

August 4, 2020

Hello Lisbon Students, Families and Community,

I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy during this trying time we are experiencing with the coronavirus pandemic. I thank you for your patience as we have been working and preparing for the new school year.

I have attached the Lisbon Return To School Plan for the 2020-21 school year. A great deal of work, collaboration, and thought has gone into this plan. As was stated earlier, Lisbon is planning on returning to school on-site with all students. In this document, you will find many precautions and procedures being put in place to keep students and staff as safe as possible. This plan has been presented to the school board for review. We will hold a public hearing on August 12th at 6 pm at the Lisbon CSD for feedback. The Lisbon CSD School Board will make the final decision on the same night of August 12th at their regular school board meeting.

One big topic that has been discussed and evaluated since early this summer is the use of face coverings. While at the beginning of July, I said that masks would be highly recommended and not required. I have changed my earlier recommendation to **require** face coverings for students in grades 1st -12th and staff members when social distancing is not possible. For students in preschool and kindergarten, face coverings will be highly recommended. In looking at the upcoming school year, the coronavirus situation has not improved, and in many aspects, it has gotten worse. When planning to bring everyone back, we looked at trying to ensure social distancing for all students and staff. We have determined that we will not be able to social distance in many areas of the building throughout the school day. We have decided to recommend a requirement of face coverings in an attempt to do our part and help slow the spread of the coronavirus. Our alternate option would be to look at a "hybrid" plan like several other schools and bring students back 50% at a time. In that model, masks could be highly recommended. We, however, are not considering a "hybrid" model at this time. We will also have a Virtual Home Learning option for families that are not comfortable sending their students back on-site due to COVID-19; parents will need to fill out a request form found on slide 21 of the **Return to School plan** to participate. The deadline for that request is **August 19th.**

While this plan has been challenging and controversial, I ask that we, as the Lisbon school community rally together, be positive and do everything we can to make this plan work. Many hours have gone into this plan, and while you may not agree with everything in this plan, I ask for your support. Decisions are being recommended based on the information we currently have, and we believe we are recommending a plan that will best serve the students, families, and staff of the Lisbon CSD in good faith.

Again, there will be a public forum on **August 12th at 6 pm** in the Lion's Den for people to provide feedback to the school board. If you are unable to attend, I will encourage you to contact board members with your feedback. I ask that the Lisbon School community treat people with respect regardless of what decisions will be made. Thank you to the Lisbon community for your feedback and your continued support. What lies ahead, I am not sure, but what I am sure of is we will be doing everything to make the best decisions we can, provide a safe learning environment for all staff, and students and make the 2020-21 school year a success!

Pat Hocking

Lisbon Superintendent