

November 13, 2020

Dear EPS Staff and Families,

As you are aware, virus transmission rates continue to rise; and earlier today, Oklahoma County moved into the “Red” or high category per the Oklahoma State Department of Education’s (OKSDE) color-coded Covid-19 Alert System.

In addition, in the last few days, we have experienced a significant spike in the number of staff absences at several schools due to Covid 19 positives and quarantines, making it extremely difficult to provide adequate instruction. All across the district, employees are stretched to the breaking point, trying to cover classrooms and ensure adequate supervision of students.

Following the “Return to Learn Plan” approved in July, Edmond Public Schools has made the difficult decision to immediately transition to remote learning until November 30. We understand that moving to remote learning is disruptive for students and families. However, we believe it is in the best interest of student and staff health to take this action at this time.

For your planning purposes, in-person school will resume for A students on Monday, November 30. The first in-person learning day for students on the B schedule will be Thursday, December 3. If the virus transmission rates continue their upward trajectory, the district could remain on a full remote schedule even after November 30. Should that occur, we will communicate that information via our normal delivery methods.

Your child’s teachers will be contacting you for more information about setting up Google Meets and providing instruction and support during this time. If your child is on an IEP or 504, you should review your child’s contingency plan for school shutdown to learn what services your child will receive.

While we must cancel cafeteria meal service, families are free to pick up drive-through meals at any school. Click on this [link](#) for more information regarding meal pick up times.

With the exception of any fall sports which may be advancing to playoffs, all extracurricular and fine arts activities will be canceled until November 30.

I write this today knowing that we are all physically and mentally drained from dealing with this relentless pandemic. I know that we are all experiencing fear, anxiety, sadness, frustration, and anger to the point of Covid exhaustion and surrender. We are seeing that in the letdown of our guard and a relaxation of safety protocols. This is not the time to let down our guard. This is the time when we need to be the most diligent in protecting ourselves against this virus.

As we move into the holiday season, when family and friends will be gathering more, I want to encourage you and your family members to follow the safety protocols that health officials have repeatedly told us will help to limit community spread of the virus. Wash your hands, wear your mask, stay socially distanced when possible, and seriously consider limiting holiday gatherings. The return to school is dependent on reducing Covid exposures.

We appreciate your patience and understanding and look forward to reopening schools on Monday, November 30.

Sincerely,

Bret Towne

Superintendent