



Northgate School District

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October 28, 2020

Dear Virtual Northgate Families,

We will schedule meetings for all virtual families later in November to discuss how we can continue to adapt to each student's needs. These meetings will be broken down by grade levels since the instructional delivery models vary. Information about the meetings will be communicated via email, our website, and through our Facebook page.

For our elementary families:

As indicated in our previous communications, we are able to dedicate personnel to live stream lessons.

Grades K-2: We have enough staff that will work with our K-2 students who are electing to remain online. These students will follow the same schedule as an in-person cohort with three live instruction days and two asynchronous days. All three of their live days will be online. Students will follow the same pacing and curriculum as the students attending in person.

Grades 3-6: Students in grades 3-6 who remain online will be in their own homeroom section in each building, and will maintain the teachers that they currently have. They will be scheduled just like a student within a normal cohort with three live instruction days and two asynchronous days. All three of their live days will be online.

For our secondary families:

We are aware that this group is specifically interested in having daily live streaming at the secondary level. The educational model that is being implemented has been under development since the summer. It has been informed by research and feedback from the other districts that have previously begun operating under a hybrid model. The option of livestream was analyzed and determined not to be the best course of action for our students. This was looked at through the lens of both content delivery and relationship building.

To deliver content effectively, we need to be able to quickly adapt to changing circumstances without significant disruption to instruction. This is critical for all of our students regardless of what option they choose. We selected an online learning platform, Edgenuity, to be utilized for both our in-person and online students that is endorsed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This means that the curricular content will not vary for students in each of the models.

We also want to ensure that students maintain connection to the school community regardless of whether they are fully virtual, temporarily quarantined, there is an unexpected closure, etc. Taking all of this into consideration along with parent feedback, the decision was made to keep students with their current teachers, have them continue in their current courses, include all students during Wednesday, live streamed lessons, have an advisory group dedicated to virtual students to help them connect as a community, and provide twice daily access to their teachers.

Just like our in-person students, our online students will remain a part of their current courses/cohort. All students, regardless of how they are participating, will receive their instructional content through Edgenuity. When students attend in-person class the teachers will be utilizing Edgenuity. Online students will work asynchronously two days a week when their cohort is attending in-person classes. On these days, they are encouraged to check in with their teachers and participate in advisory. All students will be working asynchronously online for two days. On Wednesdays, all students will be attending regular scheduled online sessions.

Sample Schedule:

Monday: In-person students attend class. Teachers will utilize Edgenuity to deliver content. Virtual students will work on the same content in Edgenuity and are encouraged to connect with their teachers during office hours. They will also participate in live stream advisory lessons.

Tuesday: All students in the cohort complete asynchronous Edgenuity lessons and participate in livestream music classes.

Wednesday: All students will participate in live stream classes with their cohort.

Thursday: Same as Monday

Friday: Same as Tuesday

Finally, it was determined that live streaming would not provide additional benefit for our students. In order to livestream, teachers would need to remain physically next to the camera in order to be seen and heard by the students at home. This would detract from the students in the classroom. Moving around the room to address the students in person would greatly detract from the students learning online. Additionally, there have been incidences of misbehavior online. This is not something we want any of our students subjected to and in a combined in-person/online model the teacher cannot adequately supervise what is occurring. We have learned from neighboring districts that trying to deliver content via a mix of face to face and live streaming is inferior to having a fully developed platform.

In November, we will check in with the parents at the scheduled meetings to see how students are progressing and make some tweaks as needed to ensure they continue to feel connected to the community. We can also discuss ideas to connect them as their own community with their distinct needs.

We continue to be available to any parents who have questions or would like to discuss their child's specific needs. The schedule of parent meetings will be communicated within the next few weeks.

Sincerely,

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