



## PLANNING FOR SCHOOL IN FALL 2020

### UPDATE #4

June 8, 2020 meeting

**\*NOTE:** *This article is a result of the weekly discussions of the Pearland ISD Return to School Committee. This serves as insight into possible contingency plans the committee is preparing for and these are not being implementing at this time. As the 2020-21 school year approaches, definitive plans will be released.*

Realizing that the current COVID-19 pandemic has radically affected “normal” school operations, and that social distancing restrictions may remain a necessity next school year, Pearland ISD is planning to maximize educational opportunity by planning for 3 intertwined possibilities:

- **On-campus instruction to students - with required social distancing measures in place.**
- **Remote/distance learning from home**
- **A Hybrid system whereby students are both on campus in smaller numbers and learning through remote methods when away from school.**

**ALL THREE OF THESE POSSIBILITIES MUST BE AVAILABLE TO MEET A SURGE IN INFECTIONS OR IN CASES WHERE A STUDENT/STAFF/CLASS OR SCHOOL BECOMES INFECTED.** We have been continuously warned that surges in the pandemic or other realities may require further temporary closures of school campuses next school year. Thus, we must be prepared for a combination of on-campus, distance, and hybrid learning next school year, realizing we may have to make rapid changes/additions to the district’s calendar of instruction. In our planning efforts, we have established a large “Return to School” committee comprised of leaders and advisors from each major area of district operations, as well as parents. We are meeting on a weekly basis.

#### **UPDATE #3** (June 1, 2020 meeting):

This update was in the form of a video interview with Superintendent Dr. John Kelly and can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5mSHqOlaSY>

Here are some of the major issues we discussed this week:

#### **SCHOOL SCHEDULES**

With the every-day, half-day model for elementary schools, we will need to find a “holding area” for students as they transition to go home or arrive on campus at mid-day in order to maintain social distancing. There is consideration to use large areas of schools such as the gym, cafeteria and outdoor areas (weather permitting) as students transition from the AM to PM session.

For high schools, the district is having discussions with Alvin Community College for dual enrollment students (approx. 1,100 students) on how to make the high school every other day, full day schedule work with the ACC-instructor courses.



## **CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

We are not expecting any state testing to be waived during the 20/21 school year. Our C&I Department will continue to work with campus administrators and teachers on the required instruction through TEKS integrated lessons, as always. C&I is also looking at a staff development model if it can/must be done remotely with virtual training, small group rotations, etc.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Our desire is to provide as much service close to the level we've been able to provide with the social distancing constraints we have due to COVID-19. As previously mentioned, the district may have to eliminate optional fee-based bus service for students who reside within two miles in order to provide the required transportation services for those outside two miles of their school. We will continue to examine all possibilities and have not yet finished deliberations on this vital topic. While we are among a minority of districts who offer bus service within 2 miles of schools, this optional service may not be supported if we cannot provide the drivers and buses to accommodate much lower bus capacities.

## **FOOD SERVICE**

Through the National School Lunch Program we serve free/reduced-price breakfast and lunch on all our campuses. The State of Texas has filed a waiver with the USDA to allow districts to provide take-home meals for students to maintain the hybrid model of half the students on campus at a time. We believe this waiver may be granted, but districts across the state wait for the answer on this before formulating plans for the 20/21 school year.

## **DAYCARE/CHILDCARE**

Perhaps the single most difficult issue for our families is DAYCARE in the event we are forced to partially or fully close campuses. Among other "essential workers" are teachers, many of whom have young children. It may be beneficial to ALL parents if day care is provided for these essential workers – by the district itself. The Return to School committee now comprises representatives from several childcare facility directors who are working with the district to seek possible partnerships/solutions. Keep in mind that daycare providers face the same issues as the district with social distancing requirements, limiting the number of children allowed at the daycare, etc. Discussions will continue to take place.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

With regard to the use of a comprehensive software platform for delivering instruction: Elementary school students/staff will be using **Seesaw** and grades 5-12 will use **Canvas** for remote instruction to provide purposeful homework/at-home learning. Perhaps the number one complaint among parents during the Spring was the complexity of using multiple platforms for their children. Thus, the intent is to reduce this to two major platforms – while maximizing instructional capabilities. The Technology and C&I Departments are working together to develop lessons and other capabilities for various courses.

The superintendent will present a proposal for the purchase and implementation of technology devices for some/all students – so that there is seamless integration between the devices used in classrooms



and at home thereby allowing a more seamless experience for students. At present, the administration is looking at different implementation models including purchase, lease, family-buy, and maintenance costs/contracts. More information on this will be available in late June.

#### **SUMMARY**

There is still much to consider and a great deal of work to be done over the summer. We will continue to prepare for a “mix” of the 3 scenarios listed above. Our work continues through the summer and decisions will be communicated as timely as possible. Our goal remains to provide our students with a World-Class education despite the challenges we currently face. We know that with the dedication of our staff, teachers, parents and community, Pearland ISD will continue to provide the best for our students.

**ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT SINCE LAST “RETURN TO SCHOOLS” MEETING:** The Communications Department is developing a parent survey to address various issues connected to our “Return to School” efforts. The “Return to School” Committee will be given the opportunity for input on the survey and it is hoped that it can be released to parents by the end of June 2020.