



December 31, 2020

Dear FSD 145 Staff and Families,

Happy New Year! Wishing everyone a healthy and prosperous 2021!!!

IMPORTANT: Return to In-Person & Hybrid Learning

We will return to In-Person & Hybrid Learning on 01/04/21. We are looking forward and are really excited to have our students back in the classroom next week. Staff and students are asked to adhere to all mitigation protocols, including the wearing of masks, social distancing, hand washing. Parents please be reminded to symptom check your students before sending them to school. Temperature checks for students will also resume.

COVID and Vaccination Updates from the Stephenson County Health Department

Great news! As of 12/30/2020, SCHD has notified us that there are 0 active student and staff cases in FSD. They will continue to monitor the infection rates and will be in constant communication with us. Additional information that you should know:

- SCHD will still be requiring a 14-day quarantine period for all contacts of COVID cases. The rationale of continuing with the 14-day period was supported by restaurants and bars not closing, as well as case investigators and contact tracers reporting a large number of contacts developing symptoms after day 10.
- IDPH and CDC still recommend a 14-day quarantine period
- We do anticipate guidance from CDC and IDPH if quarantine is needed after vaccination and if proof will be needed. Please know that every vaccine is documented in a state system and easily accessible.
- SCHD currently has COVID vaccine and is working through the priority lists as directed by IDPH and CDC
- We have started vaccinating School Nurses as well as OT/PT/Speech Pathologists as they are considered HCW's
- We are hoping to start moving to phase 1b (educators, bussing) next week if given approval
- The goal is to have educators vaccinated by the second week of January. SCHD will be prioritizing a few categories. Special Need classrooms, bussing and schools that cannot social distance. (if vaccine amount limited that is unknown at this time, we are hoping that we will not need to do this, and get all vaccinated together)
- County cases are steady and are surrounding the Nursing Homes. We currently have outbreaks in all of the county Nursing Homes. Stephenson County has been below 8% since December 11th, and as of December 26th was at 6.8%
- Most importantly, we are incredibly optimistic about a much healthier and better 2021!!

IMPORTANT: Grab-N-Go & Meal Delivery

For families signed up for bus delivery you will receive a delivery tomorrow, January 2nd.

Saturday Grab n Go will resume, **January 9th, at Carl Sandburg** from 10 am - Noon for Group A / Group B blended students and any remote choice learners who are not on the bus delivery route. **This will be the pick-up site going forward.**

Physical & Immunization Requirements

If your student is switching from Remote Learning by Choice (they were Remote prior to the District going full-remote in November) to In-Person/Hybrid the required physical examination and immunizations must be on file. [Please click here to see for more information on what students require physical exams/immunizations.](#)

Remote Learning By Choice (RLBC)

Families who selected RLBC in the beginning of the school year:

Remote Learning by Choice will continue through the end of the school year. No action is required for families who selected Remote Learning by Choice for the first semester to continue learning remotely for the rest of the school year.

Families who wish to change their selection to or from RLBC should follow the processes below

- **In-person to Remote-** Sign up using the [Remote Learning by Choice](#) form.
- **Remote to In-Person-** Contact the ETC at 815-232-0580 or your student's school to request a return to in-person. Families who wish to switch for the start of the 2nd semester must make their decision known by January 6, 2021.

Placements for students returning to the classroom after being Remote Learning by Choice are made every two weeks and are dependent on building capacity. Elementary students may be offered a spot in a different school building if their home school capacity has been met. This is a temporary solution.

Return dates are offered every two weeks for the remainder of the school year depending on openings that take into consideration staff availability and our ability to maintain social distancing in classrooms.

K-6 Chromebooks

Unless directed not to, in-person students who are returning to school on Monday, January 4, should come with their Chromebooks fully charged. Chargers can be left at home.

Upcoming Important Dates:

- All learning (In-Person, Hybrid, Remote by Choice) resumes Monday, January 4, 2021
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday - Monday, January 18, 2021 - District Closed
- District Institute Day January 27, 2021 - No School for Students

COVID-19 Positive Cases in FSD

On a weekly basis the District updates staff and student positive cases as reported by the Stephenson County Health Department. [This information is available to view on our website](#) and will be updated on Fridays.

Feedback & Questions

If you have missed our weekly communications to families, you can read them here. [Weekly & Special Community Communications](#). Please call your student's schools with any questions or comments.

I hope that you have enjoyed the holidays and that everyone has remained safe and healthy. Your partnership and support over the last four months have been invaluable and will continue to be as we come to the end of the first semester and prepare for a successful second semester. Know that we appreciate you and we are committed to being in this process together and finishing strong.

With gratitude,

Dr. Anna Alvarado

Superintendent of Schools