



Knob Noster R-VIII School District

401 E. Wimer, Knob Noster, MO 65336
Office: (660) 563-3186 Fax: (660) 563-3026
Student Services: (660) 563-5597

Dr. Jerrod Wheeler, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Michael Cohron, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Angela Rolofson, Director, Student Services

Our Mission Is Student Success

Date: April 28, 2020
To: Knob Noster Public Schools Community
From: Superintendent Jerrod Wheeler
RE: Covid-19 Update – Graduation, Summer School, and Other Updates

Dear Knob Noster Public Schools Community,

It is hard to believe it, but we have completed a full month of virtual learning! This “new normal” still does not feel “normal” but I want to again say thank you to our students, parents, and teachers who have worked together to make things run so smoothly. While this process has not been perfect, Knob Noster has been out in front of most with our virtual education rollout. We look forward to finishing the year strong over the next 3.5 weeks of the regular term. Again, thank you for your partnership, and we encourage you to connect with us during tomorrow’s virtual town hall for any comments, feedback, or questions.

Third Virtual Town Hall – Tomorrow, Wednesday April 29-12:00 Noon

To further connect and communicate with you, we will be hosting a third Virtual Town Hall meeting tomorrow, Wednesday April 29 on the district Facebook Page. The event will be recorded and available for viewing at any time.

Governor Parson Enacts Phase I of Reopening Economic and Social Activities

Yesterday, Governor Parson took a first step to reopen Missouri. In Phase One, which takes effect next Monday, May 4, the Governor’s plan calls for “no limitations on social gatherings, as long as necessary precautions are taken and six feet of distance can be maintained between individuals and/or families.” This plan is slated to remain in effect through May 31.

School will Remain Virtual through the End of the Year

As a reminder, the Governor previously called for schools to remain virtual through the end of the regular school year. Knob Noster Public Schools will remain virtual through our last day of school on Thursday, May 21 at 1:00 p.m.

Summer School

As previously shared, Summer School will occur June 2 through June 25. A summer school survey and enrollment form will be emailed to all parents this week. This is a very important survey to help us properly plan and staff for summer school. At this time, we are not certain if summer school will be in person or virtual. We are planning for both options. The survey allows parents to respond if their children will attend summer school for both options. The \$100 attendance incentives will remain in place for elementary and middle school students this year.

Graduation Survey Results

Thank you to all seniors and their families who completed the recent survey related to graduation. We received responses from around 80% of our senior families. Of those who responded, the following feedback was provided:

87% indicated they prefer a delayed traditional ceremony once large gatherings are allowed. (First Choice)

49% indicated they prefer scheduled appointments for each student to come to the stadium with family members to walk across stage, receive their diploma cover, and have graduation picture taken. (Second Choice)

30% indicated they prefer a Saturday evening ceremony.

27% indicated they prefer a Saturday morning ceremony.

In response to this valuable feedback, we will move forward in the following manner.

1. We will plan to hold a traditional ceremony at the first available date and will do so on a Saturday.

2. The Governor's reopening requires social distancing through May 31. Accordingly, our May 17 hold date will not be possible for the commencement ceremony.
3. As previously shared with Seniors and their families, we have the following hold dates in place: June 19, June 20, June 21, July 17, July 18, July 19, August 7, August 8, August 9.
4. As of this date, we will plan for Commencement on Saturday, June 20 in the evening, if the situation allows. We will make every attempt to provide a minimum of a 14 day notice of any change.
5. Our best guess at this time is that we will have to push this date to July 19.
6. Any Senior who is joining the military, PCSing, or moving may email myself and Principal Connie Morris to request an individual ceremony.

Academic Awards Ceremony

KNHS will be delivering an academic awards ceremony virtually on May 13. Honor cords and other physical items will be provided to seniors at the commencement walkthrough.

Athletic Awards

Due to the amount of physical items that transfer during the athletic awards ceremony, KNHS will postpone this ceremony with the intent to hold a physical ceremony at a later date. This could possibly occur on or around our final graduation date. The district has a plan in place regarding the awarding of Varsity Letters for athletes who were rostered to participate in Spring 2020 sports.

Spring Sports – Modified Schedule

The district continues to closely monitor state and local guidance as it relates to all school functions, including sports. In order for a modified schedule for spring sports to occur in June, the social distancing directives must be lifted at the state and local level. At this time, we do not anticipate that will occur until June 29, or after.

Physical Item Transfers

The district will schedule and communicate a plan to allow students to return to school to collect their personal items and to return school property in their possession (laptops, books, textbooks, etc.) That date will be announced at a later date. We will also coordinate delivery of any fundraiser purchases or other personal items in conjunction with this event.

Meal Distribution Will Remain Once Per Week

Our plan for meal distribution once per week seems to have worked as designed. Currently, we are preparing and serving approximately 8500 meals per week, and a big thank you is sent again to our Food Service Team. We will continue to carry this plan forward on Mondays on May 4, 11, and 18 **and on Tuesday, May 26**. We will also carry this plan forward for summer school, should we remain virtual, with servings on Mondays, June 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29.

Panther Pantry

The Panther Pantry will be open on Wednesday, April 29 from 4:00 to 6:00 at Knob Noster Middle School.

Student Grading for Fourth Quarter:

As previously shared, we are approaching fourth quarter with the goal of supporting our students in their learning and providing them every opportunity to continue their learning. Regular engagement and completion of work is expected of all students. Regarding grading, no decision will be punitive. Remember, grading serves to report back where a student is performing in order to inform future learning and instruction. We will move forward providing all students the maximum opportunity to learn while also ensuring no student has an unfair advantage or disadvantage as related to GPA's, class rank, etc. Please see previous communications for specifics on grading from our instructional team.

Knob Noster Board of Education Meetings

The KNPS Board of Education meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. For May, we may meet again virtually, as we did in April. You are welcome to attend the meeting virtually and may do so by visiting our [Board of Education YouTube Page by clicking](#) here or by visiting us on our [Board Docs link by clicking here](#).

District Business Activities

Preschool Program Expansion

The district has continued to develop a plan to expand preschool offerings beyond our current Early Childhood Special Education Program with the introduction of the “Little Wingmen Preschool.” District administration will be making a recommendation to the Board of Education to expand preschool offerings for three year old and four year old students beginning Fall 2020. We know early childhood education is of utmost importance for students and is a top priority for mission readiness and quality of life. Look for a survey soon regarding this program expansion.

MCASP Grant

The district is preparing to submit its next Military Child Academic Support Program (MCASP) Grant which will request \$1 million to support the development of the Knob Noster “Little Wingmen Preschool.”

Volkswagen Bus Grant

The district is preparing submission for the Volkswagen Grant which will request funding for replacement of multiple bus units, including our Special Education bus.

DCIP Progress – New High School Funding

Over the last four years, the district has focused heavily on advocacy for the establishment of a new funding line item in the National Defense Authorization Act called the Defense Communities Infrastructure Program. This grant will soon be released and the district will submit a proposal for funding to support the construction of a new Knob Noster High School. A comprehensive communication plan for this process was shelved due to Covid-19, but will reemerge in the weeks ahead with more information on this project.

Second Closure Planning

As we look ahead to the fall, the district is contingency planning for a potential second shut down. Last month, the Board of Education approved the purchase of 1100 new student devices to replenish our current student devices, many of which are nearing end of life. The district is also evaluating multiple programs that could further enhance and help provide comprehensive reliability and validity to our virtual delivery.

Thank you for your time to review this memo, and we hope you will be able to join us for tomorrow’s Virtual Town Hall meeting. As always, we appreciate your partnership and understanding as we work together to serve our students and community. Please reach out to our team if we may be of assistance.

Very Respectfully,

Jerrold H. Wheeler, Ed. D.

Superintendent of Schools