

Brown City Community Schools

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Dear Brown City Community Schools' Families:

The staff and Board of Education at Brown City Community Schools would like to thank all of our families for their patience and support during these unprecedented times, as we prepare for the 2020-2021 school year. We have a few announcements we are finally prepared to make and give some details on a few minor changes to the start of the school year.

- **Elementary Meet the Teacher/Open House ~ Thursday, August 27.**
 - We will not be having our traditional Meet the Teacher event, however will do a modified version as listed below:
 - Elementary Meet the Teacher from Noon – 3:00pm outside of the elementary building. All face-to-face, hybrid, and virtual students/families are welcome to attend and meet the student's teacher. We ask that all individuals wear their mask, practice proper social distancing, and limit your time with the teacher to approximately 15 minutes or less.
 - Kindergarten – 2:00-3:00
 - First Grade – 12:00-1:00
 - Second Grade – 1:00-2:00
 - Third Grade – 2:00-3:00
 - Fourth Grade – 12:00-1:00
 - Fifth Grade – 1:00-2:00
 - Sixth Grade – 2:00-3:00
 - Elementary Open House from 5:30-7:00 – If you would like to bring your child in to see their classroom, the elementary building will be open from 5:30-7:00pm. Administrators will be available to answer any questions you may have, but your child's teacher will not be in their rooms at that time. Again, we ask that you wear a mask for all individuals, practice social distancing, and limit your visit in the classroom to 15 minutes or less.
- **7th Grade Orientation/Open Building/Virtual Device Pick-Up ~ Thursday, August 27**
 - We will be providing information to our 7th grade students about changes that are different, in the high school compared to the elementary, to assist them in their transition of buildings. Mr. Hale will post this video by Thursday, August 27th. Mr. Hale will provide an all call to all 7th grade families when it is available.
 - Thursday, August 27, we will have National Honor's Society kids available to give building tours from 2:00-6:00pm for any 7th grade students (and students new to the building) that would like a tour. One parent may be allowed to join the student on the tour. Again, we ask that you wear a mask for all individuals, and practice social distancing.

- 7-12 Grade Device Pick-Up for Virtual Students
 - Any student, 7-12, that chose the virtual option may pick-up their device (Chromebook) on Thursday, August 27 from 2:00-6:00pm. Pick-up will take place in front of the high school building. Students/Parents must have their signed device contract completed before students will be issued devices. Device contracts will be available on the school website by Wednesday, August 26th, or you can get one on August 27th when you come for your device.
 - 7-12 Face-to-Face and Hybrid students will receive their devices the first week of school. They will also be required to have the device contract signed prior to taking the device home.

- **First Day of School is still Monday, August 31.**
 - All elementary (K-6) students will report as normal the first week (if face-to-face)
 - The high school 7-12 will be adjusted slightly for week 1. We are planning a “soft opening” in the high school to have half of the students attend on Monday/Wednesday of that week, and the other half of students to attend on Tuesday/Thursday the first week. It is not our intent to prolong the start or inconvenience families; however, we have a few details (lunches, transitions between classes, etc.) that typically create congregating of large groups. We have a few ideas we want to try that first week to see what will work best to limit large groups and help with social distancing. This is easier for us to do with half of the students in session. Students 7-12 will report every day, as normal, starting on Tuesday, September 8 (second week of school). Mr. Hale will communicate with families indicating which 2 days your child will report that first week.

- **First Week of School and Content Expected**
 - Please understand that the first week of school typically is spent getting to know our students, going over rules/expectations, providing structure, etc. We typically do not get to a lot of content/curriculum the first week, and this year is no different. We have not seen many of our students since March, and we have many new protocols to cover with them. For our virtual students this means your first week may seem to be a little “light” on what you have to complete, but please understand there are things we will be doing at school that you cannot do from home that first week. We will be more into our content and normal schedules starting in week 2.

- **Bus Route Changes**
 - Last year, we had 7.5 bus runs with the half run being our town stops. This school year, we will only have seven bus runs. The town stops will be split up among the seven routes as they were prior to last year. The town kids will be last pick-ups and first drop-offs. There will be designated town bus stops (as normal).
 - Just a reminder with the buses that your child will be required to use the hand sanitizer upon entry and must have a mask to ride the bus. We will also be loading from back to front, and asking students from the same household to sit together.

- **Student Drop-Off**
 - **Doors to the school will be open from 7:55-8:05 each morning.** Students will have multiple doors they may enter, and their building principals will communicate this.
 - Parents will not be able to enter the buildings to drop-off their child. We know this may be difficult, but we have a few things to help.
 - Tents have been rented for the first week, so kindergarten and tuition preschool drop-off can happen on the playground. Parents may spend a couple of minutes on the playground with their child to help this drop-off transition. Parents must have masks on during this time.
 - We have some of our preschool aides who will be assisting teachers during the first week to be an extra hand. They know our younger students, they and will be a familiar face.

- **Online Learning Days – Thursday, September 17 & Thursday, September 24**
 - We are committed to providing proper support and training to all of our families to better prepare them, in the event of a future school closure. We were not able to do this last spring, and want to be better prepared if needed. We plan to provide parent training for our virtual and hybrid families during the first few weeks of school (dates TBD and communicated). We also want to provide a couple of “practice runs” for families to do virtual learning with our face-to-face students. We have scheduled these for Thursday, September 17 and Thursday, September 24. Our plan is for students to not report that day, and hopefully for families to work with their child virtually, while our teachers provide approximately half a day of instruction from approximately 9:00-12:00. We will then have parent trainings the following day to answer any of the parents’ questions/concerns/difficulties with the virtual learning day. With these days, we can address most parent concerns during a time when we are allowed to meet with you. We understand this may create an inconvenience for your family’s schedule, but we feel that the benefits of the parent involvement and support is necessary for a successful 2020-2021 school year.

- **Breakfast and Lunch**
 - We have communicated with our families that all students will receive a free breakfast and a free lunch this school year. This is part of the CEP program that our district qualified for. We do need all families to complete the CEP family form that was included with your yearly Visions Newsletter. This form is what determines some of our federal money that is used for instructional materials and staff. If these forms are not completed, we will not be able to continue the free breakfast and lunch program in future years, and could lose federal funding this school year. Thank you for your cooperation.
 - Students who choose the virtual learning option will also be eligible for the free breakfast and lunch. Our plan is to start these during the second week of school, for the virtual kids. We will provide the first set of meals on Tuesday, September 8th. These meals will come once a week (5 breakfast / 5 lunch), and our intent is to deliver them to the student’s home address (if in our school district borders). If your child has opted for the virtual learning option, and you do not want meals delivered, please contact the superintendent’s office.

- **Lockers – We have a bit of a change for lockers in both buildings**
 - Elementary – They will be using lockers to put their bags/coats in during the morning, getting in them for recess if needed, and removing items at the end of the day to go home. This is very similar to normal, but we ask that there are not many “extras” that stay in the locker overnight, since the inside (of the locker) is an area that will not be disinfected.
 - High School – Students in the high school will not be assigned hallway lockers to start the year. This was done to limit congregating in the hallways before school, between classes, and after school. Junior high and high school students will take their backpacks with necessary materials with them from class to class.

- **Health and Safety Changes in District – We have made many changes in district since last March to make our buildings as safe as possible. Below, I have listed a few to share with you.**
 - One change involves our HVAC systems. Our system is different from a home furnace system, and operates a bit differently from a fresh air standpoint. We have the ability to control the amount of fresh air that can come in through our air handlers, and we have increased all of these. We have increased the fresh air to the maximum level recommended (if you open all the way you cannot prevent freezing and/or control temperatures appropriately). This will bring in more fresh air and natural disinfectants to keep our students and staff safe.
 - We have also added a daytime housekeeper to our staff. This change was done to assist with required disinfecting of high touch areas and classrooms throughout the school day.
 - We have added hand sanitizer dispensers to all classroom doorways and around the buildings.
 - We have purchased portable units (1 per building) that will “scrub” the air in our quarantine rooms and/or rooms with various illnesses.

- We have purchased multiple disinfectant misting units that can be used in larger areas (classroom, cafeterias, etc.) throughout the day and after school hours.
- Masks have been bought to distribute to students and staff. Face shields have also been purchased for those that would like one.
- Clear curtains have been purchased for office counter areas.

- **Health Department Involvement**

- The Sanilac County Health Department has been involved with the county schools, as we get ready to return to school. We will continue to be in contact with them as needed and new issues arise. The Health Department will be creating some documents to help guide districts through best practices in cases of positive COVID-19 tests, symptomatic students/staff/families, testing, contact tracing, etc.

****The building principals will be releasing some short videos over the next several days to discuss some specific details as they relate to the elementary or high school buildings.****

I want to thank our amazing staff at Brown City Community Schools and commend their hard work as they have prepared for the unusual start of school. We know there will be some changes that will need to be made as we go, but I am confident we will be prepared to provide a great school year for everyone at Brown City Schools.

If you have questions please continue to contact:

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Sincerely,
Neil Kohler

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