



Hanover-Horton School District

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Hello Comet Families!

As our committee continues to develop our Back to School Plan for this fall, we wanted to provide you with an update. Please keep in mind that we are still working our way through the plan based on current Executive Orders and law which could both change suddenly and force us to modify our plans. This school year is sure to require flexibility as we all work through an ever-changing environment. Our goal is to create the best plan we can which will allow for a high-quality education while keeping our students and staff safe.

Survey Results: We recently sent out a survey in order to help us in our planning process. The results indicated a majority of families have quality internet service available and at least one device in your home that will stream video. We are working on setting up methods to distribute devices if we go back to online learning for everyone; our goal would be to make sure every student has access to an individual device.

Our numbers also indicate there is a wide range of comfort levels with a return to school happening next month. We are hopeful our final plan will put minds at ease as much as we possibly can. In the end, our plan will provide families with options in order to allow your student to continue their educational journey with us. Do not be surprised if another survey is sent out soon in order to gather more specific information.

Student Learning: One of the directions given to us by the Governor is to create a system which allows for a quick shift from in-person instruction to online instruction in case our region is moved to Phase 1-3. We are also aware for many families, there is a desire to utilize an online format at this time. Therefore, we are going to offer two options: in-person and online. Our teachers will work to create their lessons utilizing either Seesaw or Google Classroom so that, regardless of which option chosen, students will be receiving a similar curriculum. The delivery and rigor of the online curriculum will be much closer to what a "normal" day would look like. Student work will be graded, and they will be held accountable for their progress.

If we are still in Phase 4 or Phase 5, we will offer both the online and in-person instruction. However, in order to structure our schedules and staffing needs, it will be essential families commit to the online program for a certain amount of time. At this point, we are thinking it would be necessary to commit for a trimester at the middle school and either a marking period or semester at the elementary and high schools. We have not yet decided what the timeframe is going to be and will have that decided before asking for a formal commitment.

Internet Access: We are very aware of the struggles many of our families have with internet access in our area. Our teachers will do their best to create downloadable online lessons which will closely match what is covered in class. While not ideal, students would be able to connect their devices to the school's connection in the parking lot and be able to upload/download their work. Packets like we used this spring will not be a part of the process this year. This will be an unavoidable inconvenience for several of our families if we have to go entirely online, and we apologize for it.

Devices: Orders have been placed to increase the number of Chromebooks we will have available for use this year. Based on the surveys done this spring and recently, we feel we will have enough devices to provide at least one for each house that doesn't have a device for the student to use. We are hopeful to have enough to ensure every student will have access to an individual device. There are a lot of details regarding devices that still need to be worked out.

Masks: We have heard from many families regarding the use of masks, and the feelings have been really mixed. As a government entity, we are required to follow Executive Orders issued by the Governor. Under the current order, masks will be required to be worn. The district has ordered reusable masks for our students who choose the in-person instruction. Knowing many already have masks, we will be providing three to each student. If you choose for your student to participate in the in-person instruction, and feel they are medically unable to wear a mask, we will require a note from an MD or DO to be turned into the building office which explains why they are unable to tolerate the mask. We are working on procedures to handle this step.

Unknowns: Like you, we are also wondering what is going to happen over the next few weeks. A few districts in the state have already made the decision to begin the year online, and it would not be surprising to see others follow that path. Among the Jackson County schools, it looks like we are all planning to offer face-to-face instruction this year. Our local health department is still working out how we would handle a positive COVID-19 case within our district. They have indicated every case will be unique, and every case will be handled differently based on all of the circumstances involved. Will the current orders change? Will the legislature change the rules regarding online learning, pupil accounting, instructional hour requirements, seat-time requirements, and more? The good news is most of the policy/legal issues should be resolved over the next few weeks which will give us enough time to be ready for our first day of school.

On behalf of our committee, thank you for your patience and understanding as we work through this complicated process. As more of our requirements become clarified and our plan develops more, we will share those details with you.

Thank you!



John Denney, Superintendent