

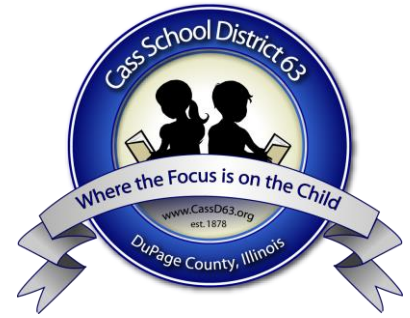
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

CASS SCHOOL DISTRICT 63

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Mark R. Cross

Superintendent of Schools



Tuesday, July 21, 2020

Dear Cass School District 63 Parents,

As we continue to work on the details of our framework for starting the 2020-21 school year, I would like to share with you some other important information. *Reimagining School: The Cass 63 Return to Learn Framework* will be rolling out this week, but we know how critical some of these programs are to our children, parents and families, as well as all of us here in the school district. No decision is taken lightly, but I feel that we have an obligation to share this with you now so that you can plan accordingly.

It is with great regret that I inform you that we will not be able to offer the Before and After School Experience (BASE) program to start the 2020-21 school year. We will not rule out the possibility of this coming back later in the school year, depending on health conditions and guidelines at the time, as well as our ability to staff the program. While I realize this announcement does not impact all families, we take this very seriously for the ones that it does and we wanted to let you know this in advance.

Unfortunately, there is no path to offering BASE at this time while also ensuring the safety of your children and our staff. By its nature, the BASE program is very different from the day to day structure of school. To have any chance of staffing the program, the numbers of children involved would be too high to allow for social distancing and providing meaningful activities that are safe for children. Furthermore, the complexities of educating our students under the current guidelines is requiring our school district and staff to focus 100 percent on two things: (1) the health and safety of everyone in our schools, and (2) providing your children with an excellent education regardless of how that is delivered. At this time, that needs to be our total focus as a school district and staff.

Along the same lines, to start the 2020-21 school year we will not be able to provide fall extracurricular activities and athletics, including cross country and softball. We will not be able to offer our usual parent-student orientation day or the curriculum nights in person. We are working on plans to share and communicate with virtual orientation and curriculum night presentations. At this time, any events that bring larger groups of people into our schools or that can be avoided or modified will not be held to start the school year.

Concord Elementary School

Cass School District 63

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Laura Anderson, Ed.D.

School Principal & District Director of Teaching & Learning

Cass Junior High School

Cass School District 63

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Mrs. Christine Marcinkewicz

School Principal & District Director of Technology

As you will see when we roll out our Return to Learn Framework, our school district will operate very much on the safe and conservative side of current health guidelines. As much as we want things to be back to normal, that is not the world we live in right now and we will not take any unnecessary risks with our staff, students or families. We will release our detailed framework this Thursday, July 23, along with a parent survey with some important choices and options available to you. Everything from our schedule, transportation and parent choices will be presented at that time, along with some of the health and safety guidelines and protocols that will continue to be developed. In addition to our blended learning option, which will be shared with you, there will also be a fully remote learning option. I think most of you will be very pleased with the thought that has gone into our planning in this regard.

As I shared last week, no plan is going to make everyone happy and we can't promise perfection. But what I can promise is that no one is working harder or in a more thoughtful manner than the wonderful staff here in Cass School District 63. We are here for you and I welcome your questions or concerns any time at mcross@casd63.org. Thank you again for your kindness and support during these very challenging times.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Cross

Mark R. Cross
Superintendent of Schools

MRC/glw