



August 4, 2020

To: Students, Parents, River Bend Families, Business Partners and Other Community Members

From: Brian Emerson Director of River Bend Career and Technical Center

Re: Fall Opening

Greeting folks! It has been a crazy summer but I think we are ready to start communicating our Fall Opening plan. But, before I do, let me start off by saying that we are going to have to stay flexible. All of us have experienced great changes the last few months because of the Covid crisis. Although this plan is being communicated to you, who knows what challenges lay down the road. There are no guarantees and this plan could have to change tomorrow. The biggest consistency that remains from before the pandemic, during the pandemic and after the pandemic is that we care about one another, are kind to one another, support one another and try to be patient with one another. We are all under a lot of stress. But this community and staff are loaded with great people and we'll get through this. I promise!

Now to the Fall Opening. The states have given school safety guidelines for keeping students safe. The Tech. Centers across the two states, Vermont and New Hampshire, the local school districts, the five area high schools and the River Bend staff have all had input and influence on this Fall Opening Plan. As I lay out the plan to date just remember, things could change.

First and foremost, the overriding goal is to keep students as safe as possible but with the understanding that the vast majority of high school students learn best when they are in-person. In the technical center world this is even more important as the majority of our learning is hands-on! Both states, by and large, have done a great job in slowing and containing this virus which does make it possible for River Bend to even consider opening with some in-person learning. Although the states are not dictating, they have expressed that they would like schools to have some form of in-person learning. Again, as mentioned above, the states have given the schools guides to follow. These main guidelines are: wear a mask, social distance, daily screenings, washing hands often, and keeping the school campus clean and disinfected as much as possible. Our plan addresses all of these guidelines.



Although River Bend is part of a statewide tech. center collective and part of the OESU School District, it has shaken out that both of these entities have decided that instead of making top down, one size fits all decisions, they would give River Bend the general safety guidelines and let River Bend make local, flexible decisions to meet the safety guidelines. I applaud both the statewide CTE Association and the OESU school district for providing support for our tech. center while allowing River Bend to adjust to the circumstances on their own. River Bend is part of a great team!

Speaking of teams, our local five high schools came together as a team this summer and all five schools are on board supporting River Bend as we embrace a hybrid schedule this fall. As a team, all five high schools and River Bend promised to stay as flexible as possible. Although I'm communicating a generalized schedule, the team knows that there will be times when individualized adjustments will need to be made. If you are a student and have a problem with the schedule for personal individual needs, communicate with your school guidance counselor. All of the area school guidance directors will be in constant communication with River Bend's guidance director, so hopefully the response will be quick. Again the key here is stay flexible!!

The staff at River Bend is one of the most caring, professional and hardworking staffs you will find! There's a lot of knowledge and experience in that group and I would be crazy, which my wife generally thinks I am anyway, if I did not listen to them! The staff's major concerns were and are: monitoring mask wearing, monitoring social distancing, limited bathroom availability for washing hands, students that don't have access to internet at home, having to design both in-person and distance learning lesson plans, keeping their rooms clean, students not knowing how to engage in distance learning and the overriding fear that if we move too quick with reopening we will go back to complete distance learning. Our construction technologies instructor said it best when he said: "How can a student learn shop equipment safety if they can't handle equipment like a chop saw?" Agreed. This could end up being quite a challenge. So listed below you will find the Fall Opening procedure that I think addresses all the concerns of the River Bend instructors but also adheres to the safety recommendations of the state.

In closing, the River Bend staff and community would not be happy if I did not mention how important our local business community is to River Bend's life blood, and how this emergency might give us opportunities to work closer with the business community. Both states are promoting expanding work-based learning, even during this crisis. A great way of lowering student numbers on campus, promoting career development and building our local community is to have more students gaining their learning out in area businesses and local institutions, like health care providers. There is still a lack of employees to fill local employment needs even during this economic crisis! If you the student, or the other folks in the community, know a student that could use a boost in



career direction, mention this to them and have them talk to our work-based learning coordinator, their guidance counselor, or River Bend's guidance director. There are plenty of good paying local jobs in our local economy and given the recent uncertainty today in our country, why not build some security into career exploration???

Well, we will be seeing you. Stay flexible and let's take care of one another.

Brian Emerson



Protocols and Procedures for River Bend Fall Opening

- River Bend Student body will be split in half into two cohorts
- One cohort will attend in-person on Monday & Tuesday
- The other cohort will attend in-person on Thursday & Friday
- The days each cohort is not in-person they will be distance learning
- Wednesday the campus will be shut down for students so the campus can get extra cleaning
- Wednesday will be used for extra teacher planning time, extra time for teachers to reach out and connect with struggling students, and extra professional development time
- The guidance and administrators will work on dividing the student body into the two cohorts and students will be notified which cohort they are in
- All students will enter River Bend through the main entrance
- All students will be required to wear masks which will be provided by the school
- All students will have their temperature taken daily as they arrive
- All students will fill out a health questionnaire when entering the building
- All students will wash their hands with sanitizer when entering the building which will be provided by the school
- All students will proceed to their individual class/program rooms/shops and stay in that designated area for the duration of time on campus
- Each program will have a designated bathroom to use
- Students must maintain social distancing to the best of their physical ability at all times
- If a student does not meet the temperature requirement or through the health questionnaire, or conversations, it is determined there may be an infection risk, the student will be requested to leave campus and the parent/caregiver will be notified.
 - * Students who drive will return home and parents will be notified.
 - * Students who do not have individual transportation will be quarantined in the Resource Room until a parent/caregiver can pick them up from school.
- Students not having access to the internet at home, or struggling with distance learning will be required to attend both their in person days and their distance learning days on campus. These students will either be placed in the Computer Lab or Mr Daniel's computer room for the duration of their time on campus.



- Students wishing to engage in work-based learning will be required to fill out, sign, and return a new copy of work-based learning expectations that have been created by the VPA, AOE, and our local work-based learning coordinator, and which are COVID specific.
- Parents and caregivers will be required to sign a document stating that they will communicate to school any health issues that could put their family and student at risk for being exposed to the covid virus or report any symptoms that the student's immediate home is experiencing that could have a virus as an underlying cause