



New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva Public Schools

Independent School District No. 2168

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Empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed.

2020-2021 School Year Learning Model Family Update

September 3, 2020

Secondary School Moving to Distance Learning September 14

Dear Families:

The purpose of this update is to inform our families with secondary level students (Grades 6-12) that beginning Monday, September 14, 2020, the Secondary School will be moving from the *Hybrid Learning* model to the ***Distance Learning*** model. Secondary students will still report to school starting Tuesday, September 8, under the *Hybrid* model according to their assigned A/B assigned schedule, but will then move to Distance Learning beginning on September 14. The change impacts the Secondary School only and not the Elementary School. The Elementary School will continue with *Hybrid Learning* beyond next week.

In past updates and communications including when the *2020-2021 School Year Learning Plan* was introduced to families, we shared the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines school districts are to follow when making their learning model decisions. The MDH guidelines place a school district in the learning model of *Hybrid Learning for Elementary and Distance Learning for Secondary* if the county-wide case rate is 30 or higher. We continue to focus our attention on Waseca County as that is the county with the highest case rate. In addition, Waseca County is home to the largest percentage of our students and families.

Today, we learned the positive case rate in Waseca County continues to increase with a 14-day case rate of 37.75. This is a jump from 21.80 a week ago. Projections we are receiving from local/county/state officials indicate the case rate will likely continue in this range for multiple weeks. As a result, and as mentioned above, the Secondary School will move from *Hybrid Learning* to ***Distance Learning*** beginning Monday, September 14. Secondary students will report to school starting Tuesday, September 8, and continue through Friday, September 11, under the *Hybrid* model according to their assigned A/B schedule.

The decision to continue with *Hybrid* learning for next week is to allow for each student to have a total of two days of “in-person” contact with their teacher to better prepare for the move to *Distance Learning* beginning September 14. Students will have an opportunity to be issued their devices, textbooks and other materials, review safety protocols, and prepare for *Distance Learning*.

This decision was made by the Superintendent in consultation with the School Board Chair as directed by the School Board. While the current and known projected case-rate data makes the decision to move to *Distance Learning* fairly clear, it is still a very difficult decision to make. We believe that “in-person” learning is best, but we also believe that we need to follow the state guidelines and the

recommendations from experts in the public health field in order to minimize the spread of the virus in our communities.

The length of time the Secondary School will be in *Distance Learning* is not known at this time. The school district will continue to work closely with local/county/staff officials in examining positive case-rate trends in order to make the best decisions possible for our students, families, staff and communities.

Do not hesitate to contact your child(ren)'s teacher(s), principal, or me with questions. Thank you for all you do to support your child(ren) and the NRHEG Public Schools.

Dale Carlson, Superintendent