



NICE Community Schools

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Hello Parents, Guardians, and Students,

In the midst of this COVID-19 pandemic, we are continuing to get ready to return to school. I know I do not need to elaborate on the strange times in which we live. I truly believe if we work together, we can make it through these challenges and return to normal operations one day. Between now and then, without a doubt, we'll have obstacles to clear and problems to solve. I am confident we will persevere. With that written, I'll get to the heart of our return to school matters as simply as I can. I thank you all in advance for your patience and understanding regarding these issues.

- Reopening Dates – Barring any new directives from our state or federal government, we will be open for in-person learning to all students beginning Tuesday, September 1, 2020, including our school bus transportation services. Our Patriot Online Academy is also available for any interested students starting Tuesday, September 1, 2020. Our online academy is free of charge. We are also able to assist parents with hard-copy and electronic correspondence learning for those interested. Our hard-copy and electronic correspondence options will be available beginning Wednesday, September 9, 2020.
- Masks – We will require all PreK – 12th Grade students and all employees to wear masks while indoors. This includes buses, classrooms, hallways, etc. There will be breaks throughout the day for students and staff to remove their masks. We will utilize our 84 beautiful acres across our campus to get our kids outside to learn, play, and to remove their masks when the weather and proper social distancing allows. We know required mask use is not universally popular. Mask use will, however, be part of our efforts to keep our students and staff safe and healthy. Our professional educators will help our kids manage mask usage and will closely monitor their well-being throughout the school day. (Mask exceptions will be made for those with a written excuse from a licensed doctor.) Masks will be available for those who do not have access to their own on any given day.
- Arrivals and Departures – Parents who transport their students to and from school will be required to remain in their vehicles during arrival and departure times. (Exceptions will be made for our PreK and Kindergarten students. Information will be available from Elementary Principal Chris Marana. Exceptions will also be made for special education students with

arrangements made through Special Education Coordinator Nate Longton.) A traffic flow diagram is enclosed in this mailing.

- Hygiene and Cleaning – We will provide an abundance of soap, hand sanitizer, and other personal care items for staff and students to wash their hands. We will teach proper handwashing techniques. We will routinely clean every common area throughout the day and are changing around our custodial hours to have more staff available for immediate cleaning duties during the school day. Common areas will be cleaned every four hours or less, classrooms will be cleaned after every class period. We will also be cleaning our buildings and equipment again after school hours. Buses will be cleaned before and after every bus run.
- Athletics – Our athletic programming will be governed by the Michigan High School Athletic Association and the Governor’s Office. Our Athletic Director Jon Beckman and our varying coaches will be in touch routinely with our student-athletes and their parents and guardians.
- Health Screenings and COVID-19 Testing – We will follow all guidelines and directions issued by the Marquette County Health Department and the State of Michigan Health and Human Services Department. We are hiring an additional temporary nurse to start the school year so that we have two full-time nurses on campus every day. We are asking all parents and guardians to self-assess their students each morning prior to school. If a student has a fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or is sick in any way, that student is to stay home. If a student becomes ill at school, our nurses will take charge and be in touch immediately with a parent or guardian to follow all health department protocols. If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, parents and guardians should expect a partial or complete building-wide and/or a district-wide shutdown for a quarantining period of up to 14 days. Again, our regional and state health departments will guide us through any necessary quarantining procedures.
- Visitors – We ask that visitors only come to the school for emergency or exigent circumstances (circumstances that are truly pressing or demanding). A visitor will be required to wait in the respective office, office vestibule, or in their personal vehicle until a student is called to the office from class.

I know we all want to get back to normal as quickly as possible. I know, too, that not everyone is 100% in favor of all or any of the above protocols. The more we work together and endeavor to help bring this pandemic under control, the faster we’ll return to normal operations. Please stay tuned for more outreach from your students’ building principal and their teachers. We will take good care of our community’s kids and each other. Please reach out when you need help, give others help when you can, and stick together through all of this. We will make it.

All my best,



Bryan DeAugustine
Superintendent