



# WINDSOR C-1 SCHOOL DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

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August 6, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff, and Community Members,

As we have continued to plan for the reopening of school, positive cases within our County and Region have continued to climb to their highest totals to date. As you are probably aware, nearly all of the St. Louis County and City Schools have decided to start their school years completely virtual.

One of the largest factors we must account for are how to maintain “in-person” school as safety and social distancing guidelines have been increased. In addition, we face a huge obstacle in keeping our doors open under the guidelines in place for contact tracing. The contact tracing guidelines currently stipulate that any individual who is within 6 feet of an individual who has tested positive for a period of 15 minutes or longer (whether wearing a mask or not) must quarantine for 14 days. In addition, with the contact tracing, the turnaround to find out the results of a test is taking a considerable amount of time, due to the number of people being tested, which causes these individuals to be out of school for approximately 10 days or longer. With current class sizes for a regular 5-day in person setting, social distancing to avoid those exposure guidelines is simply not possible. This, more than likely, could result in large numbers of students and staff having to be quarantined due to each case, possibly even multiple times.

Therefore, we are reaching out today to inform you of changes to our reopening plans as this situation continues to develop. This action reflects evidence from the County that positive cases of COVID-19 continue to increase. As of today, we believe that bringing 100% of our students and employees together would not allow for us to put the necessary protocols in place to best mitigate exposure to the virus and keep everyone safe. Furthermore, after weeks of monitoring and gathering information from our summer school programs, along with data received from the Jefferson County Health Department and guidance on smaller class sizes and the utilization of masks, we find that opening with our original plan would significantly increase the likelihood that we would be forced to move to an all-virtual educational model. Our desire remains to bring students back to school as soon as possible, as we believe that is best for most students. **By starting at a slower pace for the first few weeks, we give ourselves a much better chance of sustaining and moving to an all 5-day week.**

**Accordingly, the model that we will begin the 2020-2021 school year with will be a hybrid of in-person and virtual learning.** This plan will allow us to attain multiple goals: return students and staff to campus, sustain on-campus face to face learning and access to resources, provide space to effectively social distance both in buildings and on buses, as well as continue to offer extracurricular activities. **Our plan is to incorporate this “hybrid learning” through Labor Day week, which concludes on September 11, 2020.** At that time, we will have an exact count of who has chosen the virtual option, how social distancing is working, and how the positive cases of COVID-19 continue to trend.

If we have a higher percentage of students who have selected the all virtual option, and social distancing and other precautionary methods are being successful and continue to be, along with the downward trend of positive cases, the District will review all data and look to go to a 5-day week. If at that time the situation has not improved, we will continue with this model through the remainder of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter and then make a determination of how to proceed for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter at that time.

The District recognizes that some families are uncomfortable with resuming “in-person” school of any type at this time. As a result, **the District will continue to offer a completely virtual option.** Families who choose this option will be utilizing the “Owls@Home” virtual program, which will be taught by Windsor C-1 teachers. This will not be the same virtual instruction that most encountered when school was dismissed on March 17<sup>th</sup> when we were forced to close on an emergency basis. The “Owls@Home” program will have increased rigor and much more closely resemble what one would be experiencing in the regular classroom setting.

**Building principals will be communicating with families by Friday, August 7, 2020,** at the latest, in order to provide their building specific plans for your child.

We had great success with our summer schools, which was due to having lower class sizes where we could keep students socially distanced. We want to use that same concept to have some “in school” success vs. having our students remain solely at home; **our children need to be back in school for the long-term and sacrificing some short-term to accomplish this gives us a much stronger opportunity to make that happen.**

All of us associated with the Windsor C-1 School District would like to thank you for your patience, understanding, flexibility, communication, and your willingness to do what is necessary to make our start to the school year as successful as possible. This will be a long process and it will also be a school year full of challenges and obstacles that we have never seen before as a school or as families. These are very difficult decisions and we realize we will not have a consensus on all decisions. But, at the end of the day, it is imperative to move forward as a collective group with the common goal of all working together to get our students back to school for the long-term for their educational growth and advancement. Thank you, again.

Sincerely,



Dr. Joel B. Holland  
Superintendent