

July 23, 2020

Dear North Mac CUSD #34 Community,

Thank you for your patience as we have been planning for what the North Mac School's "Return to School" might look like for the 2020-2021 school year. I want to assure everyone that the health and safety of students, staff, and families remain our top priority as we plan the year ahead. Based on available information from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), school districts in Illinois were directed to create local plans based on guidance and regulations provided by the Center for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). North Mac has made plans with the following guiding principles:

- Public Health and government leaders make health decisions.
 - Alignment with the ISBE, IDPH, and Macoupin County Public Health Department guidelines for reopening schools will be strictly adhered to.
- COVID-19 safety concerns take priority over educational programming.
 - We cannot *eliminate* risks; we can only *reduce* risks.
 - Reducing risk will help keep schools in session and maximize student learning.
- Learning for all students is crucial.
 - North Mac teacher-directed and in-person learning is what is best for our students.
 - To respond to a potential shift to remote learning in the future, we will be providing laptop accessibility to 7-12 students immediately, with plans to go full 1:1 for the rest of the K-6 students in the coming weeks.

Over the last several weeks, administration and staff have been working to develop plans that meet not only the guidelines laid out by the ISBE and the IDPH, but also address some of the circumstances that are unique to our school district and campuses. We surveyed parents and staff for feedback on a variety of topics regarding the reopening of schools and the results of those surveys were taken into consideration as much as possible when developing our plans. We thank everyone who completed our surveys earlier this summer and know that the results of those surveys played a big role in our planning for the upcoming year. While we have developed three main plans, each with very specific protocols and arrangements, it will be our goal to have as much in-person instruction as we possible this school year. Our various plans are:

1. **Full Remote/E-Learning Plan (Stage 1)** – This plan will be used if we are instructed to cease with all in-person instruction. We will also utilize this plan during inclement weather and emergency days whenever possible.
2. **Blended Learning Plan (Stage 2)** – This plan will be used if we are required to reduce class sizes, but are still permitted to conduct some limited in-person instruction.
3. **Full In-Person Instruction Plan with Restrictions (Stage 3)** – This plan will see all students returning fulltime to our campuses. This plan will require some changes to the normal school day and environment, but would allow us to hold classes for all students on a daily basis.
4. **Normal Conditions (Stage 4)** – This plan will see us return to full operations with minimal to no restrictions.

It is important to note that every school district will have plans that will be broadly similar, but may seem very different in the details. This is because every single school district's buildings, student needs,

transportation setup, staff resources, and financial resources are vastly different. These are just a few of what can be many differentiating factors that will cause school district plans to look very different. Things as simple as the size of a cafeteria at a certain building, the number of entrances to a building, and even the grade levels housed in a building can cause drastic changes to a plan from one building to another, and therefore from one district to another. We ask that you keep this in mind, especially as you hear and read about the plans in other school districts. Just because something may work for a neighboring school district does not necessarily mean it will work here at North Mac, and vice versa.

The full Reopening Plan is located on our website. It is important to know that while these plans have been developed from extensive forethought and discussions, they will not be perfect. A plan is only as good as its execution and until we can actually put these plans into motion will we know for sure that they will work as we hope. While we feel we have solid plans *on paper*, once we get back or we begin to implement a certain plan there may be some need to fine tune things here and there. Changing conditions due to the virus, or from decision makers above us, may also force us to fine tune or change plans along the way. We will do our best not to alter plans, but if and when that becomes necessary we ask for your patience. We will provide you information in as timely a manner as we possibly can.

With that said, the following is the current reopening plans based on what we believe is best for all stakeholders at North Mac:

August 14th – Teacher Institute Day. **No student attendance.**

August 17th – 19th Remote Learning Planning Day for Faculty and Staff. **No student attendance.**

August 20th through September 4th - **Enter Stage 2 Blended Learning Plan:** Schools Open with Modifications

Note: Student Cohort assignments will be based on where students live geographically within the district and will be announced as soon as possible.

September 8th – October 21st – **Enter Stage 1: Full Remote Learning Plan** for all students. All students will be in remote learning, five days a week, and the schedules outlines in the Reopening Plan will be followed.

This schedule will allow our students to adjust to the new routines and safety protocols by easing into the year and be in smaller groups both on busses and in the classrooms. In addition, this schedule will allow teachers to work with students and parents to insure that remote learning can be accomplished with as much success as possible. This time spent in Stage 2 Blended Learning will also allow our students and teachers to work out some of the potential issues that may accompany remote and e-learning.

Thank you for your patience and grace as we come back together and demonstrate our Panther Pride and Determination. We look forward to seeing everyone back soon. Enjoy the rest of your summer and if you have any questions please contact your child's building principal.

Thank you and Go Panthers!

Dr. Jay A. Goble

Superintendent North Mac CUSD #34