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August 24, 2020

Dear Crew,

I am sending this letter with genuine appreciation of the support you are giving our staff and students as we work through the many challenges that 2020 has brought. Daily, my staff comments on how much they value your kind words, encouragement, and honest feedback. We will continue to monitor the students' academic progress as well as the culture of the classrooms as we work on this next phase of bringing students back into school for face-to-face instruction.

As a school, we are working hard to develop a plan that brings our students back to campus in a manner that is safe, consistent, and honors high levels of instruction. In making these decisions, we must consider the safety of our students, our staff, and our community.

In looking at the current data for Douglas County, it looks like our numbers are continuing to improve, which is fantastic news. Douglas County is still classified as being in the substantial spread zone, but the ratio of spread to our population is decreasing. We also noted that the percent of positive cases continues to decline. Access to critical care in hospitals, testing, and PPE is increasing; so we are at a point where we can resume and finish our planning to bring students back to campus by using our hybrid model which we presented this summer. Please click [here](#) for an overview on Brighten's hybrid model that was presented in July 2020 if you need more information.

As you can imagine, we are beyond excited to greet our students on campus, but we are also challenged by the planning and logistics involved in adapting the school to meet social distancing and other safety recommendations. If the data in our county continues to improve at the same rate as it has over the last two weeks, we anticipate being able to welcome our students back on campus utilizing our hybrid model on October 5, 2020. Please note the timeline below so you know what to expect over the next 6 weeks.

Week of 8/24	Request 4 additional staff allotments (paraprofessionals) to be added to the budget to support the safety needs for face-to-face instruction and social distancing.
Week of 8/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent meeting to go over questions related to face to face learning (TBA) • Send Updated School Supply lists to parents to include items needed for face-to-face instruction (example: headphones with a microphone)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents confirm option for the next 9 weeks (100% online, 2 day, or 4 day lottery)
Week of 9/7	Hold 4 day Lottery Drawing 9/8/20 (time TBA)
Week of 9/14	Notification of lottery drawing and confirmation of learning option sent to all families
Week of 9/21	Parent Orientation on face-to-face norms, arrival/dismissal
Week of 9/28	Students with an IEP or Tier 3 accommodations report to campus for face-to-face instruction if that is the desired option
Week of 10/5	Begin hybrid model with group A attending school on Mondays and Tuesdays, Group B attending school on Thursdays and Fridays and all students participating in digital learning on Wednesdays.

We know this next phase brings about some relief and some new concerns/wonderings. Please see the FAQ below for some additional information. We will continue to update this section as we work through some of the unique challenges presented by operating a fully online and face-to-face learning environment.

What are the school hours?	In order to accommodate the social distancing needed for arrival and dismissal we will need to stagger our schedule. The hours for grades K-5 are 8:15-3:00 and grades 6-8 are from 8:30-3:30. Students will report directly to their homerooms when they arrive, and students can arrive on campus as early as 7:40.
Will the After-School Program (ASP) be open?	If we have enough interest so that the program is self-sustaining, we will open the ASP program. We will also offer a before school program if needed and enough interest. More information to come!
Will students need to wear masks?	We will require students to wear a mask while they are in common areas and in a place where they cannot practice social distancing. Students will not be required to wear a mask when they are in their classrooms as long as they are social distancing.
Are you redoing the 4 Day Lottery that was completed in July?	Yes, given the projected return date of October, we feel we need to redo the lottery as needs have changed.
What specific safety measures are you following?	We will enforce frequent handwashing as well as screen all staff and students as they enter the building. We will enforce social distancing in the classrooms. We will require the use of masks when social distancing can't be required or when in common areas (halls, entering the building, etc.). We will follow all recommendations from the DPH related to isolation and quarantine if a student tests positive or comes in direct contact with someone who tests positive.

What will the online learning component look like?	We will not be “live streaming” our classrooms. Our teachers have designated time each day to teach their online students. The online zoom schedule may adjust slightly, but it will be a similar schedule as well as similar instruction.
What will students be doing while they are on campus?	Students will participate in some computer-based learning while on campus. They will also receive direct instruction and practice from their certified teachers. Students will have outside time built into their schedule as well as time for specials (example: pe, art, music, adventure pe).
My student has an IEP or specialized accommodations. What will their schedule look like?	Your student’s case manager will be in touch with you to go over your student’s unique schedule and accommodations to reflect the virtual and face-to-face component.
How will arrival and dismissal work? Are we still coming into the building to pick up our students?	This is one of the many processes we still need to work through, but our goal is to eliminate the need for you to come into the building.
Are we still doing digital learning on Wednesdays?	Yes, all students will participate in digital learning on Wednesdays.
How long will we be in the hybrid model?	We will plan to utilize the hybrid model as long as there is a need to offer a fully online model. We intend to keep this plan at least through the end of first semester, which is 12/18/20.
Will students be expected to be on the computer all day?	No. Students who are participating online will have a schedule like what we have in place now. Students who are participating in face-to-face instruction will have some computer assignments and some assignments that do not require a computer. Please note that some zoom times may change as we work through some scheduling conflicts related to face-to-face instruction and how it merges with the online portion.
Will you participate in the contact tracing and reporting outlined in the DCSS communication on 8/24/20?	Yes. As a public school, we will be participating in all recommendations from the DPH for quarantining, isolating, and reporting cases.
If students need to quarantine or isolate will they be able to participate in the online learning even if they are enrolled in the face-to-face option?	Yes. If a student is asymptomatic and feels well enough to work, they can participate in the fully online model. If participating in the online model (and completing assignments) they will not be marked absent.
We are enjoying the online learning. Can we opt to stay at 100% virtual for the next grading period?	Yes, we will offer a 100% online option as part of our hybrid model.

Again, thank you for your continued support and commitment to our school. We still have quite a long road ahead of us, but we are certainly glad to be traveling it together. Together is Better.

Sincerely,

Lisa McDonald