



Superintendent Update

September 17, 2021

Swartz Creek Families,

Happy Friday! I hope you are all enjoying this beautiful fall weather! I wanted to bring you an update on several topics as you head into the weekend, but I am very impressed with the start of the year. Staff and students are under a lot of external pressures this year on top of the normal stresses of starting a school year. With all that being said, everyone is doing such a great job trying to help each other be successful. Here are a few important updates:

1. **Update on COVID-19 Quarantine Options** - The district has been working with the health department to develop tools that would keep kids in school this year. Last year, probably the single-largest problem educationally was when people were quarantined for 14 days for being in close contact with someone with COVID-19. Thankfully, we will have more options this year for handling close contacts other than just keeping people home from school in quarantine. Before I explain the options, the first assumption that we are operating under is that both students are masked. With that, if a student is identified as a close contact (3-feet if masked, 6-feet if unmasked) of a student who has tested positive for COVID-19, they have several options.
 - **Option 1** - Vaccinated. For students who are vaccinated, they will not need to quarantine, but will need to get a negative COVID-19 antigen test on day 5.
 - **Option 2** - Quarantine. The school will notify you immediately that they have been in close contact and inform you to stay home from school until the health department reaches out with quarantine guidance and dates which is typically 10 days.
 - **Option 3** - Daily In-School Testing. Students who opt for this option will NOT take school transportation, but will be able to report to the building before school to take a COVID-19 test for 7 consecutive days. If the test is negative each day, the student may remain in-school as normal. With negative test results for 7 consecutive days (excluding weekends - we do not test on weekends), the student would be able to resume using school transportation (buses).
 - **Option 4** - In-Home Daily Testing. At-home rapid COVID-19 antigen tests such as Ellume and BinaxNow are now available and can be purchased over-the-counter in grocery stores and pharmacies. If opting for this option, the student may test at home each day for 7 consecutive days (excluding weekends - we do not test on weekends) prior to taking the bus. If the student has a negative test each day, they can board school transportation and go to school as normal. Students will be required to bring proof of their negative result to the school office before school begins.

We are very thankful for these options, because they keep students in school and not quarantined if opting for testing. The tests are very easy and non-invasive. Our hope is that students who are identified as close contact will take advantage of options 2 or 3 to stay in school and continue their schooling in-person. Each individual building will be providing more detailed guidance and instructions if your child is considered a close contact and will help you through the process.

2. **Homecoming** - Next week is Homecoming week and we are very excited to host everyone at Dragon Stadium. We hope the whole community will come out and support our Dragons and that people can enjoy a beautiful Friday night. There will be a parade through town starting at SCMS, and the game will start at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, September 24.

3. **Traffic** - This year, we have record numbers of parents transporting children to and from school. In addition to this, we have construction from both the city and the district occurring at our buildings. As a result, we are trying several traffic mitigation measures to help families make it easier. One thing we are doing is posting several traffic safety positions. If you are interested in working with kids and the school on a part time basis, please consider applying.
4. **Bond Update** - We have had a very successful summer at SCHS and SCMS with the bond. SCMS has their classrooms air conditioned and additions for both the STEAM Innovation Wing and also the new front entrance are well underway. At SCHS many indoor corridors were addressed and the STEAM Innovation Wing and new front entrance are also well underway. We will wrap up those additions this school year and start another busy summer at those buildings next year with phase II. In addition, the SCHS, Morrish, and Dieck parking lots will be completed next summer which will aid congestion and traffic flow as well.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership!

GO DRAGONS!

Ben Mainka, Superintendent

Swartz Creek Community Schools