

Dear Parents,

First I want to restate our plan for Fall 2020: Based on the number of active cases in Freeborn County, we will have ALL students in grades K-12 start school back in our buildings for In-Person Learning.

Based on the data driven decision we have made there is a critical decision that you, as parents, need to make and that is whether or not you will be sending your child to school for In-Person learning. This is an incredibly important decision and you will need to weigh all the factors before making a decision. Some factors that I believe are important for you to consider:

1. We are basing our decision to start with In-Person Learning on the county wide numbers of Covid-19 infections. Based on those numbers we believe it is safe for students to be in our building. We will continue to use data to make all decisions about teaching models.
2. Distance Learning (DL) for secondary students (Gr. 7-12) will mirror a “normal” schedule where students are expected to log-in for every class, every day at the scheduled time. They are expected to stay logged in for the entire class period and will receive instruction at the same time as those students who are in the building. They will be expected to complete assignments and assessments on the same time schedule as students who are in the building.
3. Distance Learning (DL) for elementary students (Gr. K-6) will be similar to a “normal” schedule. Each grade level teacher will create a schedule for the times that students will be required to log-in to participate in class. They will not have to stay logged in for the entire day but will be expected to log in several times throughout the day. They will be expected to complete assignments and assessments on the same time schedule as students who are in the building.
4. You can choose to start or go to Distance Learning at any time. Once the decision has been made students will be **required** to continue with Distance Learning until the end of the First Quarter.

Distance Learning this Fall will look nothing like it did last Spring. When we were asked to create a Distance Learning model last Spring we had a very small window to create a plan. We also tried to create a plan that allowed parents the time to help their children as you were also put into a difficult position. We believe strongly that we need to return to the same level of expectations we have always had, regardless of which model families choose.

Another critical item that we will need your help with is determining the health of your children **BEFORE** they leave for school. Based on the guidelines we have been provided, if a student or staff member has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, they should not be in school. Thus if that temperature threshold is reached at any time of the day, those students will be isolated from everyone else and parents will be called to come to school to pick up their child. As a parent I know how tough it is to receive the phone call that your child is sick and how much work it can be to rearrange your day. So we are asking that you assess your child’s health before they leave to allow you to make immediate arrangements. A worst case scenario is a student comes to school after being exposed to Covid-19 and spreads the virus. One infected student could theoretically cause the entire school district to switch to Distance Learning. Please take the time every day to ask your child how they are feeling and take their temperature. If all parents take a few minutes before school each day it could help everyone else stay healthy and in school.

Of course the other hot topic is that of masks and face coverings. As I have stated and will continue to state, this requirement is a state mandate. This is not something we can choose to ignore. There are a wide variety of acceptable masks and face coverings that your children can wear. Every student will be provided a cloth mask at no charge. I don't know what these masks look like as the state is providing them to all students and staff members. All staff members will be instructed to remind students to put on or pull up face masks in classrooms and hallways. We are not going to make mask wearing a disciplinary issue unless a student continually pushes back and they make it an issue. Whether you agree or disagree with the mask wearing mandate is not relevant. This is a requirement to enter the school building and if a student does not or will not wear a mask, the only option will be for that student to start Distance Learning.

Bottom line for this school year is it is going to be very fluid and ever changing. We cannot do this without your help. Children model what their parents say and do. They look to you for guidance and direction. If you help them understand why we are taking the precautions we are, they will hopefully carry that over into their school day. If you disagree and openly criticize the requirements we are asked to adhere to, the school year will be even more difficult. As a whole, the families and community members have always supported Glenville-Emmons School. This is just another time when we are asking you to help us make a difficult and stressful situation a little more tolerable.

To recap what we need from you:

- 1. If you are planning to use Distance Learning to start the school year, please call the school and let us know. School Phone #: (507) 448-2889**
- 2. Monitor your child's temperature and health, every day.**
- 3. Support the state mandated mask requirement for all students in grades K-12**

Thank you for your continued support and patience!

Superintendent Brian Shanks