

## ATTENTION PARENTS & GUARDIANS –

As all of you know, we just recently received the final set of guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education. One of the biggest changes with these final requirements was the mandate now to offer Remote Learning to all students & families, not just to those who have documentation regarding being medically fragile. Up until this point in time, we were planning to offer it only to the medically fragile who were unable to return to in-person teaching and learning due to documented medical issues.

At this time, we feel that we are ready to share our complete Return to School plan with parents, students, and staff. However, please remember that this information could change based on future mandates received by the Governor, Illinois State Board of Education or Illinois Department of Public Health. Important also to note... in order to successfully switch gears after receiving these recent changes from the state, we have decided to delay the **1<sup>st</sup> day of student attendance until Wednesday, August 26<sup>th</sup>**. This additional time will undoubtedly be needed by our staff and administration in order to effectively plan and ready themselves for the kickoff of this new school year.

With the new state requirements and guidelines in hand, in combination with the recent COVID-related concerns which hit close to home, we decided to reach out again at the end of this past week to seek current feedback from both parents and staff. With approximately 800 student / parent responses currently submitted, the overall percentage of students who would likely be interested in full e-learning is approximately 40%, with the remaining 60% indicating a preference for return to full day in-person teaching & learning. Of course, these percentages vary somewhat from one grade level to the next, and from one building to the next. But those are the overall numbers of the most recent survey, which bear out overall pretty consistently.

In moving forward, although we are anticipating for the number of students who actually decide to enroll in Remote Learning for the beginning of the school year to be a little lower than the survey percentages, we have decided to proceed as outlined below, offering a choice between In-Person Instruction and Remote Learning to all students and families. Please be aware that Remote Learning / e-Learning will look much different than last spring. Any teacher who is engaged in remote learning / e-learning with students will be teaching from their regular classroom at the school building in which they are assigned. The state is requiring synchronous, real-time instruction to be offered to students daily in remote learning. Teachers who are assigned to teach via Remote Learning will be working just as if students were physically in their classrooms each day. Students will follow the regular school day schedule at each building. Live interaction will be required for all remote learning classes (via google meets, facebook live, or other e-learning tools); and the regular master schedules will be followed by both students and staff in a remote learning environment. This will be true of any classes beginning the school year in a Remote Learning format. As usual, daily attendance will be taken and regular classroom grades will be assigned, just as if students were learning in-person at school. Grades will be assigned to classwork and assessments just as if students were in the classroom. If remote learning students are not available at the times lessons are being presented by teachers, they will be considered absent. The rigor and expectations for teaching and learning will be the same for in-person and remote learners.

- We are now anticipating offering both in-person and remote instruction to all students & families throughout the school district at the beginning of this new year.

- All parents & guardians must complete the **In-Person and Remote Learning Selection** form by **Wednesday, August 5, 2020**. Selections made will be for a commitment to enroll in this fashion throughout the entire 1st trimester / Semester. See link below...
- In grades k-5, we are anticipating offering at least one Remote Learning section or class per grade level, while also offering multiple in-person classes. The remote learning sections would be taught by teachers who are willing to voluntarily teaching in this format. Based on initial Staff results, that does not appear to be a problem to overcome. All others will teach in-person with all safety measures and precautions in place.
- At WMS, the plan is for staff to teach multiple classes of in-person instruction within their content area each day, while also teaching at least 1 online class section of Remote Learning of the same content. Students selecting e-learning would be given a schedule to follow remotely from home each day via Google Classroom and other e-learning tools. Remote learning students will be required to actively participate in remote learning / e-learning each day according to the time schedule provided. All middle school Remote Learning classes will be conducted live, in real-time during the regular school day. It will be just as if they were learning at school, but they will be participating virtually. This will allow for the remote learning option, while also driving down in-person enrollment numbers and class sizes, which will allow for greater amounts of social distancing and other safety-related measures.
- WHS students enrolling in Remote Learning will be engaged with an online academic program such as Apex Learning, or something similar, while also engaging with an identified staff member to reinforce learning and receive guidance / remediation services. Students would be required to be available to complete course assignments & activities during regular school hours. Grades will be assigned and attendance / participation will be monitored with appropriate measures in place to monitor active remote learning participation.

Again, please be aware that the Wilmington School District is making plans to provide normal on-site, in-person instruction in each of its four buildings at the beginning of the new school year; while at the same time, a remote learning option will also be available, for any students or families who would prefer that form of instruction as we begin this new school year.

In order to effectively plan for the start of this new school year, we are going to ask **ALL parents & guardians** to complete an **In-Person and Remote Learning Selection form** for all individual students by Wednesday, August 5, 2020. This form can be found at: <https://forms.gle/QbRFvJ7pCZ8BxaW99>.

**Please be aware that whatever final selection is made will be in place at least throughout the entire 1st trimester for students in k-8 and throughout the entire 1st semester for high school students.**

For all of our students and families who are deciding to return to regular in-person teaching & learning at the beginning of the new year, you will find our entire Return to School plan in the attached document. This information will also be posted on the Covid link on the main Wilmington School District website.

If selecting to return to In-Person instruction at the beginning of the new school year, we must have a documented commitment on file from parents to complete a Daily Self-Certification Temperature Check & Symptom Screening. This is a commitment for parents to daily check their child's temperature and screen for any potential symptoms prior to leaving the house for school each morning. This will be documented also through the **In-Person and Remote Learning Selection** form can be found at <https://forms.gle/QbRFvJ7pCZ8BxaW99>.

This form and additional information will also be available on the district website at <https://www.wilmington.will.k12.il.us/COVID-19-Updates>.

**All parents & guardians must complete the In-Person and Remote Learning Selection form by Wednesday, August 5, 2020.**

You will find the following state-driven requirements in our final plan which have been documented for all Illinois school districts to follow during the upcoming school year. Please be aware that each of these following cornerstones will be included in our final return to school plan in Wilmington.

- Students and Staff must wear cloth face masks, unless they are younger than 2 years of age, have trouble breathing or are unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance;
- No more than 50 individuals can be in one space at the same time;
- Social distancing should be observed, whenever possible;
- Individual students (parents) and staff will likely be required to conduct daily self-symptom screenings and temperature checks, self-certifying each morning that they are symptom-free... healthy, well & safe to attend school; and
- A requirement for an increase in school-wide cleaning and disinfection.

Thank you again for your patience and understanding as we continue working together to get through this crazy situation. Please be aware that in order to successfully finalize all plans for a successful and safe beginning to the new year, we have decided to delay the first day of student attendance to **Wednesday, August 26**. We wanted to make students and parents aware of that adjustment ASAP.

Also, please remember that we will continue to follow dictates and guidance from the Governor, State Board, and IDPH. Although we are well aware that future changes in guidance could potentially affect our planning at any point in the future, we are confident at this time in the Return to School plan which is being shared today.

Thanks again for your patience and understanding. We will continue working together to get through this challenging situation. Stay well and safe.

Sincerely,

Matt Swick

Superintendent of Schools

Wilmington School District