

July 6, 2020

Lisbon Students, Families and Community Members,

I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy during this time. We continue to receive guidance from the Iowa Department of Education and other supporting agencies as we work towards a plan for a return to school. The latest guidance that was given out was that school will start as normal as possible in the fall. However, this continues to be a fluid situation and things are changing daily. I will attempt to update you on what the Lisbon CSD is doing to prepare for the 2020-21 school year at this time.

As a district, we have greatly appreciated your feedback through our surveys. I will touch on some of the points that stood out. Two pieces of feedback that stood out were:

Parents want children back in school in a traditional setting this fall.

Face coverings should be optional.

At this time, that is the Lisbon CSD plan of starting school as normal on August 24 and face coverings will be optional. If you have not had time to fill out the [Lisbon CSD Return to Learn Parent Survey](#), please do as this info is helping drive our decisions. However, if you would rather, feel free to email any Lisbon administrator and we will include your input.

The Return To Learn Plan is not a concrete plan but rather a resource for schools to put down thoughts and ideas. We have worked and continue to work through our plan to include all the components the Iowa Department of Education is asking of schools. Right now, Lisbon CSD plans to start school as normal on August 24 in a traditional setting like we have done in the past. There will be learning opportunities offered by the district for students and families who do not feel comfortable returning to the traditional school environment. Many precautions will be put in place to help ensure safety, but ultimately it will be a parent's decision whether to send students back to the Lisbon CSD or if they would like their child to do an online curriculum. The other item is the discussion of face coverings. There are many different feelings on this topic, but Lisbon CSD plans to make face coverings optional for students. Again, the survey feedback indicated loud and clear a desire for face coverings to be optional so that is our plan at this time.

We will be briefly discussing the R2L plan at the July 8 school board meeting at 6pm. However, at this point nothing is being finalized until we get closer to the start of school. At the August 12th meeting we hope to have the plan finalized, ready to go for the start of school and it will be shared with the school board and the general public. At the August 12th board meeting, we also hold a public forum for anyone who would like to speak or comment regarding the plan for the start of school.

In the latest DE guidance, school activities have been given the approval to resume after July 1st. So, if you hear from a coach or sponsor, understand we have been given approval by the state to resume these activities. Again, with all of these COVID-19 issues, if you are not comfortable participating in something, you have the choice to not participate. I do ask that you please let staff know as we do not want families to be uncomfortable about returning to activities. We will also be interested in family's reasons for participating or not participating. As a school, we are implementing extra cleaning and safety requirements of group meetings held at school facilities. The Lisbon CSD will not be allowing or opening facilities for non-school related activities. In the future when things improve safety-wise, we will revisit this topic.

Please remember we are still over 7 weeks away from the start of school. Things are likely to change even more before we officially start school on August 24. In the meantime, please be confident that we are working on providing the best and safest educational plan we can. As always, please feel free to reach out to us with any additional concerns you may have with the start of school. Thank you for your patience with this matter. In the meantime, stay safe until we can all be together safely again.

Pat Hocking
Lisbon Superintendent