



Return to School Plan – Fall 2020

Guiding Principles and Components

RIVER FOREST DISTRICT 90

August 4, 2020

Table of Contents

Part I - Key Principles and Overview

Part II – Teaching and Learning

Part III – Social Emotional Considerations

Part IV – Safety and Operations

Part V – Special Education, Section 504, and Related Services

Part VI – Students with Unique Needs

Part VII – Instructional Technology

Part VIII – Communications

Part IX – Full-Time Remote Learning Option

Part X – Activities and Extracurriculars

Return to School Plan – Fall 2020

RIVER FOREST DISTRICT 90

KEY PRINCIPLES AND OVERVIEW

This “return to school” plan is guided by several key principles that have been essential components of the District 90 philosophy for some time; however, they are particularly important now as our school community responds to the current pandemic. The key principles will drive decision-making about the safest possible way for our District to return to in-person instruction under the guidance of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC). We believe that the best circumstances for teaching and learning include students and staff working side-by-side in school on a daily basis. When this is not safe or permissible, it becomes necessary to create alternate instructional models that can optimize the best elements of in-person learning while accommodating for the safety issues that must be acknowledged and addressed. Keeping our key principles at the fore helps to ensure the intentionality of decisions and that our most important consideration – the needs of individuals – remains the focus. Key principles include:



- Safety
- Equity
- Social Emotional and Physical Wellness
- High Quality Instruction

The key principles cannot be considered in isolation. To ensure that this plan to return students and staff to school safely is functional and serves the needs of all individuals and stakeholder groups, the principles must be considered through an integrated perspective. All are current elements reflected in the D90 Strategic Plan.

DESCRIPTION OF KEY PRINCIPLES

Safety is the cornerstone of the D90 return to school plan. The operational elements of this plan are based on procedures and protocols that are grounded in evidence and established best practice. While it is tempting to make and implement decisions that reflect our wishes about how students and staff might return to school this fall, we need to rely on lessons from science in order to protect students, staff and families as much as possible from the spread of contagion. Likewise, it is important to stress that all members of the school community have a vital role to play in keeping our school community as healthy as possible. We entreat all individuals to abide by the procedures that are established in this plan and shoulder the responsibility to both look after oneself and the well being of others.

Equity must guide the choices that we make so that all individuals are able to benefit from the learning experiences that are available. “Return to school” decisions that present potential barriers and/or limitations for some members of our school community are inequitable and contradict the established core values of our school district. While it is important to acknowledge that every decision will have different impact on individuals and families, minimizing the negative impacts and ensuring that they are not based upon race, culture, disability, economic situation, language, or any other group or individual characteristic is critical. Ensuring access and opportunity is a powerful way to elevate the quality of the learning experience for all students, staff and families in our midst and is foundational to our goals of fostering positive relationships and growing our shared culture of belonging.

Social Emotional and Physical Wellness are the foundational prerequisites to learning. Students (and adults) are currently dealing with a variety of home and life situations that are exacting a heavy cognitive load. District 90 has a responsibility to see that students are equipped with the skills that can help them navigate traumatic times in a resilient, reflective, and positive manner. Since a “sense of loss” is a primary factor during this pandemic, District 90 must actively foster a sense of hope. Steps to accomplish this include incorporating more social emotional content in classroom learning, continuing to provide movement and physical wellness activities, and taking steps to promote stronger relationships and a sense of school/classroom belonging for all students and families.

High Quality Instruction is our primary organizational objective. Teaching and learning are the main activities to which the school district is devoted, and District 90 endeavors to offer an outstanding academic program that is challenging, student-centered, evidence based, and closely aligned with state learning standards. Our faculty, staff, and administration collaborate to ensure both vertical and horizontal fidelity of instruction for every child. A great deal of effort is dedicated in pursuit of the District 90 Mission: “Inspire and empower all learners to achieve their personal best.”

Inspire . . . Empower . . . Achieve

OVERVIEW OF PLAN DEVELOPMENT

To ensure that the plan represents the comprehensive needs of the school community, it is vital that it encompasses the perspectives, experiences, and voices of all stakeholder groups. The elements contained within this plan are the result of significant deliberation and research on the part of numerous individuals and District action teams/work groups. These groups include:

D90 Remote Learning Action Team (RLAT):

The District activated the Remote Learning Action Team before the end of the school year, with the majority of the team’s work being conducted during June and into early July. The team was asked to evaluate the successes and drawbacks of the way that the *D90 Remote Learning Plan* was implemented during spring 2020. They were provided with perception data from both parent and student feedback surveys administered during the month of May. The Remote Learning Action Team was asked to provide recommendations regarding the manner in which remote learning should be modified to improve the instructional experience under circumstances in which it might be activated in the coming school year. While the RLAT recommendations were used to inform administrative decision-making about the instructional program, they were also shared with the Board of Education and community to build increased understanding among stakeholders and stakeholder

groups regarding the varied experiences that individuals had with remote learning and how it could be substantially refined to meet the needs of students in the fall.

D90 Safety and Operations Action Team (SOAT):

To prepare for the safe and compliant return to school operations in the fall, District 90 formed a team of individuals who were tasked with establishing necessary procedures and tactics. This team was established as a superintendent's advisory committee, and was organized as the *Safety and Operations Action Team (SOAT)*. The SOAT was comprised of selected individuals within the D90 school community who have experience with the operations of our schools, expertise in cleaning and facilities management, oversight of resources, responsibility for student and staff health, and practical considerations around school safety. The SOAT made numerous recommendations within three distinct areas, including facility safety, PPE and safety materials/supplies, and health/safety related procedures that will be implemented in all three schools this fall.

D90 Social Emotional Wellness Team (SEWT):

During the spring of 2020, students, staff and families endured a significant amount of trauma. It is likely that this trauma is ongoing and will continue into the start of the school year. In addition to the stresses of remote learning, the new school year will introduce unexpected challenges. It is critical that the District use a "social emotional lens" to establish the path forward so that all students, staff, and families are able to thrive and succeed to the highest degree possible. For this reason, the District established the Social Emotional Wellness Team (SEWT) to identify and prioritize vital social emotional supports as part of our "return to school" plan. The SEWT is comprised of school social workers, psychologists, teachers, and administrators. This team aspires to further effectuate a climate of belonging and an ethic of care for all members of the school community.

D90 Special Education and Related Services Team (SERST):

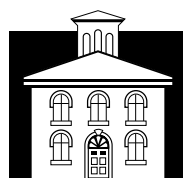
Upon return to school in the fall, District 90 will continue to serve all students, including students receiving special education and related services, under laws governing the provision of "free, appropriate public education." Special needs and

related service delivery models will continue to comport with past D90 practices, although the manner in which services will be provided may vary depending upon the way in which students and staff safely return to school at the end of the summer. Special education teachers and related service providers will continue to work closely with students and families to ensure that individualized education plans (IEP's) guide service provision and instructional decision-making. The Special Education and Related Services Team (SERST) is tasked with overseeing the best approach to continue supporting IEP and 504 Plan students - as well as their families – in accessing the curricula in an optimal way. This team is comprised of D90 special educators, related service providers, general education teachers, and school administrators.

In addition, the following inputs also helped to guide the development of the D90 “Return to School” plan:

- Directives from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the Cook County Health Department
- Guidance from educational associations and industry experts
- Scientific, evidence-based research
- Student, staff, and family survey feedback
- Staff, student, and family input on the Remote Learning Action Team (RLAT) and Safety and Operations Action Team (SOAT)
- Practical lessons learned during spring 2020

It is important to note that this operations plan was designed as an adaptive document that will allow for revision, and that it evolves as conditions related to COVID-19 and the Governor’s “Restore Illinois” phases change over time. Communications regarding the plan’s development will be shared broadly and updates will be provided to all members of the school community on a regular basis.



River Forest
Public Schools

The D90 Return to School Plan is intended to reflect the essential elements that support our goal of continuous improvement, constantly moving “toward excellence for all.” This effort includes three areas of focus: **Teaching, Learning & Innovation, Community & Culture, and Structures for Success.** The core of our work is the District 90 Vision for Equity, which informs our strategic focus, inspiring new ways of thinking and acting.



TEACHING AND LEARNING

Elementary School

When students are able to reconvene safely, elementary school students will return to in-person instruction each day. Students' classes will function as cohorts that will remain together for the duration of the day. District 90 half-day Inclusive Pre-School and Kindergarten programs will also receive daily in-person instruction. Non-essential furniture will be removed from classrooms to allow for a six-foot distance between students' desks, and between students and classroom teachers. Each elementary school will develop a schedule for bathroom breaks and the filling of water bottles for each class to ensure appropriate social distancing outside of the classrooms throughout the day.

Core instruction will be delivered at established times each day to provide consistency and allow students who have opted for full remote learning to engage fully in their learning. Students who are learning remotely will be able to participate in synchronous (real time) lessons with their teacher and classmates. The traditional practices of providing students with grades and feedback on assignments and projects will continue both in-person and for students participating remotely.

Middle School

When students are able to reconvene safely, Middle School students will participate in a hybrid-learning format. Students will be divided into two groups (Group A and Group B) to reduce school and classroom density. Members of the same family will be assigned to the same group. In this model, students will attend remotely and in-person on an alternate day basis. In-person instructional days will occur with students changing classes, and remote instruction days will span at least five hours per day. Middle School students will have lunch in small-group supervised setting.

Instruction will be scheduled at pre-designated times to allow for concurrent in-person and synchronous (real time) remote instruction, as well as offline learning when students apply skills through independent practice or work on projects. Traditional grading practices will resume and students will receive teacher feedback and/or grades on their assignments and assessments. During

hybrid learning, students with heightened needs (such as students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), English Learners, and homeless students) will be scheduled to attend school daily in-person. Parents may opt out of this option, if they choose.



Remote Learning

The Remote Learning Action Team (RLAT), composed of teachers, administrators, parents, students, and a Board of Education member, convened to review the District 90 Remote Learning experience implemented in the Spring of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Remote Learning in District 90 may be initiated in any of the following circumstances:

- A return to Phase Three of the *Restore Illinois* plan requiring school districts to deliver instruction remotely to students
- The inability of the school district to implement or sustain school operations in a safe and functional manner
- Heightened incidence of pandemic illness occurring in the local community
- Medium-length closures due to individual classroom or school closures due to COVID-19 quarantines, “rolling” closures dictated by public health agencies or local COVID-19 counts

- Short term or daily District closure due to inclement weather (i.e. heat warnings, snow days, etc.)

The Remote Learning Action Team conducted an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities based on the spring 2020 rollout and implementation of the District 90 Remote Learning Plan. This analysis resulted in the following recommendations to refine the delivery of remote learning:

- Enhance student engagement through increased synchronous learning, intentional lesson design, increased student choice, and high-interest activities
- Prioritize social-emotional supports for all members of the District 90 community
- Increase accountability through the development of clear remote learning expectations for teachers, parents, and students
- Enhance consistency with grading practices, feedback, instructional rigor across grade level teams
- To the extent possible, consolidate technology and learning platforms to increase efficiency of use
- Coordinate communications from both schools and the District Office

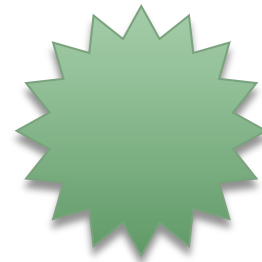
The Remote Learning Action Team recommendations will serve as the foundation for action plan development by the Curriculum, Special Education, Communications, and Technology departments, conducted in partnership with building leadership and teaching staff. Similarly, the District will use these recommendations to ensure that remote learning experiences for students will be robust and engaging.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is imperative that our “Return to School” plan in District 90 attend to the social and emotional needs for all individuals, with particular emphasis on students. The Social and Emotional Wellness Team will be identifying specific goals to address SEL objectives over the course of fall 2020. Some ways to ensure that all members of the school community feel connected and supported include:

- Encouraging transparent communication among all stakeholders

- Understanding that academic development and social-emotional development are strongly interrelated
- Affirming the value of healthy relationships between and among adults and students as a powerful asset
- Seeking opportunities for positive feedback/connection between students and staff
- Acknowledging students' current situation and context
- Providing students with appropriate time and space to process events
- Utilizing school and community resources to provide wellness/mental health supports
- Acknowledging that all individuals in the school community - including students and adults - are experiencing stress, anxiousness, and a sense of loss during the global pandemic
- Ensuring access to District resources, including school social workers and nursing professionals



SAFETY AND OPERATIONS

The Safety and Operations Action Team (SOAT) composed a plan to create the safest environment possible for our physical “return to school,” once it is safe to do so. The plan includes modifications to our facilities; purchasing/deploying personal

protective equipment (PPE) and other supplies and resources; and instituting essential safety procedures.

Facility modifications include items such as:

- Multiple temperature-check areas at each school building
- Signage reminding everyone about social distancing and personal hygiene recommendations
- Plexiglass dividers installed in various locations, including the building main office counters, between each gang bathroom sink and on all teacher desks
- Student seating in all learning spaces that follow guidelines outlined by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Public Health, with extraneous furniture removed from each classroom and stored in storage pods outside of each building
- Electronic door openers installed on the inside and outside of each gang bathroom to allow for hands-free entrance and exit
- Hallways restricting locker, cubby and water fountain use. Hallway water bottle fillers will be available and encouraged. Also, hand washing stations will be installed in the Willard and Roosevelt hallways (these are not required at Lincoln due to a high prevalence of classroom sinks).
- Secondary nurse quarantine locations established to separate students with COVID symptoms from students with everyday health needs

D90 has purchased a supply of PPE for all staff that includes masks (disposable and reusable), gloves, disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer. For staff with specialty assignments, the District has also purchased a supply of gloves, gowns, face shields and KN-95 masks. For students, we have purchased a supply of disposable masks in case students forget, lose or destroy their mask. We have also purchased a supply of disposable masks for visitors in case they forget, as masks will be required to be

worn at all times inside our buildings. All students will also be provided with one washable mask to reuse on a daily basis.

In order to perform temperature checks, D90 has purchased digital-infrared and temporal thermometers. Upgraded filters have been installed in the HVAC system to promote the best possible air quality without overloading the system's performance. Stand-alone HEPA-rated air purifiers have also been purchased for each instructional space. Multiple tents will be installed on the asphalt adjacent to Lincoln and Willard Schools to provide flexible outdoor space for students to eat and convene. In addition, the District will identify heat thresholds under which elementary instruction will be shifted to remote learning in order to prevent heat-related safety issues, which may be more pronounced under mask wearing requirements.



Cleaning and disinfecting the buildings thoroughly is a critical safety issue. The District has purchased a supply of cleaning products for daily disinfecting. In addition, the District has purchased one high-powered, electrostatic sprayer for each building that can sanitize a 900 square foot area after it has been disinfected in approximately 90 seconds. This will be performed each night in all classrooms, bathrooms, and common areas. The custodial staff will be trained on up-to-date cleaning procedures, as well as in the correct use of the new sprayers. The District has also started the process of interviewing for additional custodial support who will have the responsibility of disinfecting restrooms and common areas periodically throughout the day. With regards to hiring additional support personnel, D90 has made arrangements with a nursing contractor to provide a back-up relief nurse who will be present and available in the District on a daily basis.

Understanding and communicating our daily procedures will be of utmost importance. Prior to returning, the District will require all families to sign off to demonstrate their understanding of the "Return to School" addendum to the Student

Handbook. When it is safe for students to reconvene in person, it will be imperative that families respect the importance of keeping any student home who is showing signs of illness. The District will also be requiring families to self-certify each student on a daily basis. For school arrival, students will be assigned a specific time and door number for entry. Upon arrival, social distancing will be expected as students wait to enter the buildings and proceed through the temperature check. Face coverings will be required at all times except when eating or drinking. Students will exit through their assigned door at dismissal, as well. Students with indicated temperatures or apparent symptoms of illness will be escorted to the identified quarantine area and supervised until a parent or guardian arrives to take the child offsite.

District 90 will also require self-certification of staff. Faculty and staff members will also be instructed to stay home if they are showing any signs of illness. To help cover daily staff absences, we have contracted with long-term substitutes exclusively committed to our District.

Visits by non-staff or students will be highly restricted and only allowed when absolutely necessary. All visitors will be required to wear a face covering when inside the building and will be given a disposable mask if they forget. Visitors coming for longer than just a delivery will receive a temperature check and be expected to answer a symptom questionnaire.

Lunch will be eaten in classrooms or in designated small groups in areas located throughout the building, with special considerations given to students with food allergies. All schools will be “nut-free.” Lunch times will be staggered as much as scheduling permits to allow teachers to receive their duty duty-free lunch breaks. PTO-hosted *Fun Lunch* will continue in the coming year, once it is safe to reinstate. Each student’s lunch will be individually wrapped and labeled with their name. Lunches will be boxed by class and delivered to the main office vestibule and placed on the open shelving. Each building will develop a procedure for delivery of *Fun Lunch* to each classroom.

In the PK-4 buildings, students will only transition for bathroom and water breaks, PE and recess, and instruction for “specials classes” (art, music, STEM and library) will be delivered in general education classrooms. Students may also travel with a teacher for other support services. As much as possible, hallway movement will occur with the full class, monitored by the teacher. Bathroom breaks during

instructional time will be at the discretion of the teacher and limited as much as possible. Recess times may be adjusted to limit the number of students present on the playing fields at one time. Teachers will schedule separate recess times to avoid interaction with students outside of their individual class pod. If more than one class is outside at the same time, each class will remain in a designated zone with their class. At Roosevelt, employees who act as hall monitors during passing periods will observe student bathroom use, time spent in bathrooms, user load, and promotion of hand washing. Also, bathroom breaks during instructional time at Roosevelt will be at the discretion of the classroom teacher and limited as much as possible. When students are outside for PE and recess, they will re-enter through multiple doors to promote social distancing.



SPECIAL EDUCATION, SECTION 504, AND RELATED SERVICES

River Forest D90 understands the impact COVID-19 has had on our most vulnerable student populations. We are committed to providing free and appropriate educational opportunities for students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible in alignment with public health guidelines. Additionally, collaboration with families continues to be essential during this time. To address the unique needs of students with disabilities, IEP and 504 team members will continue the work with families to collaboratively identify the most essential services and accommodations for each student that can be provided both directly and indirectly in remote and in-person learning environments. We recognize that each student will have an individual plan based on the learning model selected by the district. When this happens, we will be working diligently to set detailed plans for the delivery of special education services. As we look to reopen schools this fall under Phase 4, we have developed the following guidelines, as suggested by ISBE, to provide a safe and instructionally effective environment to do so. When it is determined that we can physically return students to school safely, the overarching guidelines include the following:

Instruction (Delivery of Special Education and Related Services)

Preschool and Elementary School Students with IEP and 504 Plans: Like all general education students in D90, students with IEP and 504 plans attending Willard and Lincoln will have the option of in-person instruction each day which includes all special education and related services. Teams are working to implement additional safety measures in learning environments where consistent social distancing may not be possible. Additional written guidance related to safety precautions for Early Childhood students is forthcoming.

Preschool students attending RFCC or receiving walk-in speech services: All students with an IEP attending RFCC and receiving walk-in speech services will be provided services remotely while in Phase 4 of reopening plans. An individualized remote learning plan will be developed for each student.

Roosevelt Middle School Special Education Services: While in Phase 4 or reopening, Roosevelt Middle School plans to transition back using a hybrid model once it is safe to do so. In person instruction for special education students will take a tiered approach.

Students with Section 504 Plans: Students with 504 plans are considered general education students. Middle school students are expected to attend school on an A/B schedule and continue to receive accommodations, modifications and services as listed in their 504 plans with appropriate supports in place to address safety concerns. Certain students may be eligible for remote learning instruction due to medical exemption.

Students with IEPs receiving resource level and co-taught services: Students with IEP plans receiving Resource or instructional services will continue to receive services in the least restrictive environment with their general education peers. Middle school students are expected to attend school on an A/B schedule and continue to receive accommodations, modifications and services as listed in their IEP's with appropriate supports in place to address safety concerns. Certain students may be eligible for remote learning instruction due to medical exemption.

Please contact the principal if you would like your child to be considered for in-person instruction every day.

Students in Multi-Needs/Functional (Skills) Program who utilize a functional curriculum: Students in the Multi-Needs (Skills) program will be provided in person instruction 5 days a week, once it is physically safe to return to school. To the best extent possible, students will form their own cohort. Related services provide push-in services in an “engineered classroom” or will be provided by synchronous interventions. Individual access to general education within a second cohort will be scheduled to meet the LRE recommendations of the IEP to the greatest degree possible.

Opting Out of In Person Instruction

The administration will work closely with parents, teachers, school nurses, as well as the student’s medical provider, to determine safe alternatives to in-person instruction for students who are medically fragile or whose parents choose to opt out of in person instruction for other reasons. River Forest School District 90 will consider continuing remote learning for medically fragile students, students at a higher risk of severe illness, and students who live with individuals at higher risk of severe illness for the duration of Phase 4. Appropriate consents must be obtained for communication with outside providers. IEP teams will consider the following:

- Whether the student’s medical condition is conducive to in-person attendance or if needs would best be met remotely
- The student’s behavior and capacities, including the ability to control secretions, cover mouth/nose when sneezing and coughing, ability to maintain distance from other classmates, ability to tolerate wearing a face covering (may consider the option of face shield instead), ability to wash hands with/without assistance, and ability/safety to use hand sanitizer.
- The number of students per classroom and the ability to maintain six-foot distance, when possible
- The best modality to meet the student’s individualized needs after consult with individual student health care providers, if applicable, and IEP teams

For staff working with students who are present for in-person learning, all procedures and policies outlined in District 90 guidance will be followed. In addition, River Forest School District will provide appropriate additional PPE for continuous wear during procedures such as feeding (e.g., plexiglass screens, gowns, gloves, face shields) and where social distance cannot be maintained at all times. Maintaining strict social distancing will not likely be feasible due to the personal nature of common care and services, including feeding, toileting/diaper changing, hand-over-hand assistance, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. Appropriate training will be used in conjunction with PPE.

To be proactive, if a school, district or state school closure is needed, a Remote Learning Plan will be completed for all students who have an IEP as soon as possible. The goal would be that parents, students and staff are aware of the services to be provided to help support students during any remote learning scenario.

Homebound Services

Students that are in need of homebound services due to medical needs will have meetings to reflect appropriate needs once medical certification is received. All homebound tutoring will be done virtually by a tutor, unless assessments are required to be administered. Homebound students receive 5 hours of tutoring for independent online instruction or assignments sent home. Homebound students receive 2 hours of tutoring for synchronous (real time) remote learning instruction. Additional information regarding eligibility for homebound instruction can be found on the District website. Homebound services are not the same as remote instruction.

Face Coverings/Masks

- District 90 has secured face shields and masks that have clear covering to assist with access for students with hearing loss or communications deficits. Staff will be utilizing social stories and other resources when appropriate for students for use of face coverings and providing guidance to families to prepare for wearing face coverings in school.

- Per ISBE guidance, students with disabilities who are unable to wear a face covering may be provided reasonable accommodations per the American with Disabilities Act. There will be some very rare situations that will preclude a student from wearing a mask and who must instead wear a face shield. For example, a student who cannot independently remove a face mask will wear a face shield, a student who is deaf or hard of hearing may require the use of a face shield instead of a face mask, a student with significant sensory needs may not tolerate wearing a face mask or face shield, etc. We will address these situations with families on a case- by-case basis. Parents/guardians must provide sufficient documentation of the medical condition. A note from the physician will be considered, but not necessarily result in an accommodation. The D90 Face Mask Medical Exemption Form should be completed for consideration of medical exemption.

Child Find and Evaluation

D90 will continue to identify, locate, and evaluate students suspected of having a disability and needing special education and related services. Early on in the school year, the team will develop a list of potential signs that a student might need additional support beyond what is being provided through an MTSS program or through the regular classroom environment.

At the same time, we must be mindful that students have been displaced from their typical learning environment when initiating the referral process. For example, the District will be mindful not to over-identify students who are learning remotely or those who are in-person more often simply because they are in a different learning environment than is typical.

Some evaluation procedures can be completed in remote learning situations. Some evaluations require in-person contact with students or observations of students in school settings. D90 Service teams will conduct evaluations remotely and in-person while adhering to public health guidelines for the safety of students and staff.

Special Education and Section 504 Testing/Evaluations

When possible, IEP testing/assessments will be done in person to align with timelines (re-evaluations and initial evaluations). Additional protocols and procedures are being implemented including additional PPE, materials, training and sanitization of spaces used for evaluations. If any portion of the identified evaluation could not be completed due to lack of parent/guardian consent or health and safety regulations, then the district will document the missing portions in the evaluation section of the Evaluation, along with the reasons those portions could not be completed. IEP teams will complete missing portions of the evaluation as early as possible once access to students can resume, after which the IEP team should be convened to review the results and determine or revisit eligibility and develop or revise the IEP, as appropriate.

Individual Education Plans (IEP) and 504 Meetings

Per ISBE Guidance: “Districts must adhere to timelines for annual IEP meetings and required evaluations. There continues to be limited flexibility from complying with federal and state laws. All Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 timelines remain in effect.” The District is committed to providing families an opportunity to have meaningful participation in the special education process. Consistent with recommendations from the Illinois State Board of Education, IEP and 504 meetings, and other meetings between staff and visitors/families will be held remotely, to the greatest extent possible. However, if parents/guardians are unable to engage in a required meeting remotely, socially distanced in-person meetings may be held.

- Ensure that all state and federal mandates and timelines are followed.
- Special Education and 504 teams will partner with families to determine the most practical format to conduct IEP and 504 meetings and arrange for an interpreter if necessary.
- Practitioners will collaborate with publishers and others to determine any language that should be included in evaluations related to COVID-19 (i.e. norms being invalid, etc.)

Special Education Services for Private, Parochial, Homeschooled Students

Individual Service Plans (ISP) meetings for eligible students that are being homeschooled or attending private and parochial schools in District 90 will be scheduled virtually. Based on the “Timely and Meaningful” required meeting held in May 2020 with private, parochial schools, the proportionate share agreed upon for the 2020-2021 school year are speech and social work services.

Special Education Students attending therapeutic day schools

Students attending therapeutic day school will receive information from respective therapeutic day schools regarding their reopening model. D90 will continue to provide transportation and will work with the current transportation provider to establish protocols and procedures for safety and appropriate social distancing.

Additional information related to specific programs will be provided directly to families. Frequently asked special education questions will be provided to families and updated on the D90 special education web page.

STUDENTS WITH UNIQUE NEEDS

Because of their unique needs, some students require more varied supports to be successful and fully access the curriculum. For example, English Learners require high-frequency exposure to English learning experiences in order to facilitate optimal language acquisition. Also, homeless students often benefit from the consistency that school routines and structures can provide, as well as the services that can be leveraged to ensure a strong network of supports. For reasons such as these, students who may be experiencing unique circumstances will be afforded the option to attend school at the middle level (Grades 5-8) on a daily basis, once in person instruction resumes. Though families will also have the option for their students with unique needs to attend the hybrid model on an “alternate day” basis, our school community commits to providing the most significant supports to those

individuals who are in greatest need. Families who have needs that may be unique in nature are asked to contact their school principal directly.



INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Instructional technology is an essential component of hybrid and remote learning. Unlike the remote learning program offered this spring, District 90 is in the process of finalizing a remote and hybrid learning program that will offer synchronous (real time) instruction on a daily basis, interspersed with portions of the day when students are offline completing assignments, independent practice, projects, and other suitable learning tasks.

District 90 will employ video conferencing and virtual learning platforms that are compliant with data privacy laws and District 90 standards for student data privacy protection. The vendors' online terms and conditions/privacy policies must provide adequately robust protections for student data privacy and do not misuse or allow misuse of student data. Teacher decisions about how to employ synchronous (real-time) instruction will be contingent on the age and developmental level of students. While real-time remote instruction allows teachers to engage directly with students, a balanced use of off-line lessons and learning activities afford increased (and sometimes preferred) options for student learning.

Technology Highlights, Grades K-4

iPads and chargers were sent home with students in the spring, with lending agreements sent to parents electronically. Families will continue to use the device this fall that was issued in the spring, with devices being issued in August to new students. Parents were asked to sign and scan Elementary iPad lending agreements to: powerschool@district90.org. Any families who have not submitted the lending agreements must do so before the start of school. Parents are asked to inform teachers as soon as possible if Internet access is not available at home, and accommodations (WiFi hotspots) will be made available to assist with accessibility. Teachers deliver lessons, activities, and assignments via the SeeSaw and Google Classroom platforms. Synchronous and asynchronous lessons will be delivered via Zoom and new SWIVL devices have been purchased to better facilitate live and recorded lesson content delivery. Technology Integration Specialists will be available via Google Hangouts during established times (to be determined and communicated to students/staff). The D90 Technology "HelpDesk" will be staffed and responsive during all instructional days. Parent technical questions should be sent to Powerschool@district90.org. Responses will be made as soon as possible.

Technology Highlights, Grades 5-8

Students are issued iPads to take home for the completion of assignments and activities. Accommodations (WiFi hotspots) have been made available to assist with accessibility for families who do not have Internet access. Teachers deliver lessons,

activities, and assignments via the Schoology platform. Synchronous and asynchronous lessons will be delivered via Zoom and new SWIVL devices have been purchased to better facilitate live and recorded lesson content delivery. Technology Integration Specialists will be available through Google Hangouts during established times (to be determined and communicated to students/staff). To assist students and faculty members, the D90 Technology “HelpDesk “will be staffed and responsive during all instructional days. Parent technical questions should be sent to Powerschool@district90.org. Responses will be made as soon as possible.



COMMUNICATIONS

When District 90 transitioned to remote learning on March 2020 due to the rising number of COVID-19 infections in the state and Chicago area, communication to key stakeholders was crucial. Regular and relevant communication enabled families to keep students focused and engaged with alternative instructional models. Communications provided consistent expectations and support to the District’s faculty and staff as they quickly pivoted to delivering instruction in new ways. Further, clarity and consistency in communications enabled Board of Education members, River Forest residents, and District 90’s community partners to provide support to District families, staff members, administrators, and schools.

As always, the primary communication priority for the District remains to deliver information in a clear and transparent manner that supports the District’s priorities and initiatives. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, District communication efforts will continue to support D90’s guiding principles of safety, equity, social-emotional and physical wellness, and high-quality instruction.

Remote Learning Accomplishments

Since D90 transitioned to offsite instruction in March, the Communications Office has accomplished the following:

- Added a complementary webpage on the District website that is devoted to providing the latest information and updates related to remote learning and COVID-19
- Conducted five surveys of families, students, faculty, and staff regarding their perceptions of remote learning, preferences for returning to school, intentions to participate in full remote instruction, and request for remote learning supervision
- Distributed more than 40 School Messenger notices since March about various aspects of remote instruction, summer learning opportunities, returning to school, and other related issues
- Devoted the majority of an e-newsletter issue of the Primer to remote learning and summer learning opportunities

Return to School Communication Approaches

Going forward, communication with key stakeholders will use multiple channels and approaches to ensure that essential messages reach the greatest number of stakeholders. These channels and strategies include:

- School Messenger notices to the D90 community, including families, faculty and staff, Board of Education members, River Forest officials, members of the media, and community partners
- Social media, such as Facebook and Twitter
- Community Information Brochure
- Media/reporter outreach and press releases
- District 90 Primer and school e-newsletters
- District 90 website updates
- Collaborative communication and outreach efforts with partner organizations and school districts (i.e., Districts 91, 97, and 200)

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Video messages to the D90 community
- Speaking opportunities for the Superintendent or his designee

Issues for Return to School

During the remainder of the summer and fall, there will be many issues that will need to be conveyed to the D90 community. The significant communication issues will address returning to school, establishing new practices and procedures for routine school matters, explaining the planned instruction model, and providing social-emotional support and resources for families, faculty and staff, and administrators. Some of these issues include:

- The final D90 “Return to School” plan
- Responsibilities of families, students, faculty and staff, and administrators in the new school environment, regardless of whether instruction takes place remotely or in school
- New and revised procedures for many aspects of the school experience, such as
 - Student arrival and dismissal
 - Faculty and staff arrival and dismissal
 - Monitoring of community health/safety metrics
 - Social distancing and face-covering requirements
 - Visitor arrivals
- Instances of COVID-19 infection in the school community (as appropriate, while maintaining an individual’s privacy)

D90’s communication efforts will continue to rely on the guiding principles of transparency, safety, equity, social-emotional and physical wellness, and high-quality instruction. In doing so, these communications efforts will be able to keep the D90 community aware of and informed about the interrelated components that will advance the safety of all in our schools.

FULL-TIME REMOTE LEARNING OPTION

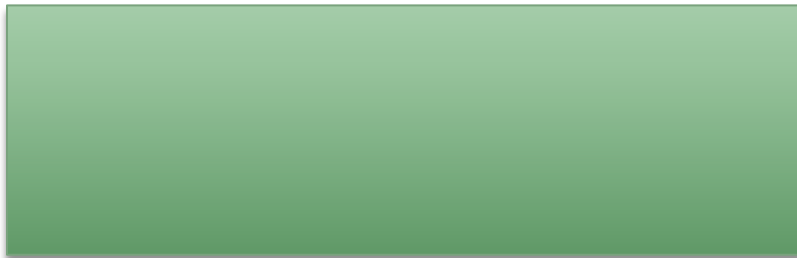
The District 90 full-time remote learning option will allow participating students to achieve proficiency on the Illinois Learning Standards at the enrolled grade level through remote instruction and be promoted to the subsequent grade upon successful completion. Students receiving instruction through full-time remote learning will take the same classes as grade-level peers, instructed by District 90 teachers. The courses will have the same learning objectives/outcomes and course expectations, including grading requirements. Students will be assessed for understanding in a manner that is similar to classroom-based students, though the nature of the formative assessment may vary. Because of physical limitations, full-time remote learners may be exempt from participation in certain standardized achievement assessments.

Under the full-time remote learning option, the classroom teacher will retain the same instructional decision-making prerogative as with traditional classroom instruction, under the approved D90 curricula. District 90 teachers are highly trained and qualified to determine preferred instructional approaches, utilize effective lesson design in service of student learning needs, and determine the best teaching methodologies for the students in the class. Specific details and decisions about class procedures, student expectations, and the manner in which the class is conducted are at the prerogative of the classroom teacher.

District 90 will employ video conferencing and virtual learning platforms that are compliant with data privacy laws and District 90 standards for student data privacy protection. The vendors' online terms and conditions/privacy policies must provide adequately robust protections for student data privacy and do not misuse or allow misuse of student data. Teacher decisions about how to employ synchronous (real-time) instruction will be contingent on the age and developmental level of students. While real-time instruction allows teachers to engage directly with students, a balanced use of off-line lessons and learning activities afford increased (and sometimes preferred) options for student learning.

It is imperative that all students learn in environments that attend to students' well being, safety, social-emotional and physical health needs. To support full-time remote students, teachers will be encouraged to involve remote learners in classroom activities designed to build community and foster a sense of

belongingness. Examples of these efforts may include synchronous team building experiences, pairing in-person and full-time remote students for online learning activities, having full-time remote learners attend “morning meetings,” and reinforcing predictable routines to help students maintain a sense of psychological safety. In addition, full-time remote learners and families will retain ongoing access to school social workers and support staff to assist, as needed. While specific details are still under development, the D90 Social Emotional Work Group is in the process of identifying steps that will provide all students (including full-time remote learners) with an electronic introduction to their teacher(s) in advance of the first day of school. If needed, River Forest District 90 may develop a *Student Remote Learning Plan* in collaboration with the family for any child requiring additional social-emotional and/or educational support.



ACTIVITIES AND EXTRACURRICULARS

As of this time, onsite school-sponsored events, extra-curricular/after school programs, or athletics are not planned for the start of the school year. The District will revisit and re-evaluate the ability to offer these essential activities for students over the course of the first quarter. We understand that these elements are very important for students as part of their holistic development and aspire to re-instate them as soon as possible.

In the interim, the District will consider faculty proposals to offer remote or virtual clubs and activities, if the opportunity presents. Examples of remote or virtual clubs include independent athletic activities conducted remotely (i.e. running club), academically related virtual clubs (i.e. book club), or online interest groups, sports, or games. More information will be provided after the start of the school year.

Works Consulted

- Anderson, Shelli, and Gharapour-Wernz, Jackie. (2020). 40 Answers to Your Phase 4 Questions: Practical FAQ's on ISBE's Phase 4 School Reopening Guidance. *Franczek Attorneys-At-Law Guidance Document*. Published online July 17, 2020
- Aspen Institute Education and Society Program. (2020). State Actions to Support Social, Emotional, and Academic Development: Fostering Connectedness in The Pandemic Era. *Aspen Institute Policy Statement*. Published online April 2020.
- BellXcell. (2020). Leveraging Findings from OST Research and Practice to Lessen COVID-19 Learning Gaps. *BellXcell/SCRI Advocacy*. Published online April 2020.
- CASEL. (2020). Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Roadmap for Reopening School. *CASEL Working Framework*.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). The Importance of Reopening America's Schools This Fall. *CDC Guidance Statement*. Published online July 23, 2020.
- Center for Medical Health in Schools. (2020). Plan Ahead to Support the Transition Back of Students, Families, and Staff. *Addressing Barriers to Learn*. Volume 25, No. 2.
- Chu, Derek et al. (2020). Physical Distancing, Face Masks, Eye Protection to Prevent Person to Person Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *The Lancet*. Volume 395, 1973-1987. Published online June 1, 2020.
- Coe, Rob et al. (2020). Great Teaching Toolkit Evidence Review. *Evidence Based Education; Cambridge Assessment International Education*. Published online June 2020.

- Frieden, Thomas et al. (2020). These 8 Basic Steps Will Let Us Reopen Schools. *The Atlantic*. Published online July 9, 2020.
- Fullan, Michael et al. (2020). Education Imagined: The Future of Learning. *Microsoft Position Paper on a Paradigm Shift for Education*. Published online April 2020.
- Gill, Brian et al. (2020). Considerations for Reopening Pennsylvania Schools, A Report for the Pennsylvania Department of Education. *REL Mid-Atlantic*. Published online June 2020.
- Heald-Sargent, Taylor et al. (2020). Age-Related Differences in Nasopharyngeal Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV2) Levels in Patients with Mild to Moderate Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). *JAMA Pediatrics*. Published online July 30, 2020.
- Healy, Michelle. (2020). Virtual Connections. *American School Board Journal*, Volume 77, 14-19.
- Horn, Michael. (2020). Seven Steps for Districts Navigating to Remote Learning. *Educational Leadership*, Volume 77, 28-31.
- Illinois Association of School Boards. (2020). Guidance for Boards Regarding the Reopening of Schools. *IASB*. Published online June 2020.
- Illinois State Board of Education. (2020). Updated Summer School and Other Allowable Activities: Part 2 – Transition Joint Guidance. *ISBE*, June 4, 2020.
- Illinois State Board of Education. (2020). Starting the 2020-21 School Year: Part 3 – Transition Joint Guidance. *ISBE*, June 23, 2020.
- Illinois State Board of Education (2020). Fall 2020 Learning Recommendations. *ISBE*, July 23, 2020.
- Jones, Emily et al. (2020). Schools for Health: Risk Reduction Strategies for Reopening Schools. *Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health*. Published online June 2020.

- Jung, Lee Ann. (2020). Accommodations, Modifications, and Intervention at a Distance. *Educational Leadership*, Volume 77, 16-21.
- Kuhfield, Megan and Tarasawa, Beth. (2020). The COVID-19 Slide: What Summer Learning Loss Can Tell Us About the Potential Impact of School Closures on Student Academic Achievement. *Collaborative for Student Growth*, NWEA Research. Published online April 2020.
- Lewis, Colby et al. (2020). Adapting Your Schools: Impact of the CDC's COVID-19 Guidance on School Capacity. *STR Partners*. Published online May 6, 2020.
- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2020. Reopening K-12 Schools During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Prioritizing Health, Equity, and Communities. Washington, DC. *The National Academies Press*.
<https://doi.org/10.17226/25858>.
- National Association of School Psychologists/National Association of School Nurses. (2020). Talking with Children About COVID-19 (Coronavirus): A Parent Resource. *NASP/NASN Joint Guidance Document*. Published online February 29, 2020.
- National Education Association. (2020). All Hands on Deck: Initial Guidance Regarding Reopening School Buildings. *NEA Guidance Document*. Published online June 2020.
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration. (2020). Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19. *OSHA Guidance Document 3990-03 2020*.
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration. (2020). Guidance on Returning to Work. *OSHA Guidance Document 4045-06 2020*.
- Office of the Governor, J.B. Pritzker. Restore Illinois: A Public Health Approach to Safely Open Our State. Published online May 5, 2020.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2020). Talking With Children: Tips for Caregivers, Parents, and Teachers During Infectious Disease Outbreaks. *SAMHSA Guidance Document*. Published online April 2020.

Reich, Justin and Mehta, Jal. (2020). Imagining September: Principles and Design Elements for Ambitious Schools During COVID-19. *MIT Teaching Systems Lab*. Retrieved from <https://edarxiv.org/gga2w>.

Simmons, Dena. (2020). Why COVID-19 Is Our Equity Check. *Educational Leadership*, Volume 77, 51-53.

Teaching Tolerance Staff. (2020). A Trauma-Informed Approach to Teaching Through Coronavirus. *Teaching Tolerance*. Published online March 23, 2020.

Tucker, Catlin. (2020). Successfully Taking Offline Classes Online. *Educational Leadership*, Volume 77, 10-14.

