

Amherst Schools Opening Update

Amherst Families,

We hope that you are enjoying a healthy, safe, and relaxing summer vacation. Although we all hope for far more normalcy during the 2020-2021 school year, we know that we must prepare for different scenarios considering the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Amherst Schools is committed to providing the best learning opportunities for all students with planning that is safe, flexible, and tailored for our community. We appreciate the feedback we received from families via our recent online survey about reopening schools. **When asked for a preference, Amherst families overwhelmingly chose a physical return to school – with adherence to health guidelines – over a blended option or any other approach.**

With this in mind, as well as guidance from Lorain County Health Commissioner David Covell and Gov. Mike DeWine and the need for families to plan for childcare, **Amherst Schools plan to open on August 20th with a traditional, seven-hour day and five-day-per-week schedule.**

The survey results also show that about 22 percent of families prefer an online option for their students. Therefore, **Amherst Schools will provide an online learning option for families who do not feel comfortable sending their children to school.**

I will meet with Health Commissioner Covell and superintendents from Lorain County school districts this week to further discuss and develop our reopening plans. Please know that all of our planning will center around five main themes, as recommended by Lorain County Public Health and State officials:

1. Distancing
2. Washing of hands
3. Screening/Assessing symptoms
4. Sanitizing and cleaning
5. Face coverings

Meanwhile, each building principal is working collaboratively with staff to develop procedures for distancing, arrival, dismissal, lunch, recess, and much more. **Families can expect specific building plans and online learning information to be available by the last week of July.** Our transportation and food service departments are also hard at work developing safe plans that strictly adhere to county and state guidelines.

As the health of students and staff changes and the County and State update their guidance, school plans and logistics will change, but Amherst Schools will continue to keep you updated. We know that this school year will present challenges, but we remain dedicated to providing the high-quality education our families have to come to expect while minimizing and mitigating the risk of Covid-19 to our students and staff.

Thank you,
Steve Sayers
Superintendent