



Johannesburg-Lewiston Area Schools

Hello Cardinal Families!

I know there are so many questions out there, we are trying to answer them all. You can keep checking back on our website for updated information on the FAQ documents. Here is the latest information to answer more questions:

Online Learning: Families that signed up for 100% online learning were contacted by each office this week to let them know they were registered and to gather some information. Next, we will assign students to teachers and teachers will be in contact with families. Our online learning platform is a program called Accelerate and it is run on the Canvas system. All teachers in the district will be blending this system into their regular classrooms in addition to the 100% online students using this system. This system will work directly with our PowerSchool System and our google emails. Students should be able to use their same logins for all systems.

Chromebooks: The district has about 300 chromebooks that we have purchased over the last several years. In July, we purchased 645 more chromebooks to allow students to go one-to-one. Unfortunately, although we ordered the first week into our fiscal year, the new chromebooks have not arrived. Students who are 100% online and have no way to work without a school device will be issued one of the chromebooks we already have. Once our order comes in and we get them set up, we will deploy the new devices. Parents and students will need to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement and the District Technology Handbook that explain the expectations and allowable uses of a school device. There will be no fee for the use of these chromebooks this year, however there is a cost for damages and that will be explained in the handbooks.

Internet Hotspots: The district provides free internet in our school parking lots. Hotspots are also available at the public library parking areas. We are working to order some hotspots to loan out, but they are limited and very costly. There will be procedures set up if these hotspots are needed.

Activities/Athletics: Students who are attending face to face and 100% online through JLAS are able to participate in JLAS activities including athletics. As you are aware, football has been moved to the spring. Currently, it appears volleyball and cross country will be able to compete in the fall, but there are some issues as volleyball is still required to practice outside. Athletic Director Smokevitch is working hard to figure out the best ways to work through these times. Coaches are working on schedules. Traditional band courses will not take place as they have previously. There will be High School band courses, but at this time, students will not be using instruments that can be blown into. Please be patient and flexible. We will get through this. Other after school activities are on hold until we get the school year started.

School Calendar and Start/End Times: As with everything else this pandemic year, we have a change to our school calendar and start and end times. The first day of school is **Monday, August 31, 2020**. This year, school will begin at the same time, but students will be released earlier. The reason we are releasing students earlier is so we can implement as many of the best practices to protect our students and staff. Students will be with their teachers while they are in school. The teachers will not have a planning time while students are in the building as we have all hands on deck to ensure as much cohorting and space as possible. You will be excited to meet our awesome staff. We even added some additional teachers this year! This means our teachers' planning time will occur after students leave. In order to provide the appropriate times and lunch periods, **school will dismiss in Johannesburg at 1:47pm and in Lewiston at 1:27pm**. Cardinal Club will be available after school in Johannesburg. We are still looking for someone to run the Cardinal Club in Lewiston. There is a process that would need to be completed with the State for licensing if anyone is interested.

Student Drop off and Breakfast: Breakfast will be offered in the classroom this year. When students report to school, they will go directly to their classroom. Students will not go to lockers at this time, some may be released from their 1st hour to go put items away until the end of the day- each building will be handling lockers a little differently depending on the season and need. The teachers will have breakfast in the rooms and will assist students in organizing for their day. Student drop off will take place in **Lewiston from 7:50-8:00 am**. We cannot let students in the building prior to 7:50am. Student drop off in Johannesburg for grades K-8 can take place in the K-8 parking lot, which will have NO PARKING, just a drive through loop. The time for drop off in **Johannesburg is from 8:10-8:20am**. We will have staff meeting students at the parent drop off and the bus drop off to ensure they get where they need to go. If you need to drop off a student late, you are asked to call the office and the Secretary will assist you in getting your child signed in without having to enter the building.

Food Service: In addition to breakfast in the classroom, the district will also offer a hot lunch program. It will be different than it was in the past and students will be eating in a classroom. All online students who would also like to participate in the food service program can do so. All students (on-line and face to face) are eligible for a free breakfast. Qualifying students are also eligible for a free or reduced price lunch. If you're interested, please call Mrs. Kierczynski at 989-732-1773 ext. 2113. Free and reduced applications will be accepted at any time, or by mail.

Transportation: All students who ride the bus must be registered. If you have questions regarding transportation, please contact the Transportation office: 989-732-1773 ext. 2114. The bus ride from Lewiston to Johannesburg in the morning will have a slightly different pick up location. Riders will be registered for a specific bus and the pick up location will be located on the bus garage side of the parking lot.

Fun Facts:

- Our enrollment is up! I know many people out there believe school enrollments are declining. Our's did for years, but over the last couple years we are seeing an increase in students.
- State law requires qualified teachers for subjects and grade levels. Consolidation of the middle school to one building has allowed us to continue to have offerings and qualified teachers. Running two middle school programs would require an additional 6 qualified teachers and that is not fiscally responsible.
- 21 teachers, administrators and staff began working on our back to school plans in May. They met weekly for a while and then as needed up until just a few weeks ago. They dedicated significant time and critical thinking to ensure we understood all perspectives and concerns. I appreciate the work and dedication!
- While we were on the stay at home order, every staff member completed high quality training in Trust Based Relational Intervention. This training will be continued and built on during this school year. Our staff is ready to support the emotional needs of our students and each other as we move back into face to face learning!
- When the final results came in, they were the same as the unofficial results. The District Bond proposal did not pass by a slim margin of fewer than 25 votes. The bond would have supported a long list of issues the district is facing including updates to the heating system, JLEMS parking lot, and educational technology needs. The Board of Education has decided to put the bond issue on the ballot in November, it has the same items, but a lower millage rate - 2.90 at the high end, but average of 2.58.

Thank you all for your patience as we continue to work through changes to the requirements and expectations from our local Health Departments, the State of Michigan, and the Department of Education. We don't like not being able to plan as we typically do, and we know you don't either.

Your Partner in Education,

Katy Xenakis-Makowski