

August 6, 2020

Dear Swanville Public School Students, Families, and Staff

On July 30, 2020 Governor Walz issued Executive Order 20-82 providing guidance to school districts on starting the 2020-2021 school year. This letter is intended to provide you with information regarding:

1. The Governor’s Executive Order and the impact of this order on Swanville Public Schools.
2. How the learning scenarios (In-Person, Hybrid, and Distance Learning) decisions will be made throughout the school year.
3. The opportunity to participate in Distance Learning via the revised Swanville Public Schools Distance Learning Plan.
4. How to provide information to help with finalizing District Planning
5. Important upcoming dates

The impact of the Governor’s Executive Order on Back to School Plans

Executive Order 20-82 provides guidance to Minnesota school district regarding the specific learning scenarios each school district should be operating in based on local COVID-19 case rate data. The order details a plan for school districts to work collaboratively with county health officials to periodically review current case rate data to inform decision making. The count-level data analysis outlined by the order will allow Morrison County school districts to base decisions on localized pandemic data.

How Learning Scenario Decisions Will Be Made

In accordance with the state of Minnesota’s Safe Learning Plan, the goal of the Swanville Public School District is to implement in-persons learning for all PreK-12 students throughout the 2020-2021 school year, while providing the option for students and families to choose a distance learning scenario. Executive Order 20-82 states, “School districts MUST adhere to parameters set forth in Minnesota’s Safe Learning Plan for the 2020-2021 School Year in implementing the three instructional models”. In order to make informed decisions regarding the learning scenario to implement, the Minnesota Department of Health will provide bi-weekly case rate data (over a 14-day period) to schools. On July 30, Swanville Schools received the first set of case rate from data from May 31 – July 18, as well as guidance on how to use this data to determine the appropriate learning scenario, in-person, hybrid, or distance learning. The MN Department of Health case parameters are listed below:

Number of cases per 10,000 people over 14 days, by county of residence	Learning Scenario Recommended
0-9	In-person learning for all PreK-12 grade students
10-19	In-person learning for PreK-6 grade hybrid learning for secondary
20-29	Hybrid learning for all students
30-49	Hybrid learning for PreK-6 grade, distance learning for 7-12
50+	Distance learning for all students

As of the current data, which was dated May 31- July 18, Swanville Schools would be in the in-person category. Based on this data, the Swanville School Board voted on August 5 to choose the in-person model as its base model, knowing that this may change as the county data changes. Since this data is dated July 18, this may change before school starts. **But if case rates do not significantly increase over the next few weeks, we will plan to begin the 2020-2021 school year implementing an In-Person Learning Model for all students.** Under this model, students would attend Mondays – Thursdays, with Fridays being a flex/distance learning day, which will also give use time for deeper cleaning. We will be following the MN Department of Education and MN Department of Health requirements and guidelines including the following:

- Requiring staff and students to wear masks.
- Visitors will be limited and large events canceled or not scheduled. For example, the Open House and Waffle Feed are canceled.
- The building will not be open until 7:50 am in the morning and students will not be allowed in the building before then.
- All staff, students and visitors will be screened.

We are anticipating more updated data to be released by the MN Department of Health prior to August 21, 2020. After receiving this data, we will finalize our back to school plans, which will be published. The current plan is now available on the school district website.

The opportunity to Participate in the Distance Learning Scenario

Families who do not feel comfortable having their student(s) attend school in-person are not required to do so and may elect to participate in the revised Distance Learning Scenario at any time throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Students will be required to attend classes virtually. More details will be provided on this plan in the revised Swanville School Back-to-School Plan which will be released August 21st. We ask that if you choose this option, you notify the district by August 23rd.

Providing Information and Feedback

In order to finalize the details of our back to school plans, we are seeking specific information from our families. We have provided a brief survey for you to complete. It is on the school district website. We ask that you complete this survey by August 15th

Important Dates and Information

- **August 15** – Return completed survey
- **August 21** - Final Draft of the Swanville Schools Back to School Plans
- **August 21** – Updated county case rate data
- **August 23** – Notify school is choosing distance learning option
- **September 8** – 1st day of school

Finally, Swanville Schools will continue to update you with information as it becomes available via the district website and Facebook page. Thank you for your patience the last part of last school year and this summer. We have a team that has been working hard this summer is preparing for the different scenarios. We ask you continued cooperation and patience as we work through this next school year. If you have questions please contact us at 320-547-5100 or my direct line is 320-547-5101 or gharthan@swanville.k12.mn.us.

Sincerely,

Gene Harthan
Swanville Schools Superintendent