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Grand View School Superintendent's Report

Good afternoon Grand View.

At a Special Board Meeting on Wednesday afternoon, August 5 the Grand View School Board voted to move the start date for the 2020-21 school year to August 26. This was after much deliberation and again, it aligns with most all other school districts in Cherokee County. Also notice the adjusted times 8:05-3:30.

Planning and collaboration with schools, vendors, educational organizations and health agencies aided in the development of Grand View's comprehensive *Return to Learn Plan*. After a few minor edits the School Board also voted to accept the *Return to Learn Plan*. This new plan will be implemented as Grand View re-opens for the start of the new school year.

We want you to carefully read the *Return to Learn Plan* and check with the school for answers to any questions that you might have. You can find it here:

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/842433/Return_to_Learn_Plan_2020-2021_Approved_8-5-20.pdf

For this document however, I am not going to revisit the reasons for the calendar change or explain the background in planning for reopening. I'm going to attempt to explain the key points about re-opening that everyone is asking about.

Before I get started on the many points we need to cover, we want to make certain that everyone affiliated with Grand View School first understands that: This is a partnership that involves ALL OF US. If students, parents, staff, teachers, administrators, and patrons, and even vendors or guests, are not all on board with the safety measures we have identified, COVID wins. If we have too many ill students, teachers with positive test results, or classes with severe absenteeism, the school will be forced to close. We may close for a week, a month, or a semester. Please read and follow this plan carefully. We want our students, our staff, and you to be safe and healthy through this school year.

Please partner with us on every aspect of this plan to make that happen.

SAFETY -

- Since COVID symptoms vary in children, we are relying on you to screen your children and check symptoms at least weekly (Sunday evenings). Since symptoms generally show within 5 days, we can all watch the child through the week. Most importantly, we expect you to check temperatures each morning before bringing them to school or putting them on the bus. Teachers and staff will self-screen as well. They will also take temperature checks on a daily basis. Since state law does not allow students with an infectious disease to come to school, we are trusting that you are certifying them as healthy if you bring them to school or put them on the bus. These points are key to our partnership to keep everyone healthy.
- Students, teachers, staff, administrators, parents and guests will all be required to wear a facemask (preferred) or a face shield. Mask breaks will be given when appropriate.
- Teachers will teach and reteach proper COVID prevention strategies like mask etiquette, distancing, cough and sneeze manners, hands-off and symptom awareness.
- Social distancing will take place as best we can. Furniture in the classroom will be spaced as far as practical. Barriers are being developed for use on student desks to prevent the spread of aerosol droplets. Seating during lunch time will be spaced with only one grade seated in the cafeteria at any one time. It will include one-way travel in hallways, spacing, scheduled breaks (restroom, recess and meals). Chromebooks, equipment, food, drinks, snacks, school supplies and personal items will not be shared. Lockers will not be used. Students will bring a personal, non-breakable water bottle and use only water-bottle fill stations.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to bring their students to school. This will allow for better social distancing on the bus.
- Breakfast will be grab-and-go. Students will be taught travel guidelines for hallways and the cafeteria. They will then follow traffic patterns to the cafeteria, grab their breakfast, and go directly to their classroom to eat their breakfast. Students in the Bilby Early Learning Center will arrive, go directly to their classroom, and breakfast will be delivered to them there.

Again, Grand View is the beneficiary of the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) so all meals are FREE to all students.

- Lunch will be carefully planned so that one only one elementary class is in the cafeteria at a time. During their time for lunch a middle school class may come over and get a grab-and-go meal to take back to their classroom to eat. Once the class arrives they will go to their lunch table where their meal will be waiting. It will be spread out to allow adequate social distancing while they eat their meal. A reminder: No food or drinks may be shared.
- Students will remain with their class or cohort group the entire day with very limited interaction with other groups. Seating charts will be used on the bus and in class. This keeps groups isolated in the event of an outbreak and also aides in contact tracing to determine who might be exposed.
- Cleaning and hygiene strategies will be used. Students will have time made available to clean their workspaces. All classrooms will have soap dispensers in the classroom. The buses will be sanitized after each route and classrooms will be sanitized at the end of the day. Playground equipment will be sanitized regularly.
- There will be a trained COVID team to consist of health aides and other volunteers with a background or training in student health. They will have access to more Personal Protective Equipment. They can serve to discreetly move symptomatic students to an assessment area. They will help isolate students that need to be picked up by parents. Teachers will pay special attention to student behavior and body language to make an early determination if students appear unwell. They will notify a COVID team member as necessary.
- Safety signage and Return To Learn rules will be posted at strategic locations around the campus. Teachers will also have age-appropriate posters and bulletin board material in their classroom to stress COVID safety procedures.
- Students or staff that feel ill or are quarantined will not be counted absent providing online work from home is being completed. In other words, students at home can take their Chromebook home and continue to work using Grand View's *Virtual Learning Model (VLM)*.

- The administration will regularly monitor COVID maps and outbreak statistics. We will consult with health agencies like the Cherokee County Health Department, the Cherokee Nation Health Department and the Oklahoma Department of Health. We will also collaborate with other Cherokee County schools. All information will help determine the need for school closure.

ACADEMICS -

- For those not wanting to send their child to school at this time a distance learning option is available. For grades 3-8 it will be a *Virtual Learning Model (VLM)*. For children in early childhood to 2nd grade, it will be a *Take-home Packet Model (THPM)*.
- Like our students on campus, those students in grades 3-8 will get a take home device, a Chromebook to support their *VLM*. You may also request a Hot Spot if you do not currently have internet access. Families with no internet access, that have more than 3 students may request 2 Hot Spots. (Hot Spots are on order. In the event they are not available when school starts a suitable arrangement will be made.) Early Childhood to 2nd may ultimately get a take-home device if an appropriate learning tool is found.
- Unlike distance learning models at some schools or online agencies, our *VLM* and *THPM* will be taught by Grand View teachers. We will have those connections with your students and we are currently reviewing technology tools that may allow your student to follow along at home to any or all of the class offerings. *VLM* students will be held accountable academically. Similar to other online models, learning can be asynchronous (done at the student's pace and on their schedule) allowing for attendance to count as work is submitted.
- Students using the *VLM* or *THPM* can still take advantage of the free CEP breakfast and lunch program. You will be surveyed to decide if you want to pick up meals at an on-campus meal distribution point every day, or pick up all 10 meals for the week like our summer feeding program used.
- Participation in extracurricular activities is available to any student using the *VLM* or *THPM*. Students that want to participate in; academic team, art,

athletics, band, Cherokee, competitive cheer, music, Robotics, etc., need only to be able to make it to any practice, training or competitive events like other students would.

- Parents that select a distance learning plan for their students do not have to stay with that model. We do suggest that you try it for at least two weeks before deciding to bring your child back to school. While we are proud of the distance learning models we will have in place, we want your student on campus if possible. Therefore, if the distance learning model does not work for you and your child, they may immediately move back to a traditional on-campus instructional model.
- For parents that want to limit their child's on-campus exposure there is the option of a *blended model*. This would require a set daily schedule for core classes. The parent would then pick their child up mid-day. The remainder of the work would be done using the *VLM*. This option will need to be carefully considered, but may fit your student's needs even better than the other models. See your child's principal to discuss the possibilities.

AFTER - SCHOOL -

- At this time the after-school program is still in development. It is apparent that our plan works hard to keep groups of students together. This helps for contact tracing and to limit the chance of the virus spreading. But to offer an after school program we would need 30+ teachers. That would ensure that each classroom would have their own teacher during the after school time (3:30-5:30). After a long day with students it is often difficult to get enough teachers to cover each student grouping during a traditional after school program. By keeping cohorts, the current situation would require 2x the number of teachers. We are looking at options by grade, alternating days, making it a Early Childhood/Elementary-only program, or making it virtual. Regardless, we will have to get permission to make the change from the Oklahoma State Department of Education since this is a grant-funded program.

QUESTIONS -

- Much has been covered here, but other questions or changes may still need explanation. Please read the *Return to Learn Plan* carefully. If you still have questions you may contact the school.

Thank you for your patience as we've worked to develop plans that are best for our students and staff. And as always, thank you for your support of Grand View.

Regards,

Ed Kennedy
Superintendent, Grand View School