

9/6/20

Dear Mt. Blue High School Students and Families,

As we anticipate our first day on campus, I am writing to share some of the protocols that we will be using in our return to school model, as well as some clarifications related to earlier communications. Given that we are starting the year with a structure that we have never implemented before, please know that there will be aspects that we will be adjusting as we go. We will do the best we can to problem solve and communicate, and rest assured that our first priority is the health and safety of our campus community.

In this communication, I have repeated some of the information that was included in the 8/26/20 letter to students and families. However, here is the [link to that letter](#) which contains details that may be helpful as reference points. In addition, a recent newsletter was shared by our RSU #9 Central Office. It includes a link to [RSU 9 Family Return to School Guidelines 20/21](#), which references resources and details related to district health and safety protocols, as well as information regarding academic expectations.

Return to school: As a reminder, students will begin returning to school on Tuesday, September 8th. That is a gold day, and we will welcome students who have selected the hybrid model with the last names beginning with A-J to campus on that date. They are the only students who will be on site that day. Students who chose the hybrid model with the last names beginning with K-Z will have their first on site day on Wednesday, September 9th, which will be a blue day. They are the only students who will be on campus that day. Although student schedules have been available via PowerSchool throughout the summer, we plan to distribute them as students enter the building on Tuesday and Wednesday. We are asking that students report directly to their first period classes, unless they plan to get breakfast to start the day.

There have been questions regarding the hybrid model students who will not have devices on Tuesday to engage in their first remote learning day. I will be encouraging teachers to send a Zoom link to those in their classes who might have devices at home so that they can engage in the class period. That said, the day will include laptop distribution during period 1, and a review of health and safety protocols during period 2. This will be repeated on Wednesday, when our Tuesday remote learners will be in school. Please know that if students cannot access the class on Tuesday, they will certainly receive resources to review the covered content and time to complete any necessary work. We will ensure that our hybrid model Tuesday remote students have what they need to begin their courses successfully.

Hybrid and remote learning: Students who have chosen the full remote model will not be on campus for a minimum of the first quarter and will be expected to engage in all class periods. Those who chose the hybrid model will be present on campus on their assigned days and will engage in their learning on the days that they are scheduled to be remote.

There have been many questions regarding how students will engage remotely. That information will be forthcoming from individual teachers and will depend on the content, learning targets and assessments and can vary from week to week. That said, we will have a synchronous schedule for remote learners (full remote and hybrid). This means that students will have access to classes at the same time that they are being delivered in the classroom (per the schedule above). Again, individual teachers will provide more information related to their specific courses.

Fridays: Fridays are remote days for all students in grades 9-12. They will be engaging in each class period for the corresponding color day (Blue or Gold). Individual teachers will be sharing expectations for engagement in their specific classes at the start of the year. Because we will not have Late Arrival Wednesdays at this time, there will be about one early release Friday per month in order to allow for time for our required professional development. The calendar is posted on both the district and school websites for your reference going forward.

Learning Labs/Academic Support Block (ASB): When on campus, students will be expected to attend their assigned Learning Labs. We are working on a protocol for those underclassmen who may request to be off campus during those times. (We will be connecting with seniors specifically about their senior privileges.) On a remote day, students do not need to participate in Learning Labs, unless they choose to do so in order to connect with their Learning Lab teachers. During the first week of school, we are asking that all remote students (full remote and hybrid) attend their Academic Support Block so that teachers can support in the transition and answer questions.

Grading and attendance: It is important to note that we will have expectations for grading and attendance that will be different from the transition to emergency distance learning this spring. Our general standards for attendance in classes this fall are noted in the [RSU 9 Family Return to School Guidelines 20/21 document](#). More specific information will be forthcoming from individual teachers. As stated above, expectations will depend on the content, learning targets and assessments and can vary from week to week. That said, we will have a synchronous schedule for remote learners (full remote and hybrid). This means that students will have access to classes at the same time that they are being delivered in the classroom (per the schedule below), although engagement may look different depending on the specific class assignments for the day. We will also revert to our normal grading and reporting practices upon our return to school. Individual teachers will provide more information regarding grading related to their specific courses.

Remote learners: Thanks to our technology staff members, laptops and hotspots were distributed last week. We will be in touch with our plan for distributing textbooks and other school supplies in the near future. Information on engagement in classes is noted above in previous sections.

Internet access and connectivity: Laptops will be distributed to hybrid learners on Tuesday and Wednesday. Hotspots will be provided at that time (one per family) for those who requested them (via a survey this summer) due to inadequate internet access. If you do not receive one (and verify that none of the other family members have received one to share), please contact kbremner@mtbluersd.org or mgibson@mtbluersd.org. For families that live in areas with poor or non-existent cellular service, information will be shared by the Technology Department regarding options for connectivity in your local areas.

Daily schedule:

Arrival 7:30-8:15 (Please see below for additional details.)
Period 1 8:15am – 9:25am (Students will wait in their period 1 classes from arrival on campus until the start of class at 8:15.)
Period 2 9:30am – 10:40am
Period 3 10:45am – 12:25pm
 1st Lunch 10:45am – 11:05 am
 2nd Lunch 11:10am – 11:30 am
 3rd Lunch 11:35 am – 11:55 am
 4th Lunch 12:00pm – 12:20 pm
Academic Support Block 12:25 pm - 12:45pm
Period 4 12:50pm – 2:02pm
Dismissal 2:02-2:20 (Please see below for details related to dismissal.)

Arrival and dismissal: As per the daily schedule noted above, we will begin our classes 30 minutes later than usual. This is due to the need to minimize large group gatherings and to accommodate supervision and bus arrival times. Please see this link to access the [2020-2021 bus schedule](#). The first buses will now arrive on campus at 7:35 instead of 7:05. They will continue arriving until 8:10. Parent drop off and students driving themselves will be permitted in the building beginning at 7:30. Please do not arrive before that time. We want to ensure adequate supervision, which can begin at 7:30. Period 1 will start at 8:15.

Regarding dismissal at the end of the day, the timing of the bus schedule will remain similar to past years with a first run (dismissed from classes at 2:02) and a second run (dismissed from classes around 2:20). Our student drivers and those being picked up will be released around 2:05 or so. In order to ensure proper social distancing, we need to minimize the number of students being released from classes at the same time. We will review this release schedule over the first couple of weeks to assess effectiveness and efficiency.

Breakfast/Lunch: Students will be provided with the opportunity for breakfast and lunch each day they are on campus. Students who choose to eat breakfast provided by the school will enter the building, head to the Food Court to eat, and then will report directly to their first period classrooms to wait until the class begins at 8:15. This will help to minimize the number of students congregating in the Food Court at one time. Regarding lunch, students will eat during

period 3 classes as they have done in the past. We have structured the Food Court to allow for the appropriate social distancing (6 feet while eating), and we have also secured a large tent so that students can eat outside with socially distanced seating. Those who are remote learners will be provided with information on how to access meals prior to the start of school. Please stay tuned for a district wide announcement related to breakfast and lunch in RSU #9 this year.

Face masks: Face masks are required for all on campus. Specific medical concerns will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Doctor certification will be required. We will be strictly enforcing the mask requirement in order to maximize campus health and safety for all.

Visitors: A reminder that we will be limiting visitors (to include parents and guardians) to the schools for safety reasons. If you need an appointment, please call the main office.

Athletics and after school activities: At this time, we will not be holding any after school activities. A determination on the fall sports season will be made in the near future.

Daily health screening: It is expected that all students will conduct a health screening each day before entering the school. Here is our [At Home Health Screening Tool for Students](#). Please ensure that this is conducted each day before students board the bus or arrive on campus.

Back to School Paperwork: As in years past, we will be sharing information on how to complete back to school paperwork online. This communication with instructions will be sent during the upcoming week, and we will appreciate your prompt attention to the request.

I want to pass along my appreciation to all departments and individuals at MBHS/MBC and at the district level for their incredible commitment to our students, our district and each other as we prepare to transition back to school this fall. The positive and collaborative approach at MBC this summer and of late has helped us prepare to welcome students to campus safely and to deliver instruction to all. Please know that we will continue to problem solve and evaluate all aspects as we get underway on Tuesday.

Thank you for your patience, and we will see our students on campus and remotely soon!

Sincerely,

Monique Poulin
Principal