from Marysville Schools a very memorable experience for them. These are challenging opportunities that our students choose to put themselves in help to mold them in remarkable ways that can't be accomplished in the classroom. It appears that there is a remote possibility that we could lose the opportunity to play a football game or two, but for now the KSHSAA is working to all ends to ensure that all the KSHSAA events that are on our calendar will take place this school year. We have no real idea of just what will play out until a vaccine against COVID-19 is developed.

Thank you for your attention to this detailed message. I am available at mcouch@usd364.org if you have questions or comments to share. I grew up as a "Bulldog" so, I will close with: "Once a Bulldog, Always a Bulldog". Go Dogs!!!

Sincerely,

Michael W. Couch,
Superintendent, USD 364 Marysville Schools