

BOARD OF EDUCATION

ST. IGNACE AREA SCHOOLS

(906) 643-8145

FAX (906) 643-0247

W429 Portage Road, St. Ignace, Michigan
49781

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LaSalle High School – 643 8800

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August 12, 2020

Dear Parent and Guardians,

I hope you and your children have had a safe and healthy summer. We are looking forward to the challenges of the coming school year and have been working hard over the past few weeks in reviewing information to provide a safe and healthy educational opportunity for all students and staff in the coming school year. Please review the following outline for students and staff to return safely to school at LaSalle High School for the 2020-2021 school year. The planning for this return is based on our current designation as we are in Phase 5 of the State of Michigan Back to School Roadmap. We believe that with the planning listed below we are adhering to the strongly recommended guidelines suggested by the State of Michigan, and some of the guidelines exceed the State of Michigan expectations. Again, this plan is not the most ideal plan as we know what education for students has looked like in the past, but it's the best plan we could put together with the information we have at this time. Please understand that as information and things change, we may have to change our plan and the items listed below. Thank you for your patience and willingness to work together as a partner in education!

Online Instructional Option:

This school year students in 9-12 can enroll in a virtual online option rather than coming to school in the traditional face to face setting. If a student chooses this option, the course content would be delivered through The EUP Virtual Cooperative using the curriculum of Accelerate Education. The concept of this online option would allow students to enroll in virtual classes for the entire school day that are taught by other teachers in the Eastern Upper Peninsula region but to remain a LaSalle High School student. Students would have to login and work in their classes each day but would not have to come into the school building for class. Students would be obligated to enroll for 1 semester. If a student is a special education student and enrolls in this online format, special education services will be provided to meet the students needs. To start the enrollment online process and to get more information and to answer "Frequently Asked Questions" about this program, please visit the "Headlines" section of the LHS Website labeled "LHS Fall 2020 Return to School Information Center." All of this information along with links to review curriculum will be available for viewing. An online form labeled "LHS Student EUP Virtual Collaborative Enrollment Form." is also located in this area of the website and should be completed by 4:00 PM Wednesday August 19th if you plan to enroll your child in this online option. **Because of challenges and with the purpose of scheduling and planning, we ask you to please complete this online enrollment form by this timeline!** If you do not have internet access to review the information and to access the online form. Please call the high school office at (906) 643-8800 and leave a message and we can get you the information needed. We will assume if you do not complete and submit this pre-enrollment form your child will be attending traditional face to face instruction at Lasalle. Students who choose this option will have to have internet access. If students do not have internet access, they can access the internet at designated locations within the community that include; St. Ignace

Township Hall, Brevort Township Hall, Lambert Center, St. Ignace LaSalle High School Parking Lot (outside cafeteria), Moran Township Schools. If students request a device to be used for online instruction, the school can issue a device to the student to use. Students who are enrolled in virtual online classes are eligible for athletics and must adhere to the school athletic eligibility guidelines. Additionally, if you are a junior or senior student and sign up for the EUP virtual model, you still would be allowed to enroll in CTE Vocational classes and would be required to attend these classes in person. Please note if our school is dropped in phases at any time, the student would remain enrolled in the EUP Virtual Collaborative until the end of the semester. If you enroll your child in this online program, we will use an automated phone system and or email to communicate with you regarding any important information.

Face to Face Instructional Option:

Below you will see a list of safety protocols that will be put in place to allow for students to return to a traditional face to face learning option. Please keep in mind that we are doing our best to provide a safe and healthy learning environment and may have to adjust and change some protocols as deemed appropriate to help keep a safe learning atmosphere. We plan to offer our traditional electives of band, PE, industrial arts, and mentoring/ advanced education as options for students who are choosing face to face instruction. In all elective classes students and teachers will be encouraged to spread students out. Students will be required to wear masks and can remove the masks when exercising and playing instruments. More specific guidelines may be recommended by the teacher of these classes to allow for a safe learning environment.

Masks/ Face Coverings:

For terms of this discussion the term mask and face covering is interchangeable. A mask or face covering must fit securely over the nose and mouth. Face covering could be homemade cloth material and a scarf or gaiter could be also used. If students are using a homemade cloth mask, gaiter, or scarf, it should be appropriate to be worn in the school setting and it is recommended homemade face coverings are washed daily. According to CDC guidelines a face shield is not considered a face covering and could only be used with a medical exemption. We believe an essential part of helping stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus is to wear face masks/face coverings. All staff will be required to wear a face mask/ face covering during the school day except during meals, drinking, or unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated. Individuals who claim medical exemption will need to provide documentation from a medical professional to verify the exemption and to indicate what alternative facial covering can be utilized. All students in grades 6-12 will be required to wear a face mask/ face covering during the school day except during meals, while participating in a physical education course, or participating in using an instrument in band class, or unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated. Students and or staff who claim medical exemption will need to provide documentation from a medical professional to verify the exemption and to indicate what alternative facial covering can be utilized. Signage of this face covering requirement will be posted on building entrances and on school buses. Students who are capable of wearing a face covering and refuse to do so in an area where a face covering is required will be asked to wear a face covering and will be issued a face covering by a school official and asked to put on the covering if needed. This incident will be documented. Students showing patterns of non-compliance may be removed from the school building and placed into virtual instruction until the student agrees to comply with this safety protocol. Parents will be notified by the principal of each instance of non-compliance. **We believe that wearing masks/ facial coverings is simply the right thing to do to help stop and mitigate the spread of the COVID virus and help ensure people are safe in our building!**

Information on Students & Staff Prior Coming to School:

Prior to sending your child to school, we ask you to check for symptoms at home. If your child is sick or has symptoms at home, we ask for you to please keep your child at home and call the high school office at (906) 643-8800. Some symptoms may include temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, shortness of

breath, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, sore throat, new uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing, new onset of severe headache, sudden loss of taste or smell, etc.). Staff members should also check for symptoms for their temperature prior to coming to work. If staff has a temperature of 100.4 or greater, they should stay home and consider testing if symptoms of COVID-19 are present.

Office Area/ Visitors:

To ensure safety of our students and staff, we will not be allowing visitors into the learning areas of the building. If parents need to meet with a staff member, **we ask that you please call ahead and schedule an appointment.** We ask if you need to drop something off to your child to please use our door buzzer system to check into the office upon arriving. In most cases we will have you drop off and someone will deliver items to your child. We ask if you do come into the office for a scheduled appointment, that you wear a mask and use hand sanitizer upon entering the office area.

Classroom Expectations:

We will encourage teachers to space out classroom desks and work areas as much as possible to keep students at a safe distance. For classes that have 24 or more students in a class, we will look at the possibilities and feasibility to utilize larger spaces like the library, other empty classrooms, gym, band room, cafeteria, or outside to conduct classes in safe distances. This will be based on the size of the existing classroom as well as the nature of the class being taught. For example, for computers and industrial arts classes we will not be able to move the location of the class because the existing classrooms have equipment needed in the existing classrooms to hold these classes. **We are working to keep students spread out as much as possible, but in a school setting we will not be able to keep everyone away at a 6 foot distance.**

Building Cleaning Update:

Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned at least twice per school day according to the MI Safe State Safety protocols. These frequently touched surfaces include light switches, classroom and office door handles, benches, counters, bathroom fixtures, copy machines, water filling stations, and entry/exit doors. Students will disinfect their desk when entering each classroom. Each teacher will be responsible for wiping down doorknobs prior to the start of every class period. All classrooms, band, gym, and the library will be disinfected by the assigned staff member after each class has exited and prior to the next class entering the class. Cafeteria tables and common touch points in the cafeteria will be cleaned between each lunch period. A deep clean of the cafeteria will be performed at the end of each day. A Clorox 360 sanitizing/cleaning machine has been purchased to be used throughout the building to help disinfect and clean areas.

Hygiene Update:

Hand sanitizer will be stationed throughout the building. Hand sanitizer will be available at all main entrances, all offices, all classrooms, all bathrooms, and all buses. Supplies (paper towels, soap, hand sanitizer, tissues, trash receptacles) will be checked daily and restocked in the classroom. If supplies run out during the school day, the teacher should contact the office immediately. A plexiglass guard will be installed in the building office and in the cafeteria line of the HS kitchen. Education regarding hygienic practices (handwashing, face masks, social distancing, etc.) will be encouraged and reminded to students in classrooms. Drinking fountains will not be in operation. Water filling stations will be in operation- students are encouraged to bring individual water bottles to school. It's recommended to all students and staff to wash hands after using restrooms and after eating.

Monitoring/ Screening Students/ Staff While at School:

A quarantine room will be established in the high school office area. The principal or designee will screen students in the main office. Students who exhibit any of these symptoms (fever of 100.4 or greater, shortness of breath, vomiting, diarrhea, persistent coughing, persistent sneezing), loss of taste & smell, and or other symptoms suggested by the LMAS health department will be provided a surgical mask and will be placed and remain in the quarantine room until their parent/guardian can transport them home. Parent communication will be made immediately with clear and concise directions on where and how to pick up the student. Students will be sent home for ten school days and until they are symptom free or until they provide documentation of a negative test. St. Ignace Area Schools will communicate with the LMAS Health Department frequently and closely monitor any health department guidance regarding positive cases, contact tracing, and possible exposure sites. A student who exhibits symptoms will be transported by their parents to a health care provider for offsite testing and will remain home for ten school days or until they test negative and are symptom free. Staff who exhibit symptoms will be transported to a health care provider for offsite testing and will remain home for ten school days or until they test negative and are symptom free. In the event of a positive test, the LMAS Health Department will be contacted and will be provided information such as seating charts, lunch contact, busing information, and other possible persons known to have been within six feet for greater than 15 minutes.

Busing/ Transportation:

Transportation by bus will be permitted with strict requirements in place. All **9-12 students and staff** are required to wear face coverings at all times on the bus. Students and staff who claim medical exemption to the face covering requirement will need to provide documentation from a medical professional to verify the exemption and to indicate what alternative facial covering can be utilized. All students and staff will sanitize their hands upon entering and leaving the bus. All students will be seated from the back of the bus forward and placing no more than two students per seat. Students will then leave the bus from the front to the back to minimize exposure. If a student becomes sick during the school day, the student will not be permitted to ride the bus home and a parent/guardian/emergency contact will be required to take them home. If a bus driver becomes sick during the school day, the bus driver will not be permitted to drive the bus home.

All **9-12 students** who hope to ride the bus will be asked to complete a transportation request form in the coming weeks to indicate a need for a morning pick up and/or an afternoon drop off on a school bus. It will be critical to our planning that we have received this information in advance for any student planning to ride a bus this year so that we can plan for safe and efficient transportation. Bus routes and pick up/drop off times will be developed based on this information and provided to you prior to the first day of school along with any other transportation information. We will send an automated message out for notification when our transportation request link becomes active.

Start of the School Day:

To ensure safety of our students and staff, our doors will open each day at 7:40 AM. When entering the building students will be allowed to report to the cafeteria to get a quick “Grab and Go” breakfast. If students are not eating breakfast, then they can drop items off in their locker and then will report to their 1st hour classrooms. Teacher and staff will be reporting to their respective duty stations and classrooms at 7:45 AM. Students will not be allowed to roam the halls and congregate in parts of the building prior to school starting. All students will be expected to be in their 1st hour class and class will begin promptly at 8:00 AM.

Lunch Period:

This year tentatively LaSalle High School is offering two split lunch periods that will be 25 minutes long. One lunch period will be from 10:43 – 11:08 am and another from 11:39 AM – 12:04 PM. At this time it is unknown what classes will have what lunch periods. This will allow us to divide up students and space them out safely for lunch. Students eating lunches will be spaced out in the cafeteria and in the HS gym bleacher areas. We will have one main lunch line in the HS cafeteria with some ala carte items available for sale to students. Parents who drop off lunch items for students are only allowed to drop off personal sized items. Students will not be allowed to purchase BC Pizza at lunch time to share with others.

End of the School Day:

Students will be released each day at 2:50 PM. Buildings will close to students each day at 3:00 PM unless students are staying after school for an athletic practice or for a scheduled meeting with a teacher or an after-school program.

Athletics:

St. Ignace Area Schools will comply with all guidance published by the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA). Additionally, students and coaches will confirm they are healthy and symptom free (including temperature check) before each practice or competition.

Proper hand hygiene techniques should be used before and after every practice, event, or gathering. Equipment will be disinfected before and after use. Each participant will provide his/her own water bottle-sharing of water bottles will not be allowed. When traveling to competition on a bus, facemasks will be required. Any spectators allowed at events will be required to wear masks pursuant to Executive Order 2020-147. The number of participants and spectators allowed may be limited based upon the State of Michigan's guidelines for indoor and outdoor events and/or MHSAA policy. Policies and guidelines for athletics may change as the year progresses.

Mental Wellness – Students and Staff:

With education looking far different than ever before, it is important that the school district, staff, students, and parents work together to help each other out. The mental wellness of the staff and students is important in making this work. As we tackle such educational challenges, please make sure to communicate if you are feeling stressed out and anxious. Perhaps by talking with the appropriate people and individuals with whom you feel comfortable may allow you to exchange ideas of how to make things better. We want all of our students and staff to make this the best year and opportunities we can with the situation we are in.

More Important Information:

As you know, we are in unprecedented times with this situation. We ask for your cooperation and patience in this process and understand that information may change, and we may have to change our practices and procedures that are outlined above. In the coming days/ weeks ahead, we plan to communicate additional information to both students who are planning to return to school with traditional face to face instruction regarding registration and access to student schedules and locker assignments, as well as information for students who enroll in the online option. We will continue to use this automated message system to communicate with students and parents. Again, we are doing our best and look forward to your child's return to school (virtually or in person) when school begins on Tuesday September 8, 2020 - **Mr. Fettig, LaSalle High School Principal**

