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July 14, 2021

TO: Richland Parish School Board Greater School Community

FROM: Superintendent Sheldon Jones

RE: Ready to Achieve! 2021-2022 School Operational Guidelines

As we anticipate the reopening of schools for the 2021-2022 school year, the Richland Parish School Board (RPSB) has worked diligently to continue its compliance with guidance from the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for a safe return to school. Teachers and other nine month employees are scheduled to return to work on August 12, 2021. The first day for students to return to school is scheduled for August 16, 2021. All schools in Richland Parish will implement the four day face-to-face/one day remote learning school and work week. Contact your child's school if you have any questions regarding the structure of the school week. Grab-and-go breakfasts and lunches for all students will be served.

The guidance below is from the Ready to Achieve! 2021-2022 School Operational Guidelines. It is contingent upon any future guidelines released by the Governor's Office, CDC, LDH, and Louisiana Department of Education (LDE). The LDE is continuing to work with its partners at the LDH and Children's Hospital of New Orleans (CHNOLA) to review the latest CDC guidelines surrounding school operations. The current BESE school reopening policy ended on June 30, 2021. A set of operational guidance for K-12 school systems to use in the 2021-2022 school year were provided to school systems and went into effect on July 1, 2021. The preliminary guidelines listed below were informed by LDH/CDC and are subject to change.

TRANSPORTATION

School buses may operate at 100% capacity if all passengers are masked. Windows should be kept open when it does not create a safety or health hazard. Seating charts will be created and consistently enforced.

SCREENING UPON ARRIVAL ON CAMPUS

RPSB continues to encourage families and employees to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 (i.e. fever of 100.4 or higher, persistent cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, or loss of taste/smell) prior to arrival on campus. If your child exhibits the symptoms listed above, we recommend that you take them to your family physician and do not send them to school until you receive medical clearance. Temperature checks of visitors, students and faculty on campus are no longer required.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING/GROUP SIZE

The maximum group size that may convene indoors in a single room will be determined by physical distancing requirements. Younger students who are unable to wear face coverings or maintain a physical distance from other students or adults will be assigned static groups if necessary. This includes, at a minimum, students in Grade 2 or lower. The static group composition will be maintained for as long as possible. The composition of a group may change if students are able to maintain a physical distance of at least three feet from other students and six feet from adults in a classroom or indoor setting, to the greatest extent possible.

FACIAL COVERING REQUIREMENTS

The Governor's Executive Order requiring school system facial covering for all adults and students in Grades 3 through 12 was valid through May 26, 2021, after which time, the facial covering requirement will become a local decision informed by existing CDC/LDH guidelines, unless the current K-12 mask requirement is extended by a proclamation issued by the Governor.

At this time, students and employees of the Richland Parish School Board will NOT be required to wear face masks or shields. If your child has been diagnosed with severe breathing difficulties, please make the school's principal aware.

BAND, VOCAL, AND MUSIC

Band or vocal activities may occur indoors or outdoors. Indoor concerts can be held in accordance with Theaters, Concert, or Music Hall guidance found at <https://opensafely.la.gov/>.

COVID VACCINATION INFORMATION

On May 13, 2021, the LDH announced that Louisianans ages 12 and up can now receive the COVID-19 vaccine, following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's action recommending use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for this age group. For a person younger than age 18, parental/caregiver consent is required to get the vaccine. The LDH has developed a consent form that can be found on its website.

In the event of a Coronavirus confirmed positive case of a student or employee, the Principal will contact the Superintendent to report. The Superintendent's Office will contact the Regional Medical Director to report. A Contract Tracer from the LDH may contact parents and/or employees to identify those potentially infected. A form letter may be sent to parents making them aware of any positive cases reported for their child's school. A confirmed positive case is not an automatic trigger to close school.

The Richland Parish School Board Virtual Learning Academy will be offered again as an option to the traditional face-to-face school setting during the 2021-2022 school year for all students who have been approved through the RVA application process. Virtual courses will be offered through the Edgenuity platform. For students enrolled in the Richland Virtual Academy, school meal sites will serve students on Mondays (4 meals) and Wednesdays (6 meals) only. Hours of operation on Mondays and Wednesdays will be from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. at the following schools: Delhi High School, Rayville High School, and Mangham Elementary School. For more detailed information concerning the academy, visit our website at <https://richland.k12.la.us/index.php/2020/07/30/richland-virtual-academy/>.

The Richland Parish Homework Hotline will be available for the 2021-2022 school year. The hotline will be staffed by teachers from across Richland Parish. Students and parents can access the hotline at (318) 417-7335. The Homework Hotline can be accessed on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 5:00 until 8:00 beginning tentatively August 23, 2021. The Homework Hotline will be closed on Fridays and school holidays.

Please contact your child's assigned school for questions pertaining to school reopening. Coronavirus updates are located on our district website at <http://richland.k12.la.us/covid19resources.html>. Stay safe as we continue to plan and prepare for 2021-2022 school reopening.