

September 25, 2020

Good afternoon EGF ISD 595 Families and Staff Members!

The month of September is quickly coming to a close and before we know it, the traditional MEA Break will be here. We are wrapping up our third week of school and I continue to be impressed by the efforts of the students, families, and staff members during these tough times! You are doing a super job and I am very thankful for all of you! Greeting students at the front doors of New Heights and South Point before school continues to be the best part of my work day!

Please take a little time to review the following information and feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

- **School Model Update** - The latest 14-day case per 10,000 number for Polk County grew to **16.78** (Aug 30 - Sept 12) and it looks like the number could continue to grow in future weeks. All of us will need to continue to follow the safety guidance provided by the CDC, MDH, and Polk County Public Health in order to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus. PLEASE use a face covering when appropriate, practice social distancing, wash your hands, and stay home if you have symptoms. Please go to [Polk County Public Health COVID-19 Hub](#) to find helpful information about reducing the spread. You can also go to [Data for K-12 Schools: 14-day COVID-19 Case Rate by County](#) to see the 14-Day count for all of the counties in MN. We continue to be in the correct model when using the 14-day number and want to get to a point where we can safely bring all of our students back to school every day.
- **Monthly Professional Development Early Dismissal Information** - The [2020-21 EGF ISD 595 School District Calendar](#) includes one day per month (listed below) where students will be dismissed early for Staff Professional Development. The first early dismissal date is right around the corner and release times and dates are as follows. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.
 - **Early Dismissal Times**
 - New Heights and South Point - 1:10 p.m.
 - CMS and Senior High - 1:35 p.m.
 - **Early Dismissal Dates**
 - 9.30.20, 10.28.20, 11.25.20, 12.16.20
 - 1.22.21, 2.24.21, 3.26.21, 4.28.21, 5.19.21

- **Free & Reduced Lunch Application Reminder** - The District is strongly encouraging families to complete their free and reduced lunch applications before October 1, 2020 if possible. Free meals are currently available for ALL of our students, but the funding for the current program will not last the entire school year unless changes are made at the federal level. We want families to be prepared for the transition to the traditional lunch program once the free meals for ALL students comes to an end. October 1st is a very important date for school funding and the number of students who qualify for free/reduced lunches has a huge impact on future funding resources for the school district. Please go to the following link to complete your application ASAP if you have not done so already. [EGF ISD 595 Free & Reduced Lunch Application Link](#)
- **Symptom Screening Update** - We continue to learn more about COVID-19 every day, and as more information becomes available, we continue to update our Safe Learning Plan and share information with families and staff. The CDC does not currently recommend universal symptom screenings (screening all students grades K-12) be conducted by schools. **Instead families and staff should self monitor for symptoms at home.** The Minnesota Department of Health has developed a tool for families to use at home to self monitor their children for COVID-19 illness and a link to the tool is listed below. **This means the district *will not be using PARENTVUE or STUDENTVUE any longer for symptom screening.***

HOW DO I DO THIS AS A PARENT/GUARDIAN?

1. Use the [Home Screening Tool](#) for COVID-19 symptoms to help you decide if your child(ren) should come to school, child care, or other youth programs.
2. Put this sheet in a handy place to review daily with your children.
3. Answer the screening questions each time you are going to send your child to school, child care, or another youth program.
4. If you answer “yes” to any question, your child should stay home, then the parent should contact the office of the school(s) your child(ren) attend to report their illness.
5. There will be a follow-up call with a COVID team representative following the report to the office to assist families with the [DECISION TREE](#) pathway process.

If you have questions about this process you can contact any of the following representatives of the COVID-19 team.

- School Nurse: Christy Carlstrom, ccarlstrom@egf.k12.mn.us 773-0908
- School Nurse Assistant: Kristie Devine: kdevine@egf.k12.mn.us 773-1141
- COVID ADMINISTRATION: Peggy Dunn pdunn@egf.k12.mn.us 773-1149
- COVID ADMINISTRATION: Suraya Driscoll sdriscoll@egf.k12.mn.us 218-793-2901
- COVID COORDINATOR: Mike Kolness mkolness@egf.k12.mn.us 218-793-288

- **Green Wave Activities Update** A few of the Green Wave teams have been very busy this fall and we are excited to add a couple more next week. The weather has been very cooperative and it has been fun to watch the student-athletes compete. Full schedules for all of the teams can be found on the school website.
 - **The Soccer, Tennis and Cross Country** teams were able to start their regular season in August and will be starting Section Playoffs in the next few weeks.



- **The Football and Volleyball** teams were approved to start their seasons on September 21st and will be officially starting their seasons on Monday, September 28th. Both teams have been able to conduct out of season practices the last two weeks and will start playing games during the second week of October.



- **Fan Access Information** - Fan participation at athletic contests will be very limited this fall and safety guidelines must be followed. No fans will be allowed to attend indoor games and outdoor event capacity is limited to 250 people. A process has been developed for distributing a set number of wristbands to each student-athlete that will be used for fans to gain entrance to outdoor games. Face coverings are highly recommended and social distancing guidelines will be required.

- **High Need for Bus Drivers** - The District has a huge need for more bus drivers, paraprofessionals, and substitutes in all areas. Please consider joining the Green Team and go to [EGF ISD 595 Job Opportunities](#) to apply.

Enjoy the final Friday of September 2020 and have a wonderful weekend!

Mike Kolness

Superintendent of Schools

EGF ISD 595

218-793-2880

