

## SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY UPDATE

### BLUE RIDGE LEARNING PLANS TAKE CENTER STAGE

We are excited to announce to you that the Blue Ridge Board of Education has approved a learning plan for this fall. The approved plan takes into consideration the most current guidance from the Illinois Department of Public



Health (IDPH), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). A District Reopening Committee was formed to study the guidance documents and create initial plans

for starting school in the fall. Following a Community Reopening Meeting on June 30, the District Reopening Committee made revisions to their proposed reopening plans and surveyed staff and parents. The plans were presented to the Board of Education at the July 15 meeting; that evening, we heard additional feedback from various stakeholders. Again, the District Reopening Committee met to discuss the feedback and draft revisions. The community and staff were surveyed again.

At the July 22 Board of Education meeting, the board voted to allow families to select remote learning, with a minimum one semester commitment, or to follow a blended learning model, with remote learning for all students on Monday, part of the student body attending Tuesday and Wednesday, and the remaining part of the student body attending Thursday and Friday.

Please know that our plans, while approved by the Board of Education, remain fluid. As new information is released from ISBE, IDPH, and the CDC, we will determine if our current plan must be modified. Additionally, while we remain hopeful that by following guidance with frequent handwashing, face coverings, and social distancing, we will be able to increase our on campus learning opportunities yet this fall, it is also possible that we would need to return to a remote learning model for all students based upon Governor Pritzker's orders, or the status of the virus in our communities.

I want to personally thank the District Reopening Committee for their diligence in researching the guidance, their willingness to listen to feedback and make revisions,

### UPCOMING EVENTS

July 31 Online registration opens through August 7

August 6 Walk in registration held at each school building from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and 4 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Walk in registration is required for all Pre-K, K, and new to Blue Ridge families in their respective building(s).

August 7 Last day of online registration

August 18 Teacher Institute

August 19 First day of student attendance

and their work with compiling our growing documentation.

Attached to this newsletter is a copy of the 7/22 presentation to the Board of Education <https://5il.co/ikgf>,

a link to the 7/22 Board of Education meeting recording: <https://youtu.be/dO4BPY4KNik>,

along with a more detailed document that reflects our current plans.

<https://5il.co/ikfw>

Following, is a brief summary of the approved learning plan.

Students selecting remote learning for a minimum of one semester will be called Knights. This remote option must be chosen by families during the registration process. Online registration is available for all 1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade returning to Blue Ridge students and will be open from July 31-August 7. Walk-in registration will be held on August 6 in each of our school buildings from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and 4 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Walk-in registration is required for all Pre-K and K students, as well as any new to Blue Ridge students. If you are unable to access the online registration, you may attend Walk-in Registration. Knights will be using an online purchased curriculum. Currently, we are researching Edgenuity and Edmentum. While the selected program will be based upon IL Learning Standards, it will likely differ from the Blue Ridge curriculum. For that reason, students will remain in that program for a one semester minimum.

All other students will be broken into two groups-Blue and Silver. The building administration will create the initial groupings, which will be followed by adjustments as needed.

Mondays will be asynchronous (learning at different times and in different places), remote learning for Blue and Silver. Teachers will provide services for students with specialized needs during that time and attend professional development. BLUE will attend school on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 8:20 a.m.-2:20 p.m. SILVER will attend school on Thursdays and Fridays from 8:20 a.m.-2:20 p.m. Early dismissals will allow

teachers to touch base with students not learning in person on that day and allow for additional cleaning and sanitizing.

Students and staff will be required to wear face coverings while at school and expected to follow social distancing protocols to the greatest extent possible.

Places where it is expected to have larger numbers of students in one location, such as entering and exiting the building, riding buses, eating breakfast and lunch, passing periods, and recess, will have modified routines.

Families will be expected to check students for temperatures over 100.4 and Covid19 symptoms daily, prior to sending them to school or the bus stop. Out of an abundance of precaution, we will also be conducting student temperature checks as they board district transportation and as they enter the building each morning. Staff members will self-certify on a daily basis.

Sanitizing will be done on a daily basis in classrooms, high traffic areas, and buses. In 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms where students change rooms each class period, cleaning will happen at every class change.

Food service is another area that will look slightly different when we open. Meals will be prepared in our cafeterias, boxed, and presented to students, rather than having students wait in a serving line.

For our bus transportation, Phase 4 allows us to transport up to 50 people on a bus. We will ask family members to sit together, while others will sit one per seat. Families will be expected to be available to pick up their student at the bus stop if they are found to have a fever prior to boarding. Masks will be required for all drivers and riders.

With a smaller number of students attending at one time when we start school in August, our ability to maintain social distancing is greatly increased, so it is our hope that by doing so, we will be able to return to full attendance yet this first semester. To stay connected, please be sure that upon registration, your phone numbers are updated in our system. Only the primary phone number will receive Blue Ridge notifications. Additionally, if you have a smartphone, please download the Blue Ridge #18, IL app and allow the notifications. You can also follow us

on Facebook at Blue Ridge CUSD #18 and on Twitter at @BRCUSD18.

We appreciate your cooperation as we fully understand that a positive message from an adult perspective goes a long way in how our students will respond!

## REGISTRATION

Online registration is encouraged for all returning 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students and will be available from July 31 through August 7. Any new to district students, all Pre-K, and all Kindergarten students are required to be registered in person during Walk-In Registration, which will be held on August 6 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and 4 p.m.-7:30 p.m. in each building.

## PARTIAL ACTION FROM THE JULY 15 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Due to the passing of Senate Bill 1863, schools will be closed on November 3, 2020 for Election Day. Removing that day from the school calendar adds one additional day of student attendance at the end of the school year. Without the use of emergency days, the last day of student attendance will now be Thursday, May 27, 2021. If all five emergency days are used, the last day of student attendance would be Friday, May 4, 2021. Please mark your calendar! You can view or print the revised calendar here: <https://5il.co/ih3i>

Teachers were hired for the Bridge Program, Summer Reading Program, and Kindergarten Jumpstart. We also welcome three bus drivers-Hunter Foster, Tina Miller, and Erin Zander, BRHS Alternative Education teacher Coleen Paullin, 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Anna Brutlag, and Chad Acree as BRIJHS Girls' Basketball Head Coach and BRHS Head Baseball Coach. Welcome!

JOIN US FOR 'SUMMER KNIGHTS' BY POSTING A PICTURE IN THE COMMENTS OF OUR FACEBOOK POSTS. EACH WEEK A NEW THEME IS ANNOUNCED AND FRIDAYS ARE ALWAYS SPIRIT DAYS! #BR\_U\_KNIGHTED

## FROM THE CURRICULUM COORDINATOR

Our K-8 teachers are continuing to learn over the summer by attending virtual workshops with ELA Coach, Raquel Eshleman. Topics for this month include Basics of Balanced Literacy, Centers & Classroom Management, and Interactive Read Alouds.

Intermediate teachers were also learning over the summer. Kasey Sedberry, Shawna Kollross, Erin Kennell, and Paige Trimble worked with Janet Moore, ROE 17 Math Coach, as well as grade level peers from the greater Bloomington area. Erin Kennell and Marcus Minter also completed virtual training on the CPM curriculum.

## FROM THE TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

- Streamlining of communication platforms is under discussion.
- Preparation for online registration has begun.
- Cameras for the junior high are on site and ready for installation.
- BRHS Business Lab has been torn down and the servers for lab replacement are on site and installation is underway.
- Cabling work has been completed.
- Guest network is underway.

## FROM THE OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

- Electrostatic sprayers have been purchased for the buildings and the bus barn to assist with sanitizing large spaces in an efficient manner.
- Schneider library has been recarpeted.
- The VAV box replacement has been completed at BRHS.
- Mr. Seneca's Woods class has built three new picnic tables that are now at the Mansfield ball field.

### WE'RE HIRING!

Check out our current job postings. Help spread the news by sharing them on Facebook!



OPENING AT  
BLUE RIDGE

# *SCHOOL NURSE*

*HIGH SCHOOL/SCHNEIDER ELEMENTARY*

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**Must be a licensed RN in the State of Illinois**

**SEND YOUR LETTER OF INTEREST AND RESUME TO  
RPEYTON@BLUERIDGE18.ORG  
OR**

**VISIT BLUERIDGE18.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION**