



1200 E. Fairmount Avenue Whitefish Bay, WI 53217

P: 414-963-3921 F: 414-963-3959

www.wfbschools.com

March 11, 2021

Greetings Whitefish Bay School Community and Staff,

I would like to offer a very sincere thank you to the District's students, families, teachers, staff and the larger community. We remain very proud of our team members as we continue to thoughtfully navigate through the pandemic to best serve our school community. This communication has timely and important information for families regarding the quarter 4 instructional modality, as well as the elementary school asynchronous Wednesdays for the rest of the school year.

Last night, at the March 10 Regular Business Meeting, the School Board approved to maintain the remaining asynchronous Wednesdays as indicated on the [Family Blended Calendar](#). A recording of last night's meeting is [available online](#). The Asynchronous Wednesdays at the elementary schools presentation begins at the 00:02:20 mark.

What is the need for elementary school asynchronous Wednesdays? Asynchronous Wednesdays are used for multiple purposes by the elementary staff; including collaborative planning, direct student support services, additional synchronous ENCORE learning opportunities, and student assessment. These current essential functions would be difficult to continue should students attend Monday-Friday. It is important to note that the current elementary instructional schedule provides only 40 minutes of daily collaboration and planning time for classroom teachers. The preparation and collaboration requirements are at the highest levels ever with multiple modalities of instruction, the increased need for tightly aligned pacing, and additional safety requirements. Similar to our 6-12 staff, 50 percent of our elementary teachers continue to be "blended" teachers in our current model, as we still serve a virtual group of students outside of their "homeroom." This includes our 4 year old kindergarten teachers, special education teachers, ELL staff, interventionist for reading and math, and all of our ENCORE staff. Currently, between 25%-30% of elementary students are virtual. Families of fully virtual students who want to minimize exposures agree to having students come in on Wednesday when there is a significantly reduced in-building student population. We have over 70 students who attend in person learning and are served for a variety of support and special education services on Wednesdays. The State of Wisconsin Forward and ACCESS Exams are in person and are not waived this school year. Wednesdays are currently scheduled for the large percentage of virtual students that need to take the required in-person assessments. It is for these reasons that we are maintaining these 7 asynchronous days.

What about grade 6-12 asynchronous Wednesdays? As previously communicated, asynchronous learning on Wednesdays will continue at the middle and the high school. The expectations for 6-12 teachers to teach, live stream, and post lessons in the learning management system remains the same. There is a need, this year, for additional planning and collaboration time for special education teachers, classroom teachers, interventionists, ELL staff, etc.

What was the 4th quarter instructional modality decision? The Board also approved continuing all phase-in plans [as previously approved](#) for the 4th quarter. Any family wanting to shift from full time virtual learning to in-person learning (M,T,TH,F) with asynchronous on Wednesday, or vice-versa, has until March 18th to do so. Please contact your school office directly. As in the past, there may be teacher changes for elementary and middle school students based upon the number of modality change requests, as the overall staffing model may shift.



1200 E. Fairmount Avenue Whitefish Bay, WI 53217

P: 414-963-3921 F: 414-963-3959

www.wfbschools.com

What are the plans for the 2021-22 School Year? The District is planning to offer in-person instruction 5 days a week for the 2021-22 school year. We look forward to returning to a traditional school year calendar as well as continuing our well-established mitigation practices for the 2021-22 school year.

It is important that families understand their risk associated with the decreased physical distance provided in classrooms as we begin to phase-in and that this is taken into consideration as you make your Quarter 4 selection. Please review *Certain Medical Conditions* - [CDC](#).

It is vital that the collective community commit to safety mitigation practices while at home, in the community, and while at school. Families and students at every grade level should practice the same level of risk mitigation outside of the school as they do in school. Not doing so will jeopardize our ability to offer increased levels of in person instruction.

Commitment to Health and Safety

Please be reminded - Of greatest importance are to observe the [3 W's of prevention](#). Committing to these strategies in and out of school will allow the District to maintain an in-person modality option as much as possible throughout the pandemic. For more information on COVID-19, visit [District COVID -19 Safety & Communications page](#). Please also review the [FAQ from our Community Health Advisory Committee and the District](#) that addresses additional COVID-19 information and safety recommendations.

Please look for more information from your school. Thank you again for your ongoing flexibility and understanding as we work through the pandemic as a thoughtful and caring community.

Respectfully,

Dr. John W. Thomsen
Superintendent of Schools