



August 1, 2020

Greetings SD 308 Community,

Our society continues to operate in a time of uncertainty and change. We've had to adapt and learn new ways of doing many things amid a health crisis; the education system is no exception. With the start of the school year drawing quickly near, it is time to finalize several difficult decisions. While more than anything, I wish our students were in their classes, learning from teachers, surrounded by classmates, I can't overlook the significant health concerns of in-person learning at this time.

The district's leadership team has been diligently planning several options for resuming school, each keeping the health and safety of students and staff at the forefront. Over the last week, new guidelines from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), county health departments and other health organizations, as well as rising positivity rates of Covid 19 in our area, have caused us to conclude that reopening schools at this time is not attainable.

On Monday night, I am recommending to the Board of Education that SD 308 begin the school year with our Remote For All plan. This is an extremely difficult decision that was reached based on many considerations. I fully understand that this might be welcomed news for many of our families as well as disappointing to others. Our work moving forward will be to develop a plan that can be flexible and responsive to the changing conditions of the pandemic with our ultimate goal of returning to full in-person instruction. The detailed reasoning of this decision will be presented at Monday night's meeting.

I sincerely appreciate all the students, staff, parents and community members who have provided input, feedback, and ideas. Everyone has worked together to plan and revise in response to the changing environment we are in.

I understand that this announcement brings about many questions, which is why we will work quickly, following Monday night's meeting, to provide a guide, FAQ, and updates to our webpage. The first day of fully remote learning will be announced soon. I encourage you to watch the live stream of our board meeting on Monday evening at 7pm, the link will be included on the homepage of our website www.sd308.org.

In closing, it is important to emphasize that our remote learning plan for the beginning of the 20-21 school year will look very different than what was done in March with much more real time interaction with teachers. We are committed to providing the best learning opportunities for our students academically along with meeting the social and emotional needs of our students. We will also continue to ensure that our students basic needs such as food and resources are met.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to educate our students in the safest way possible.

Sincerely,

Dr. John W. Sparlin
Superintendent of Schools