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8-4-2020

Dear Families,

We've had several questions from parents inquiring about options for their students if a student, or parent, is uncomfortable with in-person learning – something our district is committed to and something we believe we can do safely. There will be a remote option for students at all grade levels.

We felt it appropriate to share our planning with you ahead of more detailed information that will be shared with you on August 7, 2020. Please know we are committed to meeting the needs of all our students and will have options for our students and families to choose from.

1 – MSAD 54 will have a remote-learning option for any student (and family) who isn't comfortable with our in-person learning plan. The process to sign-up / determine in-person or remote learning will be provided to parents when we share our outline for a return to school this Friday.

2 - When schools closed in March, schools across the state moved to support students remotely with opportunities for learning at home – this was NOT remote learning. In the fall there will be consistent expectations around grading, class participation, attendance, etc., for those students participating in remote learning.

3 – MSAD 54 will be issuing a laptop or tablet for all students K-12 this year. Although students are unlikely to take devices home at the younger grades while doing in-person education, this allows for all students to have access should we need to do so. Devices will be provided to all students regardless if they are in-person or at home doing remote learning.

4 – MSAD 54 will be providing additional resources and supplies to students, for both in-person and remote learning, to ensure we are best able to meet student needs within the requirements of COVID-19 (to avoid the sharing of supplies and facilitate remote learning).

5 – Remote Learning isn't homeschooling. Remote learning means a student is registered in MSAD 54 and will receive the supports and opportunities available (including devices, resources, supplies, etc.). If a family decides to homeschool, that family is no longer a MSAD 54 student. Although there is a negative impact to the district financially (loss of subsidy and potential impact to town budgets), we fully respect that some may decide that this option is what is best for their family.

As noted previously, **we will be releasing our return to school outline on Friday, 8/7/20 and will be asking parents and students to let us know the option they are planning for (in-person or remote) by Tuesday, 8/11/20.** This plan, which will be posted to the website and shared via text and email will include information that will help you make a decision that makes sense for your family. We would ask that you hold-off on deciding if remote or in-person learning is the best option until then.

Next Steps and Timeline:

8/7/2020 - Release of MSAD 54 Outline for Return to School, including Maine CDC safety requirements, some specifics around grade-level instruction, transportation, etc.

Survey to Parents/Students about intent to be “in-person” or to access “remote learning” (Due Tuesday, 8/11). Schools will follow-up with families who have not completed the survey and Principals will finalize class lists.