

**July 1, 2020**

**Dear Walnut Community and Families,**

**Walnut Elementary School appreciates the patience and consideration of our families and community during this time. Per Governor Holcomb's order, schools may open facilities July 1. The Indiana Department of Education, in conjunction with the Indiana Department of Health and the Indiana Family and Social Services Agency released guidance for the reopening of Indiana schools. Walnut Elementary has been working with Southmont school leaders and the Montgomery County Health Department to develop a re-entry plan to safely welcome your students back to our school.**

**The relationship between families and schools is essential to student academic, social, and emotional success. School employees will be receiving training about symptoms and screening measures. Parents are encouraged to be aware of the health of their students, only sending them to school if they are well.**

**We will be starting school on our scheduled date, August 6, 2020. In order to have students return, we must follow procedures to ensure the health and wellness of students, staff, and their families. This plan will be fluid and change as we proceed with the school year. Please be prepared to observe these guidelines.**

### **How School will Look & Operate**

- Students are encouraged to participate in in-person instruction while following the guidelines outlined in this document.
- E-Learning will be an option for students with vulnerable medical conditions or those concerned to return to our campuses during the COVID-19 pandemic who meet eligibility requirements. Parents can communicate student health related concerns and considerations directly to the building principal.
- Visitors and guests will be restricted.
- Fall field trips will not be scheduled as we focus on lost instructional time.
- Spring field trips will be considered on a case by case basis.
- Large group gatherings such as Back to School Night, Grandparents Day and musical programs will be altered to adhere to health and safety guidelines.
- An Alternate Command Structure is in place to ensure the building runs smoothly regardless of any staff absence.
- In order to limit contact, promote social distancing and reduce movement/contact among students and staff students will remain with their classroom cohorts as much as possible. For example, when possible, special teachers will travel to homeroom classrooms to conduct their lessons.
- Intentional health and safety education will be taught on the following topics: mask wearing, social distancing, hand washing, healthy habits and other relevant topics. Staff will utilize procedures and visual reminders to promote these habits, such as visual social distancing markers on the floors to help social distance students.

- Students will be asked to bring in a clear water bottle and mask each day.
- Safety drills will be altered to prioritize social distancing
- Special Education case conferences and other meetings with guests from outside the building will be held virtually.

### **How Classrooms will Look & Operate**

- Class locations and seating arrangements will prioritize social distancing.
- Students will be assigned seats in all areas of the building.
- Shared materials will be limited. Cleaning & disinfection will occur on any shared materials.
- Excess furniture will be removed from the classroom to promote social distancing, and desks will be in rows and facing forward.
- Staff will use the Chromebook as much as possible to prevent sharing of physical resources that may spread the virus.

### **Curriculum & Instruction**

- Students are encouraged to participate in in-person instruction while following the guidelines outlined in this document.
- E-Learning will be an option for students with vulnerable medical conditions or those concerned to return to our campuses during the COVID-19 pandemic who meet eligibility requirements.
- E-Learning will be conducted in real-time, where students will access a live video feed of their teacher, teaching throughout the day.
- Curriculum and Instruction will focus on remediation of high impact standards from the 2019-2020 school year and new instruction on current grade level standards.

### **Attendance**

- Discontinue perfect attendance incentives.

### **Health & Safety**

- Identify and separate space in school clinics to treat symptomatic students.
- Restrict visitors and guests in our school buildings.
- Review and/or create student health plans. Work with families and/or related physicians to determine if education services and/or health plans need to be revised to address the need to minimize infection and account for mental health-related issues.
- Require staff and students to have a mask with them at all times. There will be certain situations when wearing a mask will be required for both students and staff.
- Employ enhanced cleaning procedures with additional hand sanitizer stations and frequent hand washing.
- [https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/20\\_Return%20to%20School\\_Parenting%20Screening.pdf](https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/20_Return%20to%20School_Parenting%20Screening.pdf)

- We will be tracking reasons for student and staff absences and submitting daily health reports to the central office to stay informed while making decisions.

Families are expected to monitor their children daily for any symptoms including a daily temperature check. This Indiana State Department of Health has created information on COVID-19 Screening for Families; please, view that information here:

[https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/20\\_Return%20to%20School\\_Parenting%20Screening.pdf](https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/files/20_Return%20to%20School_Parenting%20Screening.pdf)

Students with symptoms should be kept home as per CDC and ISDH guidelines (see link). Students returning to (or starting) school must be at least 10 days since the onset of illness, symptoms must be improved and they must not have had fever for the last 72 hours without the aid of fever reducing medication.

## **Transportation**

- Students who choose to ride the bus will be required to wear masks.
- Students who ride the bus will be assigned seats with students from the same household seated together.
- Once at school, dismissal from the bus will be staggered to promote social distancing.
- Car rider pick up and drop off procedures will remain the same with the exception that students should enter and exit the car based on a staff directive, so that we can promote social distancing.

## **Masks**

- Staff and students will be required to have a mask with them at all times. There will be certain situations, where social distancing is not possible, that staff and students are required to wear masks. For example, the state health official recommended that students and staff who are seated and practicing distancing are able to remove their face masks/coverings.
- Southmont Schools will supply masks for all students and staff.
- Masks will be labeled to eliminate the accidental sharing of masks.
- Specific guidelines have been established to teach staff and students when, where and how to wear masks and care for them.

## **Food and Water**

- Adjust lunches to maximize available open space and utilize alternate scheduling and lunch locations to adhere to safety guidelines.
- Breakfast will be a “grab and go” style for all students.
- Discontinue food sharing between students and buffet line-style food service.
- Distance students while eating.
- Allow the use of water bottles brought from home and use of touchless bottle fillers at school.

## **Playground and Physical Education**

- Disinfect playground equipment such as swings, climbing bars, and slides daily. Students will wash hands before they go out and when they come in. We will alternate use of equipment so it can be cleaned and disinfected between use.
- Clean and disinfect playground equipment such as balls, frisbees, jump ropes, etc., daily.
- Minimize the sharing of physical education equipment. When equipment is used by students in physical education, it will be cleaned and disinfected daily.