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Dear Families,

Thank you for engaging in the planning process to reopen Shawnee Mission schools. Your input and feedback has helped us tremendously in preparing for the 2020-2021 school year. We recognize this is a challenging time for families as we create a new normal for what learning looks like this school year.

An important next step is for parents to select what learning option they want for their child(ren) first semester. You have two options:

1. In-Person Learning
2. Remote Learning (Online ONLY Program).

[For a video explaining both models, click here.](#)

[To make your selection in Skyward click here.](#) If you have specific questions related to your selection, please contact your building principal.

We ask you to make your final decision by Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 5:00 pm.

We recognize the challenge of making this decision with limited information. However, we cannot complete the planning process

for staffing our In-Person Learning and Remote Learning (On-line ONLY) models until we know how many students we have in each option.

Here is additional information on both models:

In both the In-Person and On-line Learning models:

- Assessments and grades will be used
- Attendance will be taken daily
- Students will have regular contact with Shawnee Mission School District teachers/support staff

In-Person Learning:

- Students of families selecting In-Person Learning will be assigned to their home school based on their address or approved transfer school.
- Depending on the status of COVID-19 cases in Johnson County, students will receive instruction in one of these three scenarios:
 - In-Person Learning (all students attend),
 - Hybrid Learning (students attend two days a week on alternating scheduled), or
 - Remote Learning (all students learn from home).
- Any movement between the scenarios will be based on gating criteria developed by the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (which you can see [here](#)), and our ability to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

- In the In-Person and Hybrid Learning scenarios, per the Governor's executive order, masks will be required. Hand sanitizer will be supplied and social distancing rules will be followed. There will be new mitigation measures for transportation, facility cleaning, and the provision of meals in every building.
- In instances of positive COVID-19 tests or potential exposure to COVID-19 in our schools, our district will work in partnership with the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment to determine appropriate action. You can read more about that process [here](#).

Remote Learning

- Students of families selecting Remote Learning will be assigned to a Remote Learning Shawnee Mission School District teacher and will remain in that remote class for the semester.
- Enrollment at the home school will remain intact. Students will take classes remotely throughout the semester. Students with an IEP: Prior to the first day of school a member of your child's IEP team will be in touch with you to discuss the implementation of services.

After families select their model, each student will be required to remain within that option for the rest of the first semester. This selection is critical for our ability to assign and design the staffing necessary for each model. We will work to reach families who are new to the district as well as families

starting Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten this fall, so they can make their selection.

For parents who choose the In-Person Learning option, their child will have the opportunity to attend class at school, when health conditions allow. Final guidance from the Johnson County Department of Health (JCDHE) to school districts on which scenario we can start school in is expected the week of August 17, 2020. The district can take a more restrictive approach to In-Person Learning. For example, if school were to start in JCDHE's "yellow" learning mode, both elementary and secondary students in SMSD would attend school in the "hybrid" model. We will communicate our decision with parents, staff and community, once we have the County's health data guidance.

For parents who choose the Remote Learning (Online ONLY Program) option, their child will be on a set schedule for the semester. You know your child will learn from home. This helps in planning what daily life looks like for your family. Student access to some elective courses in high school may be limited in our Remote Learning (Online Only) scenario depending on enrollment.

A Science-Based, Safety-First Approach

SMSD is taking a science-based, safety first approach in making decisions. Important to this approach was yesterday's release of the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) guidance and gating criteria for school districts for when it is safe to have in-person instruction. [Please review this guidance here.](#)

SMSD is working closely with JCDHE to monitor health data and make decisions about when In-Person Learning is safe to conduct. Student and staff safety is a top priority when conducting In-Person Learning. Please understand that the mode in which In-Person Learning operates (all students in class, hybrid: students attending class on two assigned days during the week with the other days remote, or remote only) is subject to change during the semester based on health indicators. We will provide a minimum 14-day notice when moving from one mode of instruction to another, except in situations requiring immediate action.

2020-21 District Calendar Adjusted

Please note that school starts for students in grades 1-6, 7, 9 and 12 on September 8, 2020. [Click here for the newly approved calendar for the 2020-2021 school year.](#) This calendar was revised with multiple changes and we encourage everyone to review it closely. These changes were needed so we could meet the state requirements to reach 1,116 hours of instruction time for each student.

I know these are challenging times. We all want school to resume as normal. One day it will. Until that time, we will continue to work as a community to provide a safe learning and working environment as we follow through on our commitment to help every child to be a successful learner.

Sincerely,

Mike Fulton
SMSD Superintendent