



RTR SCHOOL DISTRICT #2902

Russell – Tyler - Ruthton

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Message from Superintendent Marlette

11-17-2020

Happy Thanksgiving,

Our RTR communities are experiencing very high COVID-19 cases at this time with infection rates per 10K county population at or above (96.37) in Lincoln County, (203.57) in Lyon County, (179.64) in Pipestone County, and (164.01) in Murray County, as of 11/17/2020. The MDE Guidance states any average rate over 50.0 in our four counties should indicate we need to move to school-wide distance learning. Currently our school district has (90) students and (18) staff members at home in quarantine with approximately (6-8) positive cases and the balance in close contact situations. In addition, the predictions are that COVID-19 infection rates will continue to increase over the holiday season.

On Thursday, November 19th, **at 7:30 a.m.** we will be holding a special electronic school board meeting to decide if we should move to a (PreK-12) Distance Learning Plan. The district would stay with this remote learning plan until that time when the infection rate declines to safer levels of infection. If you care to listen to the meeting, the link is as follows:

<https://meet.google.com/htr-wowc-dnp>

Dial-in: (US) +1 413-829-9015

PIN: 576 727 121#

Our proposed learning plan going forward would include the following:

- November 23rd and November 24th would be designated staff planning days to prepare for the move to remote learning. These two planning days will be non-student days, but MDE allows us to count them as student educational days. We are allowed to use up to five (5) staff planning days this year.
- November 25th, November 26th, and November 27th are Thanksgiving vacation days within our approved school calendar.
- Monday, November 30th, would be our first student school day using Distance Learning for all (PreK-12) students and staff.
- We would reevaluate the COVID-19 infection rate on Wednesday, December 9th, which is our next regular RTR School Board Meeting date. If rates have reduced to a safer rate of infection, we could return to our current learning plans on Monday, December 14, 2020. If our COVID-19 rates are still high, we could continue with our Distance Learning Plans until sometime in January.
- Our varsity football and volleyball teams will be allowed to complete their seasons throughout the playoffs. Good Luck Knights!
- All winter season activities, practices, and open gyms will be on hold and closed until further notice. Our hope is to start those activities on December 14th.

- Our school facilities will be closed to the public as our custodians clean and sanitize our buildings over this time.
- Daycare will again be offered to qualifying essential worker families during distance learning. The qualifications have changed this year where if both parents are essential workers, they would receive free daycare. If a single parent family is an essential worker, they also would receive free daycare.
- Meals will be offered again to all students. Families will need to order and pick up the free meals.

I am sorry that the COVID-19 infection levels are forcing us to take this action. I truly hoped that we could make it happen to bring students into school for the entire school year. I know that distance learning is not the best method of teaching our students, but it is the safest for a while. Please be confident that we will return to our current learning plans just as soon as possible!

Thank you for your support,

Superintendent Marlette