July 23, 2020

To: Fairmont Learning Community, Faculty and Students

Illinois is currently in Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Governor and the Illinois State Board of Education released documentation (in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Public Health) allowing for school districts to choose what form of instructional delivery works best for the 2020-2021 school year. Fairmont School District 89 has integrated this guidance with the information provided by the Will County Regional Office of Education as well as our staff and families to determine how to reopen school.

We are appreciative of the over 100 families and 55 staff that responded to the Google survey or participated in the informational meetings held via Zoom assisting us in our determination for school re-opening. We anticipated that there was a wide variety of opinions about the return to school and our results confirmed that. Unfortunately, there is no single plan we could create that would be met with 100% support from all stakeholders. The information gathered from these surveys and Zoom sessions was extremely helpful in drafting guidelines and procedures that will hopefully answer many questions regarding the fall school plan. We know there will be more questions as we go along, and we look forward to working with our school community to keep everyone informed and safe.

The Return to School Model that has been conditionally approved by the Board of Education to start the year is the Full Remote Model. Full Remote means that all students will be taught by licensed staff, through computer and Internet in the safety of their homes. Remote Learning will provide direct staff interaction, enhanced technology, and technological access for students. Attendance expectations and assignment accountability with a return to traditional grades in all core subjects will be in place for the school year. By selecting this model, the district will be able to meet the needs of the students in the safest way possible for all members of the school community. The district will re-evaluate the plan every quarter at the six (6) week mark based on the current pandemic concerns of our community and state. Choosing Full Remote Learning will allow us to begin our school year for students on Monday, August 17, 2020.

The final proposal will be presented for approval to the Board of Education at the August 12, 2020 Regular Board Meeting. Please note, further changes in guidelines for COVID-19 pandemic response from ISBE, IDPH, or other governmental authorities may result in immediate changes to the plan; however, Fairmont will always keep the best interest of our Fairmont Community first and foremost in the decision-making process.

Sincerely,

Diane Cepela
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