



Michael Zoerhoff
Superintendent of Schools

Office of Superintendent

Kentwood Public Schools
5820 Eastern Avenue, S.E.
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Dear Parent/Guardian and Students;

We hope this message finds you and your families healthy and safe. As you know from reading social media and watching the news, as a result of COVID-19 things remain very fluid with changes occurring weekly and even daily. Kentwood Public Schools is bound by the directives from the Governor's Office, the Michigan Department of Education and the various Health Departments. Since the guidelines from the Governor's Office are yet to be finalized, KPS planning has to remain highly flexible.

As families consider the start of the school year, mark August 24 on your calendar. That is the first day of school! We are excited to welcome your child to continue, or begin their educational journey on that date. Usually summer is a time of relaxation but for multiple KPS teams, it has meant long hours of diligently creating plans for a successful start of the school year.

You may recall taking several parent surveys over the past several months. The survey results identified a split perspective. Many families want school to start with "in person" learning; while others want to start with remote/virtual learning. As of today, Kent County is labeled "Phase 4" of the Governor's reopening plan. This means school may open for "in person" learning with restrictions. If the Governor moves to "Phase 3" then schools must stop all "in person" learning and go completely to remote learning.

Our current plan begins school on Monday, August 24 with all students involved in remote/virtual learning for the first two weeks. On September 8, the day after Labor Day, parents can choose to shift their student to the option of in-person learning. Here is why we believe starting remote for the first two weeks is the best option:

1. In addition to being introduced to the academic content that will be studied for the term, the first two weeks will be focused on training our students and staff on the safety protocols and cleaning procedures for a safe in person return.
2. Students and staff learn positive habits and behaviors for successful remote learning. This lays a strong foundation should in person learning be shut down and virtual learning become the only option.
3. This provides time for Chromebooks to be delivered to students needing a device.
4. This provides families with an opportunity to evaluate our new remote learning platforms and compare them to in person learning. This allows parents to make an informed choice when in person learning becomes an option on September 8.
5. Kentwood Public Schools will also have time to observe and learn from those area districts that engage in person student learning immediately. We can benefit from seeing what others do or fail to do.



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While schools will begin with remote learning, make no mistake that every class will be taught by a KPS teacher and it will be more robust than what occurred this past spring. **We have high expectations at Kentwood Public Schools for ourselves and for our students. Regardless of if students are in the classroom or engaged in remote learning, each child will be graded for the work that is accomplished.** We want parents and students to have feedback on areas of strength and areas that need to be strengthened. Regular grades provide this important feedback.

Again, if Kent County remains in Phase 4, beginning the Tuesday after Labor Day (September 8) the district will offer an "in person" learning option for students. The remote/virtual learning option will continue to be available for those families that are not comfortable with in person learning for their children. In this unusual era, we think providing multiple learning options for our families best meets the needs of our parents, staff, and community.

Attached is a document with Frequently Asked Questions. We will communicate additional details in the weeks ahead. As we receive further guidance from the Governor's Office, Michigan Department of Education, and the Kent County Health Department, we will update you through email and our Kentwoodps.org website.

If you have a question right now or in the future that is not answered, please email us at KPSFAQ@kentwoodps.org. We will get back to you with answers to your questions.

Together in partnership with our families, we are looking forward to another successful school year! As always, the health and safety of our students, staff and families remains our first priority. **These challenging times will pass, but the quality education that your children receive at KPS will serve them for a lifetime!**

Take care and stay safe,

Sincerely,

Michael Zoerhoff
Superintendent
Kentwood Public Schools