



July 27, 2020

Dear Tyrone Area School District Families:

As indicated in an earlier communication, the Tyrone Area School District is currently planning to return students to the traditional school setting on August 25, 2020 (August 27, 2020, for PreK). It is important to note that the recently approved Reopening Health and Safety Plan is a draft document that will continue to be updated over the following weeks according to the most recent health and safety guidelines.

Based on the initial parent survey that was conducted at the end of June, we are aware that some families may be apprehensive about their children returning to full-time, in-person learning. With that in mind, please see information below about the T ASD Cyber Academy.

At the end of this letter, there is a link to a survey requesting information about your initial intentions regarding the return of your child(ren) to school. Please complete one survey for **each** of your children. Hard copies of the survey will be available in the elementary and high school main offices if you are unable to complete the survey electronically.

T ASD will offer the following options for families returning to school this fall:

Option #1 – Return to Full-Time School, In Person

Students and staff will return to school five days per week with the safety protocols and guidelines set forth in the T ASD Reopening Health and Safety Plan. Students and staff will be required to wear face coverings when entering and leaving the buildings, on buses, during hallway transitions, and in educational spaces where physical distancing cannot be maintained. We recognize that there may be circumstances where students have special needs or medical conditions that make wearing face coverings difficult or impossible. Before granting an exception, we will first require parents/guardians to share medical documentation of this condition and its limitations. In the case of an exception, we will collaborate to develop a plan that includes alternative safety measures. These instances will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Option #2 – Tyrone Cyber Academy

If a student's planned placement in the virtual setting is anticipated as short-term (20 or fewer school days), the student may continue to receive schoolwork via their regular classroom teacher(s). If the student/family anticipates staying in the virtual setting for a longer term (more than 20 school days), he/she may enroll in the Tyrone Cyber Academy.

Established in 2009, the Tyrone Cyber Academy provides a flexible, online learning option for students in grades K-12. Along with our partners at Appalachia IU 8, Kindergarten through 6th grade students are afforded a flexible learning environment with the benefits of remaining a Tyrone Area School District student. Students in grades 7th - 12th participate in coursework almost exclusively overseen by Tyrone Area School District teachers. Coursework is mostly asynchronous (teachers and students are not online at the same time) with some synchronous (teachers and students are online at the same time) opportunities. Students are still considered enrolled in their respective buildings, can participate in activities, and receive a Tyrone Area High School diploma upon graduation.

Consultation meetings with families interested in the Tyrone Cyber Academy are currently taking place and will continue as needed. To inquire about the Tyrone Cyber Academy or to schedule a consultation meeting, please contact: cyber@tyrone.k12.pa.us.

Option #3 – Approved Home Education Program

Approved Home Education Programs, also known as “Home Schooling,” are designed to permit a parent, guardian, or legal custodian to conduct a program for his/her children by filing the appropriate paperwork and documentation with the school district. Home education programs allow for parent/guardians to establish their own calendars and provide appropriate curriculum for their children. More information about home education programs can be found on the [Pennsylvania Department of Education Home Education and Private Tutoring page](#). Once on the page, scroll down and open the link to the “Home Education and Private Tutoring Guide” for detailed information. If you have additional questions after reviewing the information, please contact: sjwoomer@tyrone.k12.pa.us.

Other Information

Alternate plans are currently under development if COVID-19 cases increase and conditions in Blair County worsen prior to the start of or during the school year. We continue to monitor the situation and will move quickly to a hybrid model or a completely virtual format if circumstances warrant. If full remote learning is implemented, expectations at various levels will look different than they did during the remote learning in the Spring of 2020. Further details about the hybrid schedule and remote learning will be released in a future communication.

We strongly encourage all families and community members to do your part to prevent the spread of the virus. If a spike in COVID-19 cases occurs locally, we will have no choice but to return to a virtual setting to ensure the health and safety of our staff and students.

Survey

As previously mentioned, please use the link below to respond to a survey requesting information about your initial intentions on the return of your child(ren) to school. While we are certainly aware that your intentions may change over the next few weeks, your current plans are important to help us properly prepare for opening.

Please complete **one survey for each of your children** by Monday August 3, 2020.

<https://www.tyrone.k12.pa.us/openingsurvey>

As always, we are fortunate to live in a community where there is such a strong advocacy for our children and support for our school staff. As we move into the coming school year, I don't know if there has ever been a time when it has been as important for all of us to come together. We will continue to provide information and updates that we hope will help to ease your family's concerns about returning.

Sincerely,

Leslie A. Estep
Superintendent of Schools

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