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October 24, 2020

To: Spectrum Parents/Guardians

Re: Important Information (Change in Calendar, Virtual Conferences, Results of Learning Model Survey, and Change in Learning Model)

Dear Spectrum Parents/Guardians,

CHANGE IN SCHOOL CALENDAR (NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS – NOVEMBER 2nd-4th)

The Spectrum School Board made a decision last week, based on administrative recommendation, to change November 3rd and 4th (next week) to non-school days for students. There were a number of reasons for this change: (1) As we have been navigating our current learning model, we have found it necessary to adapt; (2) Based on feedback from many parents, students, teachers, and staff, it is necessary to provide additional time for students to complete work and teachers to update grades; and (3) While a decision to move to a more restrictive learning model has not yet been made, Spectrum teachers, staff, and administration need time to proactively plan for any potential change to full distance learning. We apologize for any inconvenience and appreciate your understanding.

Notes: (1) Monday, November 2nd was pre-scheduled as a non-school day for students. (2) Lunches ordered for Nov. 3rd and 4th will not be made or delivered. Accounts will not be charged for these lunches.

VIRTUAL CONFERENCES

All parents/guardians received a communication on October 20th explaining the virtual conference format, which will take place on *Thursday, November 5th and Tuesday, November 10th from 3:45 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.* Due to limited conference slots available for each teacher in this format (whether held virtually or by phone), parents are asked to only sign up for conferences if they receive an email from their student to do so. Advisors guided students through the process this morning. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact their student's teachers, advisors, or school counselors any time with questions or concerns.

RESULTS OF 2nd QUARTER LEARNING MODEL SURVEY

Thank you for making time to complete the 2nd Quarter Learning Model Survey. Based on the results of the survey, parents/guardians of around 40 students expressed a desire to switch learning models starting 2nd quarter. The number of parents requesting for their students to change from full distance learning to hybrid (on-campus) was similar to those wishing to move from hybrid to full distance learning. As a result, Spectrum has the capacity and is currently planning to remain in the hybrid learning model for 2nd quarter, starting on Thursday, November 5th. *Note: All parents/guardians who requested a change will receive confirmation of the change by Friday, October 30th. This includes which two days on campus were assigned to student(s) requesting a switch to hybrid based on building and bussing capacity. Bussing information will follow soon after for those who expressed a need.*

PROCESS FOR DETERMINING A CHANGE IN LEARNING MODEL

As you may recall, the decision about the initial learning model in which Spectrum would start the school year was dependent upon the number of positive COVID-19 cases per 10,000 people in Sherburne County. According to Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) requirements, any number between 10 and 29 required Spectrum to choose a hybrid learning model. 30 or more would have resulted in full distance learning. The number of positive cases in the county has fluctuated somewhat since August, but remained between 11 and 23 until last week when it reached 25. A number of school districts are making decisions to move to a full distance learning model based on internal factors as well as the current numbers in their county (e.g. Anoka Co.=33.16, Wright Co.=30.58, Hennepin Co.=25.25). We anticipate the numbers for Sherburne County will also exceed 30 in the coming days.

Spectrum has been consulting with the local health department and MDH to determine the most appropriate learning model moving forward. While the initial learning model was determined based on positive COVID case numbers in the county, according to the local health department, any decision to change that model should first take into consideration the number of current cases at the school. In addition, the school should consider its ability to distance and use face coverings, follow cleaning protocols, maintain staffing, and follow capacity guidelines for facilities and transportation.

Spectrum tracks positive cases based on current MDH guidelines and notifies families if their student has been potentially exposed. Currently, there have been four students (in unrelated cases) who tested positive since August and, based on tracking/tracing, Spectrum is not aware of any school-based transmission. In addition, Spectrum had one staff member test positive for COVID (in June) – also due to exposure outside of school. In all cases, students and/or staff were isolated or quarantined for the required period of time and then returned to school. Moving forward, Spectrum will be notifying the whole school when a positive case is identified. Families will be notified separately if there is potential exposure based on tracking/tracing.

Based on the current school-wide data, lack of current positive cases at the school, and no known school-based transmission, Spectrum will be continuing with its hybrid learning model for second quarter. Spectrum staff, students, and community continue to do an excellent job following established protocol, including wearing face coverings and ensuring distancing, and the janitorial staff have done a great job keeping the buildings clean and sanitized. In conversations with the county health department, we agree that school is one of the safest places for students. They confirm that no student to teacher or teacher to student transmission has been occurring in the county. The county supports Spectrum's current model under the circumstances.

The school is maintaining its priorities as noted in the initial letter in August: (1) Safety; (2) Flexibility; (3) Quality Education; (4) Accountability; and (5) Equal Opportunity. Spectrum will continue to monitor county-wide COVID numbers as well as internal factors at the school. If the school feels that a change in learning model is required, efforts will be made to provide a two-week notice, unless the change is due to school-based transmission requiring a rapid change as directed by MDE or MDH. If that is the case, depending upon the circumstances, notification will be sent as soon as possible, which may include a small group of students, students riding a particular bus, students involved in a particular sport, students in a particular classroom or building, or the entire school.

Thank you, as always, for your feedback, support, and understanding as we continue to navigate these uncharted waters together.

Sincerely,



Dan DeBruyn
Executive Director