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January 12, 2021,

Dear Students, Families, and Staff Members of the Rochester City School District,

I hope you share in my excitement that we have returned to in-person/hybrid learning in our District. Just last week, approximately 300 students in specialized programs in grades K – 12 returned to class for in-person learning. This is a time of joy, as we have gotten to reunite classmates and staff members for the first time in more than nine months!

As we shared with each of you in December, Phase 2 of our reopening plan is still on schedule for Pre K – 6 students to return to school on Monday, February 8, 2021. Again, this includes general and special education students who chose hybrid/in-person learning. These students will receive four days of direct instruction: two consecutive days will be hybrid/in-person and two days will be fully remote. Wednesdays will be asynchronous/independent online learning. In most circumstances, students will keep their existing teachers.

I write to you today to give you an update on Phase 3 of our reopening plan. This includes all students in grades 7 – 12 who are not in specialized programs. Originally, the District had proposed that all 7 – 12 students would remain virtual for the remainder of this school year. However, after careful consideration, we have decided starting on Monday, February 22, 2021, 7 -12 students and families who have chosen to return to hybrid/in-person learning will do so two days per week. The other three days will be delivered virtually, using synchronous/asynchronous independent learning. Wednesday will remain a day for asynchronous online learning for all students.

Variations for secondary students who will attend ***in-person learning*** as part of Phase 3 are as follows:

- Students in K - 8 buildings will attend on Monday/Tuesday
- 7-12 Students in K – 12 buildings (World of Inquiry No. 58) will attend on Thursday/Friday
- Students in 7 – 12 buildings will attend in-person on Thursday/Friday
- Students in a 7 – 8 stand-alone building (Franklin Lower, Monroe Lower, School 3, and Northwest Junior High School at Douglass) will attend on Thursday/Friday

#### **Bell Times**

Beginning February 8, 2021, all students in the District, including Phase 3 students, will revert to the bell schedules published prior to the 2020 – 21 school year. For up-to-date bell times, [please visit our website](#).

#### **Health and Safety for Hybrid/In-Person Learning**

In order to continue having our students attend school for hybrid/in-person instruction, schools will need to test a percentage of students and staff every month for COVID-19 (20% in the orange zone and 30% in the red zone). If we are unable to meet this New York State requirement, the school will have to close and students will immediately return to fully remote instruction. The District is keeping a close eye on COVID-19 in our community and the latest guidance from New York State, and we know circumstances can change at a moment's notice.

Please know, students are our first priority and they drive every decision I make. I have been steadfast in my desire to have students back in school. We are taking every possible precaution for the adults who work with our children. We have no data to show that adults in the schools are becoming infected at a rate disproportionate to

the population. Be assured that we are monitoring this and will continue to be responsive to the safety and health of all involved.

Medical experts have provided research and statistics to support that schools are the safest place for students. All students should have the option of receiving their education in school, and Phase 3 of our reopening plan will allow more students to do that. This plan also allows the District to transition smoothly in the event we need to return to 100 percent remote learning.

For the most up-to-date information on our return to hybrid/in-person learning, please visit [www.rcsdk12.org/reopens](http://www.rcsdk12.org/reopens). There is also a back-to-school family guide available on our website at [www.rcsdk12.org/familyguide](http://www.rcsdk12.org/familyguide).

Staff members, please review the return-to-work guide available on the District's website at [www.rcsdk12.org/staffhandbook](http://www.rcsdk12.org/staffhandbook). We have also updated the District's [academic](#) and [reopening](#) plans.

I will be updating the Board of Education on Phase 3 of our reopening plan at tonight's Equity and Student Achievement Committee Meeting of the Whole at 5:30 p.m. To watch tonight's meeting, you can view it via the District's [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) pages.

Once again, I appreciate your patience, resiliency, and flexibility as we begin a new calendar year, and I look forward to seeing our students in school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lesli C. Myers-Small". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Lesli C. Myers-Small  
Superintendent of Schools