



Superintendent's Report

Submitted by Nick Verhoff

October 15, 2020

7-12 Hybrid Learning Model to Continue for the Second Quarter

On September 14, students in grades 7-12 at Columbus Grove converted to a hybrid learning educational model, which allowed classrooms to be occupied at approximately 50% capacity. On a student's "off" day, he/she still received new academic instruction, but it was in a virtual/online manner. One of the biggest reasons the district transitioned to this hybrid model was due to contact tracing. In a period of just 10 days of school at the start of the school year, over 70 students were contact traced to just a small number of students who had tested positive for COVID. A student being contact traced means he/she has to quarantine for 14 days since his/her last "close contact" with the student who tested positive for COVID. A "close contact" is defined as being within six feet of an infected individual for longer than 15 minutes (accumulative). With our junior high and high school students switching classes every period, it was easy for one positive student case to garner 20 or more contact traces, making a routine and consistent educational environment for both teachers and students nearly impossible.

Since the start of the hybrid learning model, student contact traces have drastically reduced. After having over 70 student contact traces within the first two weeks of school, the district now averages less than 10 student contact traces daily for the entire K-12 student population. Another reason we transitioned to a hybrid model for the first quarter was to see what happened in our community and county in terms of the number of new COVID cases and community spread. In early September, Putnam County was deemed as "Red" by the Ohio Department of Health. As of October 13, that has not changed, as the number of new cases in the county continues to stay at a rate well over 100 per 100,000 residents (consistently over 200 new cases per 100,000).

In addition to monitoring community spread in Putnam County, we also watched to see if the Ohio Department of Health, CDC, or Governor DeWine's office made any changes to the contact tracing guidelines. While there has been some talk about reducing the distance between infected individuals with those contact traced from six feet to three feet, no changes have yet been made.

As long as this distance stays at six feet, our district would likely experience a high level of contact tracing if we were at 100% capacity in grades 7-12.

Because there has been little change in these two key areas, the district has decided continue with the hybrid learning model for grades 7-12 through the end of the second quarter (January 8). The 7-12 hybrid learning model has provided a stable learning environment for both students and teachers. For our students in extra-curricular athletics, the significant reduction in student contact traces has greatly reduced their anxiety, as well as many parents.

We understand this hybrid model has its limitations. We have found that a fair number of students would rather be in school five days a week for in person learning. We know that students want to see all their friends on a regular basis. There have been higher instances of social-emotional issues since the beginning of the pandemic and this hybrid learning model does provide some restrictions in keeping students from experiencing that 100% normalcy that they crave. Though it has limitations, we believe that this 7-12 hybrid model is the best educational model for our students at this time. We will continue to monitor this learning model by checking in with students and staff, and implementing tweaks as necessary.

Parents, if your child is experiencing any social-emotional challenges during these times, please do not hesitate to reach out to our school counselors Brenda Bruce (cg_bruce@cg.noacsc.org) and Mindy Losh (cg_losh@cg.noacsc.org). They will be happy to work with your child and help in connecting you with additional resources, if needed.

Many thanks once again go to our students and parents for your wonderful flexibility during these challenging times. We want to continue to have students on campus for in person instruction for as long as possible and this hybrid model gives us the best chance to do this. A new Red/Gray student schedule for the second quarter will be released for our families in the next week. If you have any questions about the 7-12 hybrid learning model, please feel free to contact Mr. Verhoff at 659-4301.

First Quarter Ends Friday, October 23

Believe it or not, we are six school days away from having the first quarter of the 2020-21 school year in the books. Parents, remind your children to finish the quarter strong and make sure all assignments are turned in. Also, remember that there will be no school on Monday, October 26 for the first quarter break. To see the 2020-21 school year calendar in its entirety, go to <http://cg.noacsc.org/> and click on "Calendars" in the left hand column.

Bulldog Fall Sports Update

With the end of the first quarter just over a week away, the fall sports teams are rolling into their postseason competition. Here is a brief summary of upcoming tournament and playoff games/matches:

Cross Country- NWC Meet this Saturday; District Meet @ CG on Saturday, October 24

Golf- Completed competition last week. Congratulations to junior Noah Macke for qualifying for districts at Bowling Green!

Soccer- First game of tournament will be next Tuesday, 10/20 vs. Allen East at Hall Avenue Park.

Volleyball- First tournament match is at home vs. Arcadia on Tuesday, October 20.

Football- First playoff game will be this Saturday night @ 7 p.m. versus Ottawa Hills at Clymer Stadium.

Reminder: FREE Lunches for ALL Students!

On August 31, the USDA passed a waiver that would allow schools to use funding from the federal government and the USDA to feed ALL students FREE. This allows school districts to offer meals to ALL students at NO CHARGE this fall to minimize the challenges of meal service during the pandemic.

What does this mean for your child/ren? ALL students are now eating in our cafeteria FREE until further notice. We also offer breakfast, which your child/ren can receive FREE. This program will be offered until funds from the USDA run out. When this happens, we will let families know. We hope all of our families are able to take advantage of this opportunity!

Did You Know?

On October 2, the CG football squad won the NWC championship against Allen East at Clymer Stadium, marking a 3-peat in Northwest Conference championships (2018, 2019, & 2020). This is the second NWC 3-peat in our football team's history. The other three-year consecutive span when the Bulldogs won the Northwest Conference occurred in 1997, 1998, and 1999.

Upcoming Events

Thursday, October 15th

Boys JH Football vs. Ada – 5:00 p.m.

Girls Varsity Soccer vs. Kalida – 5:00 p.m.

Friday, October 16th

No events scheduled

Saturday, October 17th

Boys Varsity Football vs. Ottawa Hills (playoff game) – 7:00 p.m.

Varsity Cross Country – NWC Championship at CG – 9:30 a.m.

Girls Freshman Volleyball vs. Ottawa – 10:00 a.m.

Girls Varsity & JV Volleyball vs. Ottawa – 11:00 a.m.

Girls Varsity Soccer @ Crestview – 1:00 p.m.

Monday, October 19th

Boys JV Football @ Elida – 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 20th

Girls Volleyball vs. Arcadia (Tournament) – 5:00 p.m.

Girls Varsity Soccer vs. Allen East (Tournament) – 5:00 p.m.