

Dear Culver Families,

While this summer certainly looks different than most, I hope that you are enjoying the nice weather and spending some time relaxing together and playing outside.

Please read the document carefully as we are sharing some additional information regarding the upcoming school year below. We plan on sharing details of our tentative plan for the fall on Friday, July 24.

Summer Learning Resources

District 71 Teachers and Instructional Coaches have put together an extensive list of at-home summer resources for students. These resources can be accessed by any District 71 family and are self-paced. Click [here](#) for more information.

Registration for New Families and Transfers for Families Moving

In preparation for the school year, we are accepting registration for families new to Culver School, especially the new kindergarten families. Please reach out to any neighbors that you have and let them know that they should register their families on our website at <https://www.niles71.org/parents/registration>. Once online registration has been completed for new families, Ms. Kim Gordon, the Principal's Secretary, will contact families with additional information.

If your family is moving or has moved out of the District, we are providing transfer out paperwork for families. Please contact Ms. Gordon to learn the steps in the transfer out process so your child's records can be shared with the new school.

We will reach our returning families, including those who will be registering younger siblings who will be new to Culver, such as incoming preschoolers or kindergarteners, to register online in mid-July.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Ms. Gordon at kgordon@niles71.org or at 847-966-9280.

Student Chromebook/iPad Return

Student device return will start the first week in August in order to ensure devices are working and up to date for the start of the school year. We will send additional information regarding device drop off later in July. Students will get their devices back when school resumes in August.

ISBE/IDPH Guidance for Re-Opening

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) released a document outlining the requirements for providing in-person instruction. The 63-page document outlines the requirements for providing in-person instruction, including adhering to the following restrictions which will dramatically alter how a typical school day functions:

- Use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including face coverings;
- Prohibit more than 50 individuals from gathering in one space;
- Require physical distancing of 6 feet be observed as much as possible;
- Require schools conduct symptom screenings and temperature checks or require that individuals self-certify that they are free of symptoms before entering school buildings; and
- Require an increase in schoolwide cleaning and disinfection.

The guidance further notes that the requirements are subject to change pursuant to updated public health guidance and changing health conditions. Districts are also advised to be prepared to return to remote instruction in the event of a resurgence of the virus or a second virus wave in the fall.

Plans for 2020-21 School Year

We will carefully review the guidance (above) and incorporate the suggestions into our district's plans for the 2020-21 school year. It is important that we plan for a number of different scenarios to provide the most consistent and stable learning environment for student success, given necessary safety precautions.

At our June Board meeting, the Board approved the following guiding principles as we consider our options for the fall:

1. Maintain the health and safety of all students and staff;
2. Provide meaningful and engaging academic experiences for all students;
3. Provide services and accommodations for high needs students such as special education and EL populations;
4. Address the social and emotional needs of all students;
5. Provide consistency and stability for all students and staff; and
6. Provide continuous professional learning opportunities for staff that address learning needs unique to this situation.

We miss all of our students and we are eager to get back to our regular schedule as soon as it is safe. Most of our faculty and staff are parents too, and we recognize the difficulties, stress, and hardship resulting from closed school buildings. That said, it is important that we all have realistic expectations for school in the fall.

As we've seen with the business community, we anticipate a "partial" or "phased" reopening approach for area elementary districts. For example, there will need to be careful planning and training for staff, at the start of the school year, before we can safely allow students back in the buildings. Meeting all the ISBE and IDPH guidelines may require reduced class sizes and/or a shortened daily schedule. As a result, a full return to our "normal" school environment with all students in the building five days a week is not likely at the beginning of the year.

We plan on sharing details of our tentative plan for the fall on Friday, July 24. We anticipate that parents will have a choice between the following options in grades K-8:

1. Full-time e-Learning experience without in-person instruction;
2. Hybrid approach with e-Learning transitioning to in-person instruction.

Health Education Resources

As our State moves into Phase 4, our children will need your support in developing new habits including wearing a face covering when out in public and continuing to physically distance ourselves when we are outside of our immediate families. Your assistance in building these habits now will help support your child in transitioning to in-person instruction at school. The following resources may be useful to you as you work to build these habits with your child provided by

[Healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org).

[Masks for Children](#)

[Getting Outside During Social Distancing](#)

School Office Reopened

The school office reopened to our regular summer schedule on Tuesday, July 7, 2020. Office hours are Monday-Thursday from: 8:00-4:00. We are closed each day from noon until 1:00. Please call the school with any questions and to set up an in-person appointment, if necessary. We are following all CDC and IDPH guidelines. In anticipation of school starting, we are practicing our safety protocols. All visitors over the age of two must wear a mask and maintain proper physical distancing. As a visitor, we will check your temperature before you enter the building and ask if you have any COVID symptoms. If your temperature is above 100.4 or you have symptoms, you will be asked to return when you are symptom free for at least four days.

Summer School Meals

Culver will continue to distribute weekly meal bags, each Wednesday, from 12:30-1:30. We serve meal bags from the door near Ms. Lurie's classroom, in the west lot, closest to the baseball field.

Meals are not limited to students receiving free and reduced lunches, and there is no income verification process. The weekly bags are quite heavy, as they contain lots of food.

Through summer, District 219 meals will be distributed from the high school each Monday and Wednesday at **Niles West Location Door 13**.

The Niles Township Food Pantry is also distributing food boxes. You can find information about dates, times, and items offered by clicking [here](#). You can also sign up to receive weekly information from the Food Pantry by email by subscribing on the website.

Talking to Your Child About Race and Racism

In prior emails, we have shared resources to help you discuss the racial and equity issues that we are facing in our country, in an age-appropriate manner with your children.

A committee of our teachers are working to explicitly add anti-racist texts/activities to each grade level curriculum. Additionally, we are working to increase our diversity and equity curriculum, celebrating and highlighting different races and cultures.

Here are some resources to help guide these conversations:

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends the following resource from [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org) about How to [Talk to Children About Racial Bias](#).
- The (AAP) has also issued guidance specific to [How to Talk to Children](#) about George Floyd's death and the subsequent demonstrations.
- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) provides guidance for parents/guardians about [Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#).
- The Children's Community School, an early childhood center in Philadelphia, provides a graphic illustrating that [They're Not Too Young to Talk About Race](#).

- This resource provides a list of educational resources to engage young people (Pre-K and up) in learning about racism and justice: [Talking to Kids About Racism and Justice](#).

Appreciation & Final Thoughts

If you or your family are experiencing any hardships or are in need of assistance, please be sure to email at esmolinski@niles71.org. Our staff is available to help.

The pandemic is a fluid situation, resulting in uncertainty which makes it difficult for families to plan for the next school year and has required us all to be patiently persistent. We appreciate your continued support, as we all work toward the ultimate goal of returning all of our students to in-person instruction as soon as safely possible.