



EDMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Empowering all students to succeed in a changing society

July 7, 2020

Dear EPS Families,

I hope you had a safe and fun Fourth of July, celebrating the freedoms and privileges we enjoy as Americans. The summer is moving along very quickly, and in under six weeks' time we will begin a new school year unlike any in our history.

Please be assured that nothing is more important to me as we embark upon this journey than the physical and emotional health of all 25,000 students and 3,500 employees of the Edmond Public Schools family. Every preventive measure we initiate this year will be with student and staff safety in mind. To that end, last night board members approved new policies and updated existing ones to help ensure that we can create a safe, flexible, and positive learning environment for students and staff when schools reopen on August 13.

Additionally, district administrators gave a report to school board members on our back-to-school guidelines that students and staff will be expected to follow. Please be assured that every department in the district has played a role in collaborative problem-solving to implement precautions and practices intended to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. With that being said, the protocols found below are intended to mitigate, not eliminate, the risk of exposure to COVID-19. They should be considered fluid, and likely to change as the course of the virus progresses in unpredictable ways.

[Guidelines for Elementary Schools](#)

[Guidelines for Secondary Schools](#)

For your convenience, these guidelines are also detailed on www.edmondschools.net.

There, you will also find more in-depth information about our models of instruction. As I shared in a previous email to you, we plan to begin the 2020-2021 school year August 13 in the classroom with traditional face-to-face instruction. We are excited to announce that we will also offer a virtual option to serve families. *Virtual Edmond* is a customized online learning option for families that aligns with the Oklahoma Academic Standards. Highly qualified, certified EPS teachers will provide the online instruction and work closely with

students and parents. You will be receiving information this week about how and when to sign up for *Virtual Edmond*. Posted on our website, you will also find an extensive list of "Frequently Asked Questions" about *Virtual Edmond* intended to help you learn more about this new option.

Given the uncertain nature of the course of COVID-19, it will not be enough to plan only for traditional and virtual options. Additional models of instruction will be necessary in the event that we must close a single school or the entire district due to a dramatic increase in cases of COVID-19 or if we are required to limit the number of students that can be in a building at the same time due to the pandemic. If any such cases arise, we will be ready to immediately implement either a remote or hybrid model of instruction to provide seamless learning for students.

I stand amazed at the hard-working men and women of the EPS community who have researched and rethought every detail about school startup to create a safe, workable learning environment. Despite their diligence, we know that mistakes will be made. Procedures and precautions will not always be executed flawlessly, but I promise that we will endeavor to quickly correct any errors.

We have always enjoyed a wonderful partnership with you, and moving forward we will be counting on your support more than ever. Your grace, patience, and understanding are appreciated as we begin this unprecedented school year. Thank you in advance for your support of Edmond Public Schools. Until my next communication, please stay safe and take care of yourself.

Sincerely,

Bret Towne

Superintendent

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