

Davenport School District

July 22, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We want to first thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to provide feedback to us on the recent survey about students returning to the classroom in the fall. **Our goal is to get 100% of our students back in the classroom four to five days a week for face-to-face learning. Additionally, we will have a reputable online/homeschool option available in partnership with Davenport School District to those of you that have indicated concerns about sending your children back in August.** As we did this last spring, we will provide each student Pre-K - 12 with a Chromebook to support student learning at Davenport School District whether you participate in face-to-face learning or online. Your school district staff has been working hard over the past few weeks having several meetings evaluating online/homeschool content to ensure your children get an exceptional experience if that is the route you desire. We want to support all of our Gorilla families as we navigate together through this pandemic. All of the distance learning programs we are looking at have been in existence for years and are associated with many of the online schools you hear about on the news or radio. For a point of reference, one of the online/homeschool providers we are considering for our partnership is K-12/Fuel Education.

At this time, we are planning for different possibilities and anticipating that districts may receive updated direction from the Department of Health, OSPI and the Governor's Office. We want to ensure we are ready to implement a learning model appropriate to any circumstances. Our staff has worked hard this summer to develop comprehensive options for students and families.

Option 1: On-site Face-to-Face Learning--with dual enrollment in our online program to support learning in the event of possible closures

Option 2: Online and/or Homeschool Learning Kit "Materials"--with support from DSD staff

A: Enrollment in our integrated online program for families with internet access

B: Comprehensive homeschool learning kits for families with limited or no internet access

We know you still have a lot of questions and concerns about what this fall will look like. Will my student/s be safe, do we have to wear masks all day, is there going to be recess, what will lunch look like, etc? Although we do not have all of the answers, as life during this pandemic is always evolving and changing, we can assure you that we are working on multiple plans that will hopefully accommodate any changes that come our way.

We are going to answer some of your questions below as many of your comments on the recent survey were very consistent with one another. Our answers to these questions are based on **current health information and state guidelines**, which school districts in our state are required to follow in order to reopen this fall. We want our students back and are willing to do whatever it takes to make that happen in a safe manner.

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

Q: Do you plan on opening all day, every day?

A: Our current plan is to have our entire student body Pre-K - 12th grade on campus at the same time with our school days starting at 8:00 AM and ending at 2:00 PM. We want this to be as normal of an experience as possible while maintaining safety. We have spent a lot of time measuring classrooms and ensuring that we can maintain the 6 feet of social distancing between students that is currently required. We believe that we can make this happen under the current guidelines. We are exploring the possibility of shortening the school day by 45 minutes and ending around 2:00 PM to help decrease student transitions and the potential for virus spread while allowing students to return home a bit earlier and remove their masks. Additionally, we are looking at a 4-day in-person school week leading to Friday distance-learning activities. Our new Friday schedule would also allow teachers to connect with students learning at home and to provide in-person individualized instruction for students who may need additional enrichment or support in their learning. We would no longer have Monday late starts, as professional development would shift to Fridays for our staff along with making connections with our online & homeschool families. A more thorough facility cleaning would be carried out on Fridays while the majority of our students are continuing their education with online learning. Many of the surrounding school districts are also leaning towards this model.

MS/HS students would still have access to their normal 7-period-day course offerings. However, they would be attending periods 1, 2, 3 & 7 on Mondays & Wednesdays, and periods 4, 5, 6 & RTI on Tuesdays & Thursdays. Periods would be 77 minutes in length to help offset fewer days weekly in each class. This schedule cuts down on the number of transitions for students and helps with our ability to clean and sanitize areas of heavy use.

Elementary students will still have the opportunity to engage in many of the similar things they were accustomed to in the past. We are planning on students remaining with their class/cohort to reduce student intermingling, as part of the guidance from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Department of Health (DOH). Students will still have the opportunity to go to PE in the gym/outside and have music and library/technology specialists brought to them in their classroom. Students will also be able to go outside for recesses, as well as adding in short activity/mask breaks for students.

Q: If I become uncomfortable with my children attending in-person learning will there be an option of online schooling? Also, is it possible to have a combination of in-person and online learning?

A: Yes! If at any time you feel uncomfortable having your children attend in-person, there will be an online/homeschool option available that will allow you to remain connected with the Davenport School District. Once a Gorilla, Always a Gorilla is still our motto!

To support all of our students and families, we are currently planning on having a combination of in-person and online instructional opportunities available and ready to go. The sudden emergency closure last spring was a challenge for us all, so we have been working diligently to be better prepared in the event of another emergency closure. Our plan is to make online and in-person learning seamless and easier to manage this time around. Our staff has been vetting a number of reputable online curriculum provider partners that will help ensure your child receives a rigorous education, all while still being connected with and receiving the same support from Davenport staff members.

Q: You mentioned students will have the option to engage in online & distance learning again this year? What will be different compared to last spring?

A: Everything! We have spent the past few months examining what went well and what needs to be improved upon from last spring during our emergency closure. We are taking your feedback and working on improving the overall experience for our students, families, and teachers.

We envision a system where we partner with a traditional online/homeschool program that is run through the Davenport School District in order to provide our teachers, students, and parents with high quality teaching and learning materials that have the most up-to-date interactive technology to enhance the overall experience.

Anticipated Benefits:

1. Scope & sequence that will fit individual family needs with support from Davenport School District Staff.
2. Interactive adaptive curriculum, teaching videos, learning games, and real-time feedback to help your child thrive.

ALL students in Davenport will be dual enrolled in our in-person and online option; we feel this will better prepare DSD teachers, students, and families for a smooth transition to distance learning in the event of any unforeseen closures. OR families will have the opportunity to choose to use the online/homeschool to do full-time online education, all while still being enrolled as a Davenport School District student. During our in-person learning sessions students will get not only face-to-face instruction, enrichment, and intervention support, but will also become proficient at how to navigate the online world, curriculum, and content. Teachers will supplement this online curriculum in-person to support a well-rounded learning experience for ALL of our students.

Q: How is this program different from enrolling in a K-12 Online Public School like Washington Virtual Academy?

A: The only difference is that **instead of enrolling** in a different school district with teachers you and your student do not know, your child would still be a Davenport School District student and have access to all of the great teachers and staff that could support your child's online journey. **One major difference and benefit** to your child and family is that you will have the opportunity to still come to our schools should you feel comfortable to receive individualized instructional support from our staff members. Further, if you do not feel comfortable attending onsite school, we are committed to

providing you with the support and resources you need to help your child be as successful as possible in their educational experience.

Q: Will our students be required to wear a mask?

A: Yes, as per the Department of Health and OSPI rules. Although the American Academy of Pediatrics has shared their recommendations regarding masks and COVID, we are legally required to follow our state guidelines and regulations. **However, students will get numerous “mask breaks” throughout the day.** We realize students wearing masks for extended time periods may be a challenge, and they will need breaks. Students will be allowed to remove their masks when eating and when outside, provided they are more than six feet from others. An approved alternative to a cloth facemask is a face shield.

According to DOH, a cloth face covering is fabric that covers the nose and mouth. It can be:

- A sewn mask secured with ties or straps around the head or behind the ears.
- Multiple layers of fabric tied around a person’s head.
- Made from a variety of materials, such as fleece, cotton, or linen.
- Factory-made or made from household items.

Q: Won’t it be very difficult for students to talk to their teacher or classmates while wearing a mask?

A: While this may be a challenge at first, we have discovered that students (and staff) can do this! We have had numerous staff meetings in the past several weeks with everyone wearing masks. We have been able to hear each other, and we know we can make this work in our classrooms. Additionally, some staff are exploring the option of wearing clear face shields. We have also been visiting with school districts that are offering summer school and have learned that students have adapted well to mask wearing.

Q: Will our students be required to maintain 6’ of social distancing?

A: Yes, but there are allowable exceptions. Districts must arrange their physical spaces to accommodate six feet of distance when all students and staff are seated. Our staff has spent quite a bit of time measuring, mapping out classroom capacities, and we can do this! Additionally, when students are wearing face coverings, six-foot distancing is still the expectation, as face coverings combined with physical distancing increases health and safety, and are both DOH requirements. Both DOH and L&I recognize that some tasks and movements will require proximities closer than six feet, including passing in the hallway or a teacher’s movement around in the classroom. This is why we are working to reduce the number of students transitioning at one time. The six-foot social distancing rules do not apply to students riding in school buses.

Q: How will the teachers be asked to hold students this young accountable for keeping their mask on or maintaining social distance?

A: We are going to have to do this together, and it may be a challenge. However, we have heard promising news from a small elementary school that has been in session all summer; students

keeping the masks on has not been a big issue for them. Our teachers recognize there is a difference between a child being defiant and a youngster who is fidgety and struggling to keep his/her mask on. Our staff will use a common-sense approach to handle these situations, and the teaching and learning that will go along with them.

Q: Is school reopening directly linked to the particular phase of the county in which the school district resides?

A: No. Currently, the reopening guidance aligns with all four phases of Washington State's Safe Start Plan. As a reminder, even in Phase 4, individuals and employers must engage in appropriate physical distancing (6 feet or greater), use of personal protective equipment (PPE), illness monitoring, handwashing and other personal hygiene practices, and cleaning activities

Q: Will our students get recess?

A: Yes! Recess is a fundamental part of a student's school experience. We are building recess times into every schedule and working on how to ensure students are safe while playing their favorite games. Recess will look somewhat different than previous years, but we know that students will need this!

Q: Will there still be PE?

A: Yes! While this may look different, we know our students need opportunities to engage in physical activity, so we are planning to use the gyms as well as outdoor spaces as weather allows! Our teachers are working hard to develop games and activities students can engage in while following health and safety guidelines. We are still working through the state guidance to create a plan for whether students are able to dress down or not during PE.

Q: What will lunch look like for students?

A: Our goal is to make lunch look as normal as we can; we are still working on the specifics. Some classes may eat in their classrooms, and others may have lunch in our cafeteria with seating spaced out. We will figure these details out, and we will ensure that we continue to offer nutritious meals.

Q: What about rotating classrooms, dirty lockers, desks, and materials?

A: We are working hard to reduce the number of transitions or rotations students would make in a day. This is why the MS/HS is moving to a block schedule and only 4 periods each day, and why elementary students will stay with their classroom group. We will ensure adequate cleaning takes place before a group moves from one classroom to another. We are still discussing locker access, but we plan on staggering transition release times to limit the number of students in the hallways at one time.

Q: My child has an IEP and/or 504 Plan. Will he/she continue to receive accommodations and support? What about if we need an IEP or 504 Plan?

A: Yes! Your students IEP and/or 504 plan will remain in place and we will provide extra accommodations and supports. Additionally, if you feel your child needs extra support or accommodations, please reach out to the district, and we will make a plan to help.

Q: What space are you planning on using to isolate children who could potentially be COVID-19 positive?

A: We are exploring spaces that are away from other children and staff. They will not be in the office areas/traditional health rooms that are located in our buildings, as those places are high traffic areas where we need to limit exposure. The safety and health of our students and staff are a priority as we plan for the fall.

Q: If there is a breakout of the virus, will parents be told right away?

A: Yes, we will work closely with the Lincoln County Health Department to ensure that our families and students are notified of an outbreak, and we will follow all HIPPA and FERPA laws to protect individual student privacy.

Q: Will my student's temperature be checked at school or home?

A: The rules require that a daily screening for possible COVID-19 symptoms be completed at home or at school. Our current plans are that student temperatures will be checked by school personnel either at school or before they get on the school bus each morning. Although the school will be checking students for signs of fever, we still encourage families to take temps as well because you could help prevent sickness from spreading by reducing the number of people your ill child encounters outside your household. However, we realize this is sometimes going to be difficult.

Q: Will childcare be provided to parents that work full time, and what about after-school programming/ supervision?

A: We are working hard to provide much of the same services that you are used to. Currently, we are planning on being in-person 4 days a week. We would like to be able to offer our after-school programs and supervision as we have done in the past, but this might not initially be available at the start of the school year. Please know we are not ruling this out, and are exploring all possibilities for how to continue these programs for students and families.

Q: Is the school district communicating with the Lincoln County Health Department?

A: Yes! We have some of the same questions and concerns that parents do. Our reopening school committee has been meeting on a regular basis, and we have had representatives from the health

department at each meeting. We have learned about “best practices,” which include minimizing the times that students may need to be less than 6 feet apart (traveling in hallways, etc.).

Q: Will the school district be hosting any meetings for parents, so we can learn more about your reopening plans and have an opportunity to ask additional questions?

A: Yes! Please stay tuned for more details regarding an evening “virtual town hall” that we will be hosting online where parents (and students!) can receive an update on our reopening plans followed by a Q & A session. We value your input and want to hear from you. This event will take place at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, July 29. We will post information on our website on how to join this town hall. We would really appreciate your participation!

As we work through this planning process to create a safe school for your child this fall, we appreciate your patience. We know there are a number of questions that we have left unanswered, and we will continue to answer more over the coming weeks. Please know our staff has been working very hard over the last several weeks to ensure we can provide the same options and opportunities for all students whether your child is on-site or online! As one Gorilla family, we look forward to continuing to partner with you to provide each and every student endless possibilities!

Sincerely,

Davenport School District