

Press Clippings 07/14/20

---CBS Chicago--- 07/14/2020

As School Districts Draft Plans For Classes In Fall, Many Surveying Parents On Preference Between In-Person And Online Instruction

By: Tim McNicholas

CHICAGO (CBS) — Parents are already getting questionnaires from their school districts asking if they'd like to do e-learning full time or part time in the fall.

Some parents are being told full-time, in-person classes won't happen, and they told CBS 2 Morning Insider Tim McNicholas that will be a challenge.

Parenting is full of tough decisions. Angela Hornof is an Alsip mom, with a son at Stony Creek Elementary School, who faces a tough one right now.

"They did try to do their best, but the solution doesn't seem very feasible," she said.

The school district is giving parents at Stony Creek and other schools a choice: send kids to school a couple days a week, and do remote e-learning from home the other three days; or do the remote learning for all five days per week.

"I don't know how I'm going to find someone to log my 7-year-old into the computer every day, and then have them help them. I don't get home until late at night," Hornof said.

District 126 sent out an email with a survey on July 8, and asked parents to "choose the option you are committing to" by July 13. Supt. Craig Gwaltney said the choice can be changed later, and the idea is for the school district to gather information on what parents want.

Gwaltney said, due to capacity, all in-person in learning is not a safe option yet; although an earlier district survey showed that's the most popular preference.

"Socially distance the best they can; if they can, use alternate seating arrangements for the children."

District U-46 in Elgin is also planning an e-learning and in-person hybrid after surveying families.

District 15 in Palatine is looking at two options: in-person with health and safety modifications, or full-time online.

Also in Palatine, District 211 is surveying parents on whether they'd like in-person, online, or a hybrid.

"I'm stressed, I'm scared," said Kristyn Harvey, mom to a 4th grader at Stony Creek. "I came to the point where I'm going to keep her home all five (days). There's too many guidelines for her to even walk in the school, and I just don't feel safe."

That means Harvey will be at home with her during the day.

Gwaltney said District 126's plan is all still up in the air. He said state health guidelines could also change their plans.

We'll be sure to keep you updated on what the final decisions are.

---Chalkbeat Chicago---07/14/2020

To reopen school buildings or not? Illinois school districts start to release fall plans

So far, more than a dozen districts across the state have released tentative plans.

By: Sneha Dey and Samantha Smylie



School districts across Illinois are developing plans to reopen school buildings after the state Board of Education gave the green light last month to do so amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Educators, policymakers, and families are all waiting to see how school districts will balance public health guidelines with tight budgets. The state has provided districts with the flexibility to have in-person instruction and remote learning.

But districts are rushing against the clock as they are scheduled to start in early August. So far larger districts say that they are still working to finalize their plans, while smaller districts have already announced their plans.

Here is what we know so far:

Tuesday, July 14

Naperville District 203, in the west suburb of Chicago, plans to enroll students in a hybrid mode of instruction, where students will be split into A/B groups. Parents and guardians can opt students for full remote instruction, but must notify the district before July 22. Students eligible for transportation will be surveyed about ridership.

Indian Prairie District 204, in the west suburbs of Chicago, plans to operate on an A/B/C schedule where students will receive two days of in-person instruction and two days of remote instruction. Students with special needs can attend school four days a week. Parents can opt students into entirely remote instruction.

St. Charles Community Unit School District 303 tentatively plans to offer elementary school students full, in-person instruction with shortened school days. Middle school and high school students will receive a mix of in-person and remote learning.

Oak Park Elementary School District 97 will reopen school with a hybrid learning model. Students will be split into two groups and receive two days of in-person instruction. Students with IEPs can attend school all four days students are on campus.

Monday, July 13

Barrington School District 220, in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, is offering families a choice between returning to in-person instruction and opting out to continue with remote learning.

Glenbrook High School District 225, in the northern suburbs of Chicago, has tentatively suggested it will continue with virtual learning.

Northbrook/Glenview School District 30 is still working on their reopening plan, but expects to share their plans with the community Friday after the district's board meeting on Thursday.

Glenview School District 34 has been discussing the possibilities of in-person instruction, remote learning, and a hybrid option. The fall planning board will submit their recommendations to the district's board of education Monday evening.

North Shore School District 112, located in Highland Park, will reopen schools on September 30, two weeks later than planned. Details still need to be worked out, but Superintendent Michael Lubfeld has said the district hopes to "restart schools in-person to the extent possible." The district plans to rent air conditioning units and tents for lunch and physical education classes. Bus services will be provided with capacity restrictions.

Elgin School District U-46, the second largest district in the state, is working to develop a hybrid model of in-person and remote learning, with students attending in-person on a regular — but not daily — basis. Superintendent Tony Sanders has said students will be assessed on performance standards that align more closely with in-person expectations.

Belleville Township High School District 201 tentatively plans to operate in-person at half capacity. Students will be split into two groups, which will alternate between in-person and remote learning. Families can opt to continue with entirely remote learning for the semester.

O'Fallon Township High School District 203 will offer a hybrid of in-person and remote instruction in the mornings. Families choose to take all classes remotely. Students who are at-risk or struggle with remote learning could be invited to attend in-person classes all four days a week with administrative approval.

Lisle Community Unit School District 202, in the west suburbs of Chicago, will return to school in the fall with in-person instruction five days a week. Classes will be split into groups of 10 to 15 students and the district will use two old facilities to help facilitate social distancing.

Community Consolidated School District 15, in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, has established tentative plans for the 2020-21 academic year on the basis of Gov. J.B. Pritzker's Restore Illinois plan. If the state remains in Phase 4, parents can opt their children into either in-person instruction or remote learning. If the state retreats a phase, all instruction will be remote.