



## Jennings County School Corporation

### OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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*Teresa A. Brown, Superintendent*

November 12, 2020

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Dear JCSC Families,

As you know in Jennings County, we have been experiencing an increased number of COVID-19 cases over the past few weeks. Keeping kids in school for face to face instruction continues to be our goal. We know it is best for kids. However, with the pandemic ramping up, and it being expected to continue on this pathway for the next few months, we are making some changes to allow us to function safely.

We have had to close Hayden and North Vernon Elementary until November 30<sup>th</sup> due to widespread close contacts of positive COVID cases and a shortage of staff. With the exception of one school, we have every building experiencing large numbers of student and staff absences. We now have 28 staff members out due to COVID or close contact reasons (not counting JCHS or Hayden). With JCHS and Hayden included, we have 48 staff members out for COVID related reasons. When speaking with our health department today, I was told the community spread is significant, and it is "escalating at a high rate".

Therefore, beginning Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, we will be moving the entire district to virtual learning until November 30<sup>th</sup>. This is actually for seven school days due to Thanksgiving Vacation. We will allow sports/ECAs to resume on November 16<sup>th</sup> for JCHS, so teams can begin getting in practices etc... (with strict protocols being enforced). JCMS and elementary schools will wait until November 30<sup>th</sup> to resume sports/ECAs. When sports and after school activities resume, there will be some additional limitations for spectators and attendance. We will provide you with updated guidance soon. The Governor's order expected tomorrow will significantly limit facility capacity and attendance depending on our county's level of community spread as determined by the color-coded state dashboard. We do hope to allow students to participate in as many after school sports and activities as we can safely offer.

When students return to school on November 30<sup>th</sup>, our elementary students will return to their normal classrooms five days a week with safety protocols strictly followed. Elementary schools are able to socially distance to a large extent due to the stagnant classrooms. Secondary schools (grades 7-12) have more difficulty with social distancing due to the larger groups of students. We know it is important during this surge in COVID cases to provide more social distancing and smaller class sizes for middle and high school students.

Beginning November 30<sup>th</sup>, we plan to begin hybrid instruction for the rest of the semester (three weeks--through December) for the middle school and high school. Both buildings will have one group (last names A-K) come on Mondays and Thursdays and a second group (last names L-Z) in the building on Tuesdays and Fridays. This will allow every teacher to see every student twice each week-- once in person and once via Google Meet. It will allow the students to be truly spaced apart and control the numbers together.

**Stronger Together**

Students will follow their regular schedule at school and at home so that all the students will get instruction either at school or at home from their teacher at the same time. (This is the current middle school model.) The Career Center students will still attend their classes as scheduled for now.

On Wednesdays, the JCMS and JCHS students will be engaged in a Panther Day (all classes) model and would be able to get small group or intervention help with recorded lessons and activities available for regular instruction. During virtual learning (November 16<sup>th</sup> – November 24<sup>th</sup>), we are also using Wednesdays for recorded lessons, instead of live Google Meets, so teachers have time for meetings with small groups of students to provide more individualized help.

I understand that it is disappointing that students will not have traditional school five days a week at JCMS and JCHS in December; however, if we do not limit the spread of COVID as a community, our students will lose this opportunity completely. In December, we will reevaluate the best way to begin the new semester in January when we see how the data is trending.

We will continue to provide students with meals during weekly pick-ups, and you will receive information each week. On Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, we will have our first drive thru pick-up for students at each school. The meal kits contain five complete breakfasts and five complete lunches.

If you need assistance with a hotspot for your child for learning, you can contact the tech hotline at 812-352-1921.

I appreciate your patience and understanding as we continue to navigate through this pandemic. I will keep you posted and communicate as changes are necessary. We will get through this pandemic together.

Sincerely,

Teresa A. Brown  
Superintendent  
Jennings County School Corporation

**Timeline:**

November 16-24:	Virtual Learning: Follow schedules sent by teachers
November 16:	JCHS athletics and after school activities resume with strict protocols
November 20:	Meals available 10:00 am-1:00 pm at each school
November 25-November 29:	Thanksgiving Break
November 30:	School resumes for elementary students
November 30:	JCMS and JCHS students begin following a hybrid model for in person attendance: Last names A-K (Mondays and Thursdays) Last names L-Z (Tuesdays and Fridays)