

Chesterfield Township School District

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March 25, 2021

Dear Chesterfield Elementary School Community,

Happy Thursday! The birds are signing, our daily temperatures are rising, people are outside enjoying the warmer weather, spring sports are beginning, and pollen is starting to leave a yellowish coat on my truck. These are the signs of spring. I wish everyone a restful and well-deserved spring break. I apologize for the length of the letter today, but I have a lot to share.

Over the last two weeks, a team of staff have been involved in the planning to expand our in-person learning options. I specifically want to recognize Mrs. Graham and her leadership to complete this work. Mrs. Graham worked closely with the other members of the administrative team, as well as several support staff members, to develop a plan that provides 5-day per week in-person instruction at all grade levels. The 5-day per week in-person instruction at all grade levels will begin on Monday, April 19th. The plan involves the return of specific staff members to the building from the fully remote environment, a change in placement for specific students, and the use of larger spaces in the building for grade level instruction. Please know our plan is based on continuing all current health and safety guidelines including the 6-foot social distancing recommendation of the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Education (DOE). However, the new guidance on social distancing will allow us to adjust parts of the plan. As mentioned previously, the plan is also based on the early dismissal schedule. Thus, afternoon small group meetings and related arts/specials will continue to be virtual in the afternoon.

As you may be aware, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has recently published new social distancing guidelines for schools. The new guidelines establish a 3-foot minimum social distance in the classroom. Yesterday, we received updated guidance from the DOH confirming the new 3-foot social distancing guideline for the classroom. The Chesterfield Township School District has and will continue to follow the guidance of the DOH. Thus, when appropriate, we will begin to implement the new 3-foot social distancing guideline. This change in social distancing distance will not impact all students. Due to the number of students who participate in our fully virtual instructional model, we still have several classrooms that will be able to continue to operate using the 6-foot social distancing guideline. The new 3-foot social distancing guideline will eliminate the need to move specific classes in preparation for April 19th. It is important to be aware that the new CDC/DOH social distancing guideline of 3-feet does not

apply to situations where students must remove their mask to eat. When students need to remove their mask to eat snacks, the 6-foot social distancing guideline is still in place.

If your child will be transported to and from school via a bus upon our return to 5-day per week in-person instruction, you can expect any changes in transportation to be sent home when we return from spring recess. I will also send home all changes in arrival and dismissal procedures when we return from spring recess. One change in our arrival procedures that I want to highlight now is the change in our student drop-off area. Due to the increase in students attending school each day starting April 19th, we will reinstate our normal student drop-off location along the sidewalk in the parking lot. **Parents will no longer be able to drop-off students in the morning along Saddle Way starting Monday, April 19th.** We will have staff available to assist our students as they walk from the sidewalk on the side of the building to the front of the building to enter the school. If you want to walk your child to the building, you may use the parking lot to the left of the building to park your vehicle and walk your child to the entrance doors. We will reevaluate our arrival procedures between April 19th and April 30th and make adjustments as needed. Again, detailed information about arrival and dismissal procedures will be sent home after spring recess.

As of today, we intend to continue with our current in-person schedule during the week of April 12th, the week following spring recess. As you have seen, cases are on the rise, and if we continue to see an increase in cases, we may need to move to fully remote for all students the week after spring recess. However, based on current numbers, we will continue with our current in-person learning models for the week of April 12th. Our goal is to ensure all students and staff are healthy and ready for 5-day per week instruction at each grade level starting Monday, April 19th. Please remember to notify the school nurses if you plan to travel during spring recess. All travel guidelines remain in place and our nurses can work with you to determine when your child can safely return to in-person learning if you travel during spring recess.

As we make our final preparations for April 19th, I want to be clear that movement between instructional models is no longer possible. We've entered the third trimester and all requested changes have been made. We are also prepared to make the changes for April 19th based on the parent survey and recent contact with any parent who did not complete the survey. Thus, all student placements are now final for the remainder of the school year. Thank you for your cooperation!

As a final note, Governor Murphy stated yesterday that there will be no option for the fully virtual instructional model for the 2021-2022 School Year. Obviously a lot can change between now and September, but I did want to make you aware of his statement.

The COVID-19 Weekly Health Report for the month of March is below. As a reminder, historical data from September 2020 – February 2021 can be found by clicking on this link <https://www.chesterfieldschool.com/Page/2902>.

COVID-19 Weekly Health Report

Week of.....	# of Positive Cases in School	# of Students/Staff Sent Home Due to Symptoms	# of Students/Staff Quarantined & Why	# of Incidents of Non-Compliance
Mar.	0	0	1 staff quarantine (travel)	1

1 st				
Mar. 8 th	0	0	1 staff quarantine (close contact household) 1 staff excluded (household member symptomatic)	0
Mar. 15 th	2	0	2 students quarantine (travel) 2 students quarantine (close contact household) 3 students quarantine (close contact) 1 student quarantine (positive case) 1 staff quarantine (positive case) 3 staff quarantine (close contact) 2 staff excluded (pending results)	0
Mar. 22 nd	0	0	4 students quarantine (travel) 1 student quarantine (close contact) 1 staff quarantine (close contact)	0

Sincerely,
Scott Heino
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