



# Rock Falls Township High School District #301

101 Twelfth Avenue  
Rock Falls, IL 61071

July 7, 2020

Dear RFHS Families:

We hope this message finds you well and enjoying the summer.

We would like to share current information for the start of the 2020-2021 school year and the revisions to school procedures and policies. With the transition to Phase 4: Revitalization of the Restore Illinois Plan, we have been given three options to include all in-person instruction; all remote instruction; and blended learning, with modified in-person instruction, combined with remote learning.

This summer, working with a Back-to-School Team, we have been monitoring the ongoing changes and revisions of the state guidelines and evaluating our building and procedures to implement a schedule that would best meet the safety and academic concerns for our students, staff, and families. At this time, to meet the identified needs, we will be implementing a Blended Remote Learning.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1 Group A students	In Class	Remote Learning	In Class	Remote Learning	In Class
Week 1 Group B students	Remote Learning	In Class	Remote Learning	In Class	Remote Learning
Week 2 Group A students	Remote Learning	In Class	Remote Learning	In Class	Remote Learning
Week 2 Group B students	In Class	Remote Learning	In Class	Remote Learning	In Class

Students will be assigned to Group A or Group B. Assignments to follow.

## IDPH Guidelines

- **Require use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings;**
- **Prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one space;**
- **Require social distancing as observed, as much as possible;**
- **Require that schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings; and**
- **Require an increase in school wide cleaning and disinfection.**

## Face Coverings

In accordance with Executive Order 2020-40 and in compliance with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), “accommodations will be necessary to ensure the safety of students, staff, and their families.” The IDPH guidelines “require use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings.” The guidelines, in conjunction with recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), further state that “face coverings must be worn at all times in school buildings even when social distancing is maintained.” Thus, all students and staff will be required to wear a school-appropriate face mask or face shield, unless

excused through medical documentation. If a student is medically unable to wear a face mask, the student will be provided a face shield, unless medical documentation necessitates that no face covering can be worn by the student. To help students better understand the importance and benefits of wearing a face mask, parents/guardians may want to refer to the article, "COVID-19 and mask confusion: Separating myths from realities", listed under references.

### **Lockers and Backpacks**

To further ensure student safety and adhere to social distancing requirements and IDPH limitations, the use of lockers will be suspended. Students will be asked to carry a backpack to each of their classes to carry their supplies, to include spiral notebooks and folders or 1 binder with loose leaf paper, writing utensils: pencils, pens, and a highlighter, an extra face mask, computer charger, and scientific calculator (optional). The backpack will also need to have a padded pocket for the student's computer. It is important to remind students to be prepared for their classes, as borrowing or sharing supplies is restricted. The use of the locker room will also be suspended.

### **Attendance**

Due to the recommendations that students are to stay home if ill, we will forego the 5 call off policy. However, students are still subject to compulsory school attendance mandates, requiring that a student must be in attendance, unless excused for a valid cause. Attendance will be taken every day. During in-person instruction, attendance will be taken each period. During remote learning, for a student to be counted as present for the day, the student will be required to contact his/her 7<sup>th</sup> period teacher by 2:30 p.m. Procedures for contacting teachers will be outlined and explained in the *Return to School Plan* to follow. To monitor daily attendance, if a student is absent for illness or a valid cause, parents/guardians are still required to contact the school within 24 hours, by 2:30 p.m. of the day following the absence. If a student is called off due to illness, the parent/guardian is required to report the specific symptoms of the illness, even if leaving a message. For a student to be excused to leave for an appointment, the student must be excused by a parent/guardian, sign out, sign back in upon his/her return, and present the documentation to the main office.

### **Parental Support**

We are asking parent(s)/guardian(s) to help provide support and reiterate to their student(s) the importance of following the safety procedures and guidelines as outlined by ISBE, IDPH, and CDC. In addition, we ask that all parent(s)/guardian(s) keep the school updated with any changes in address, phone numbers, and/or emails to ensure that we have current contact information for ongoing communication. With the continued updates and revisions from the state, we will continue to keep you informed. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Administration at 815-625-3886, Mr. McCord at [ronm@rfhs301.org](mailto:ronm@rfhs301.org) or Mr. Berentes at [mikeberentes@rfhs301.org](mailto:mikeberentes@rfhs301.org) or Mrs. Dunphy at [dunphyv@rfhs301.org](mailto:dunphyv@rfhs301.org)

Thank you.

Ron McCord

### **References**

- Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Department of Public Health (2020, June 23). Starting the 2020-21 School Year. Part 3-Transition Joint Guidance. Retrieved June 23, 2020, from <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Part-3-Transition-Planning-Phase-4.pdf>
- UT Southwestern Medical Center (2020, June 25). COVID-19 and mask confusion: Separating myths from realities. Retrieved June 27, 2020 from <https://utswmed.org/medblog/covid19-mask-myths-realities/>
- Illinois State Board of Education (2020, May 4). School Attendance During Remote Learning. Retrieved June 23, 2020, from <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Student-Attendance-Guidance-5-4-20.pdf>
- Illinois General Assembly. Illinois Compiled Statutes (105 ILCS 5/) Article 26 – Pupils--Compulsory Attendance. Retrieved June 27, 2020, from <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ChapterID=17&ActID=1005>