

Dear Royal Oak Schools families:

At a meeting of the Royal Oak Schools Board of Education on October 8, the superintendent and administration reviewed a plan to bring students back into the school buildings beginning November 9, 2020, the first day of the second quarter marking period.

An all-remote plan was approved on August 6, 2020, and remains in place until November 6. The district considered putting a hybrid plan in place to start the school year, but elected to use the all-remote approach first. "We needed more time to understand the impact of the virus in our community, and how to best be prepared and navigate groups within the schools and responses to positive exposures or cases. We have received very good guidance from the Oakland County Health Department in the last month including the assignment of two nurses to serve our district," said Superintendent Fitzpatrick.

The elementary students will attend in-person two full days per week, on an alternating schedule of M-W, or T-Th by an alphabetical breakdown of the families. Fridays will be whole group synchronous lessons via the online platform already used by students. When students are home, they will also engage with specials teachers and academic support staff, as well as complete online assignments.

Royal Oak Middle School will follow a similar pattern as the elementary students in a hybrid fashion, attending two days a week on an alternating schedule. They, too, will have group lessons on Fridays. The difference for middle school students is that they will have the option to eat lunch at school, and complete work with staff in the classrooms accessing district technology, or go home for lunch and complete the online assignments from there.

Royal Oak High School will remain all remote until the end of the first semester in January. Students will have the option to make appointments and work in small groups in-person on a schedule. That schedule will allow the staff to regulate the number of students in the school at any one time, adhering to social distancing rules and lessening transitions in the hallways.

Fitzpatrick said, "The district has carefully evaluated many different versions of return to school plans. We believe this hybrid schedule provides for the important in-person contact with students, and at the same time, allows for other learning to continue using the online platform when not at school. It is a transition toward a full return to school which we hope the students and staff can enjoy at some point this school year."

Sincerely,
Mary Beth Fitzpatrick
Superintendent, Royal Oak Schools