



# Lake Orion Community Schools

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August 6, 2020

Dear LOCS Families,

Thank you for the feedback over the past three weeks since I started serving Lake Orion Community Schools. I have received many nice welcomes and greetings along with families sharing what they would like to see happen this fall as school is scheduled to begin on September 8, 2020.

Two weeks ago, we shared our [Return to School plan](#), focused on the five-days-a-week in-person learning, and our [Dragon Virtual program](#). The design was based on Governor Whitmer's Return to School Advisory Council's [requirements and recommendations](#). We went beyond the requirements, implementing additional safeguards for students and staff that were recommended, but not required. While creating this plan, we worked to provide a safe in-person return for both students and staff.

In the period since, the landscape has changed around us. COVID-19 cases remain at a consistent level throughout the state, Governor Gretchen Whitmer has reinforced more stringent mask and gathering protocols and many school districts have reacted, shifting their plans to opening the school year in a fully remote setting.

As many districts have adjusted their plans to ensure the safety of students and staff, we have studied their rationale and reached out for more information. Some districts have added additional mask requirements, while others have moved to their remote learning option for all students at the start of the school year, even as our region remains in [Phase 4 of the MI Safe Start Plan](#). Previously, it was expected full remote learning would only occur in Phases 1-3, where the state mandated that scenario. But circumstances have changed.

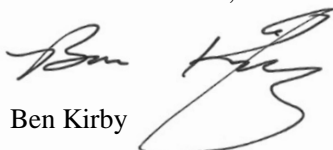
As of today, LOCS still is planning for the two options we shared in the Return to School plan on July 23. But our district has prided itself on transparency with the community, so my goal today is to share that we are planning for other options as well. With the responsibility for your children and our staff members, having alternative options is the responsible and safe process.

Currently in Phase 4, we have created a plan to provide in-person instruction, with the understanding that we would move to remote instruction if there are increased health and medical concerns. The Dragon Virtual Learning Program remains open as well, as [enrollment](#) continues through Friday, August 7, 2020 at 4 p.m.

LOCS administrators continue to look at COVID-19 statistics, while listening to health and medical professionals, scientists, other area school leaders, governmental leaders, staff, and parents as we evaluate the changing landscape. All this information will assist us as we move forward in our decision-making process. There is a significant amount of information, emotion, and opinion about how we begin school on September 8, 2020 and we are listening and absorbing all of it.

This is a very difficult time and decision for educators. We find ourselves considering information that is outside of our typical scope. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate through this pandemic to provide the safe environment and high-quality education that our Dragons have come to expect.

Yours in Education,

  
Ben Kirby



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