



March 9, 2021

Dear Harmony Families,

We received word today that the county has approved our COVID Safety Plan. This is a milestone for our pending reopening and the culmination of much labor by our staff to design the safest reopening possible for our community. This letter will describe some of the major elements of the reopen plan. Everything that we are implementing is done with the intent to reduce the risk of our reopening while improving the education and well-being of our students. Our ability to reopen, and to sustain our in-person instruction, is predicated on the prevention of COVID cases in our community. One case can shut down a class and several cases can shut down the school. We must all do our parts to open our campus and keep it open.

We continue to urge our community to wear masks and follow best practices to minimize contagion. With the evolution of the virus over time, we are seeing mutations in the virus that could make it more virulent, and possibly able to re-infect previously recovered or vaccinated individuals. So long as the virus is able to spread wild in our species, it will continue to evolve and mutate, and potentially resurge. We must remain vigilant.

Even with that warning, we are well prepared to reopen with effective mitigation strategies in practice. By working together as a community, we have the ability to return to in-person classes and remain open by stopping infection from occurring.

Program Schedules

The Hybrid Program (offering in person instruction)

Monday through Thursday on campus, 9am to 2pm.

Friday at home (morning zoom & homework)

The Home Learning Program (offering 100% distance learning)

Monday through Thursday at home (morning zoom with distance learning activities)

Friday morning zoom, with on-campus activity option

We saw a significant shift in program choice for Trimester 3 with Hybrid participation increasing to 90% (up from 72% in Trimester 2). We will continue to offer the Home Learning Program through the end of the year. Depending on COVID conditions in late summer, we may continue to offer a Home Learning option for 2021-2022, pending state directives.

Reopening Dates

In person classes will begin according to the following schedule:

TK-2nd Grade: March 29th (Monday)

3rd-6th Grade: March 31st (Wednesday)

7th-8th Grade: **If Red Tier-April 5 (Monday), If Purple Tier-Remain in Distance Learning**

Middle school students are considered a higher risk for case spread and therefore the state has restricted full middle school grade reopening until a county is in the red tier.

Facilities Improvements for COVID

As has been discussed before, Harmony has been working steadily at implementing significant improvements to our facilities to make our reopening safer and more sustainable. The following improvements have been implemented:

HVAC system upgraded with improved filters and ionizer

Medical grade Air Filtration

Ventilation improvements according to campus air quality study

Plexiglass installations at office and cafeteria

Reconfiguration of classrooms to maintain 6-foot social distancing

Installation of outdoor classrooms for each grade

Expansion of parking for pick up protocol

- Reconfiguration of traffic procedures
- Check in Kiosks for morning drop off
- Outdoor hand washing stations
- Water bottle filling station
- Outdoor cafeteria dining space
- New signs and guides to manage social distancing and safety protocols

Campus Open after school and Weekends

After clearance from the county, the Board endorsed the limited reopening of the campus to visitors on weekends and after hours on weekdays. Please follow posted rules while on campus. At this time only the fields, southeast playground and hiking trails are open to the public.

Student & Staff Testing

Students are required to participate in on campus asymptomatic testing according to the COVID safety plan adopted by the county. This means that all students and staff must participate in the testing in order to attend in person classes. This project will help Harmony avoid unseen case spread on campus and thereby reducing the possibility of an outbreak that would force closure of the school. While in the purple tier, we will be testing all staff and students weekly. When we enter the red tier, testing will drop to every fortnight (2 weeks). In orange tier asymptomatic testing stops, with testing limited to only symptomatic or exposed individuals.

Spring Break Testing

In order to keep our campus open, we need to successfully avoid the presence or transmission of the virus on campus. Testing is essential to ensure we reduce the potential for outbreaks to occur. Therefore, before we reopen, all students who intend to attend in-person classes needs to be COVID tested. Advance testing will be held the week of March 22-26. The testing clinic will be held at the school. More information for the testing schedule will follow shortly.

Orientation Sessions - March 15-19th

90 minute Orientation meetings will be held for each grade level stable cohort the week of March 15th. These meetings will include a tour of the campus for students with COVID procedures and facilities mitigation demonstrations. We will also hold an initial trauma-informed group check in circle for each stable group after the tour. Parents who are able are invited to tour the campus and check in with staff separately while the students are attending their stable group orientation. The schedule for the orientation sessions will be shared shortly.

Stable Groups (Cohorts)

Under new guidelines, each grade at Harmony is small enough that they can each be their own stable group. This means that students within a grade can share recess, lunch and outdoor classroom spaces together. However, due to social distancing limitations for some classrooms, when some classes are held indoors for instruction, they may have to be split into two classroom spaces to maintain 6-foot social distancing. The teacher and aid for these classes will alternate their time in each room.

Reopening Forum

Our COVID Safety Plan is posted on our website for review. A full discussion on the COVID Safety Plan and a forum for your questions is scheduled for **MONDAY March 15 @ 6:30pm**. Zoom Link: <https://tinyurl.com/3z7aztty>. We look forward to seeing you at the forum and orientation meetings.

Warm regards,



Matthew Morgan
Superintendent/Principal
Harmony Union School District

