



PORTAGE TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

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Educating, Empowering, and Inspiring Excellence

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July 2, 2020

Dear Portage Township Schools families and colleagues:

Portage Township Schools staff have developed a comprehensive plan for the re-entry to school for the 2020-2021 school year. I appreciate your patience as we have taken great care to ensure our plan is detailed, research-based, and focused on the health and safety of our school community. Our finalized plan is the result of collaboration with PTS staff, fellow Porter County superintendents, the Northwest Indiana Superintendents Study Council, and the Porter County Health Department. Thank you to our families and staff members who completed the Return to Learn survey; your input was valuable while making decisions at the district level.

Portage Township Schools will begin school as scheduled on August 12, 2020. Attached is the Portage Township Schools Back to School Plan, which is a three-tiered system providing a framework for school operations based on the community spread of COVID-19. The current low spread in Porter County would call for us to begin on the “green” tier of plan, allowing students to attend school five days a week with a number of enacted precautions. Should this situation change, we can move to the “yellow” tier (modified school week with E-Learning) or “red” tier (complete E-Learning). We will also offer an online school option, PTS Virtual, for families who feel that educating their child at home is the best plan for them and for students who are medically unable to wear a mask. Families can register for this a semester at a time. More information will be available on our website.

This school year, the partnership between families and PTS staff will be even more crucial. Our staff will receive professional development in our new policies and procedures so we can ensure our students are practicing healthy habits. We encourage families to monitor the health of your children, keep them home if they are ill, and report all absences to your child’s school. When students and staff are attending school in the traditional format, all schools will:

- Require masks to be worn by students and staff when proper social distancing cannot be achieved, including on the school bus;
- Provide each student with two reusable face masks;
- Organize and maximize instructional spaces;
- Employ enhanced cleaning and sanitizing procedures;
- Provide additional hand sanitizer stations and encourage excellent hygiene practices throughout the school day;
- Adjust lunches to maximize available open spaces and employ alternate scheduling;
- Utilize a separate space in each building to assist symptomatic students;
- Restrict visitors and guests in our school buildings;
- Require that all students and staff who are ill remain at home until fever-free for 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications OR until fever-free for 24 hours with a negative COVID-19 test.
- Recognize students for engagement in school rather than perfect attendance.

Thank you once again for your continued patience and support. I look forward to the safe reopening of our schools for the 2020-2021 school year.

Thank you,

Dr. Amanda Alaniz
Superintendent of Portage Township Schools