



Jacksonville | North Pulaski SCHOOL DISTRICT

1414 West Main St - Jacksonville, AR 72076

Ph: 501-241-2080 Fax: 501-241-2092

www.jnpsd.org

Building Futures: Every Scholar, Every Day

August 4, 2020

3:34 pm

JNPSD School Community:

Please continue to stay informed through all of our postings on JNP social media, JNP website, local media, and other communication outlets. All community updates and other information posted since March 6 is available for your reference.

Governor's Press Conference Today (APSRC Report)

"Reflecting on where we are with our schools opening, I want everybody to know we are working hard on this every day from discussions with the Department of Health and our preparations, but also with the Department of Education. This morning I got to speak with school administrators, but also hearing from literally hundreds and hundreds of teachers out there both supporting and excited about going back to the classroom, others are nervous about that. I look back and I am pleased that we did postpone school for two weeks, and the reason is it gives us an opportunity to study what's happening in other states that have started earlier. It gives us an opportunity to learn from the experiences that we see in the sports world as well. It gives us an opportunity to better prepare in every respect. So we are going to utilize this time effectively over the next three weeks because we want everybody to be able to go back to in-classroom instruction in a safe way that best protects the students and gives them an opportunity to learn, as well as the teachers and the staff," Governor Hutchinson said.

The Governor was asked whether he should keep schools closed until next year or open school districts on a case by case basis due to the fear of spikes of COVID.

"No, we should not cancel school for this school year. Kids need school. Everyone needs to have that opportunity for education, for the interaction even with the extracurricular activities that are so important to our students. We need to have school this year, absolutely. I am firm on that. The educators are firm on that. Public Health is firm on that. We need to have school," Governor Hutchinson said.

The Governor was asked about the fact that the public keeps hearing from public health experts that the opening of schools should be tied to a level of virus in a particular community.

"I hear three different messages from three different doctors in reference to standards for schools. So these are guidelines they suggest. You look at the CDC guidelines. They look at 10 percent positivity rate as a good thing. Everybody has a different opinion on schools. What they are united about is that these are local decisions that have to be made based upon the circumstances in your state, and that is what we are acting on," Governor Hutchinson said.

ADH Interim Secretary Dr. Jose Romero was asked if students and teachers are to self-report, and what the role of contact tracers play in preventing the spread of the virus.

"The school will notify the health department of the case. The school is being asked to put together a list of individuals that are contacts, and the health department will do the contact tracing. So the contact tracing is not being done by the school. It's still being done by the health department, but we are asking the school to give us a list of those individuals who could have been exposed," Dr. Romero said. "If you are concerned enough to be tested, then that is a report in itself. If you've reported yourself to the health department, we will have that information, we will go forward. Within the school, if there is concern an individual could have COVID, then we would not want them to go to school at that time. Of course, it would be nice if they would let the school know about that so then we can go ahead and follow up if necessary. If there is concern about infection, testing is indicated and we will make that available through our local health units or other sites."

1. Please stay tuned for announcements from each school regarding virtual open house events. These will be publicized on our communication outlets.
2. **PreK Parents:** Virtual school is not an option for PreK. State decisions have been made that all PreK programs will operate with on-site classes. Please contact Ms. Megan Brown at mebrown@jnpsd.org to register in our PreK program.
3. Please review the Arkansas Department of Health directives at healthy.arkansas.gov in order to be familiar with the safety preparations that impact schools. Much of this information is contained within all of the reentry plans that have been released to the public.

We appreciate your support of our school community.

Respectfully,



Bryan Duffie. Ed.D.
Superintendent