Dear Parents and Guardians:

As we announce a draft summary of our District 214 Return to School plan, I would like to take a moment and thank the school community for your input, feedback and patience as we have tried to build a flexible and adaptable plan that aligns with public health guidance and meets the needs and expectations of our families.

I want to share my appreciation for those of you who participated in the ThoughtExchange that was conducted earlier this summer. The thoughts and ratings provided by D214 school community were very helpful in the development of this plan.

We have heard a number of ideas and insights from students and parents over the past six to eight weeks. The points that were raised most frequently were the following:

1. Our children need to be back in school every day.
2. We do not want our child/children back in school on a daily basis due to health concerns of the child or a member of the child’s family.
3. We want to send our children back to school when it is safe to do so for both the children and the staff.
4. If students are in a remote learning setting, new content must be delivered and students must be held accountable for participating in class and doing homework.
5. Schools must provide for our children with the most significant needs.
6. If we are going to be in a remote learning environment, teachers must be given more time for preparation and planning.

We have worked hard over the course of the past several months to build a return to school plan that addresses the points above and that plan is as follows:

**Flexibility for Families**

For the fall semester of the 2020-2021 school year, our current plan is to have school open for all students whose families are comfortable sending them to school five days a week. For students whose families are not comfortable sending their child back to school, or if they need to have a child stay home for childcare purposes, students will have the ability to access their classes in a remote setting. A special schedule is currently being developed for our CLS program and our Specialized Schools, and that will be shared with families within the next week or so.

**In the event we are compelled to go to a Fully Remote Setting**

In the event public health concerns require us to move to a hybrid model where a reduced number of students are able to attend in-person learning or a fully remote model at any point during the first semester, we will continue to maintain the exact same schedule ensuring a consistent schedule for the entire first semester.

**First Day of Instruction**

Our first day of instruction was scheduled to be August 12. We will now begin our first day of instruction on Monday, August 17. During August 10-13 we will be providing professional development for teachers to maximize their effectiveness in this new teaching and learning environment. Friday, August 14 will be Freshmen Orientation since we didn’t have an opportunity to welcome our rising freshmen into our District in the spring.
Instructional Options for Families
For the first semester of the school year, the District will move to a block schedule with students having eight classes in total, but only four extended classes each day. This will limit movement throughout the buildings and will be a much more efficient and effective way to deliver instruction in the event we are required to go to a fully remote environment at some point this fall. Over the summer, the District installed a voice amplification and video camera system in our instructional spaces. This was done for two reasons. First, there is significant research around a students’ ability to hear a teacher talking, much less talking through a mask. We did not want to put any student who may be further from their teacher at a disadvantage. The second reason is that by incorporating a live remote interactions feature, students who are learning remotely can still sign on and actively participate with their class during the class period. Teachers will have several options for working with their students who are learning remotely and the specific delivery of instruction may look different based on the class a student is taking. The one constant will be the same curriculum will be taught both in-person and remotely and students will be held accountable to the same learning outcomes, content and skills.

Parents have the choice to have their student participate in-person or remotely each day. It will be up to your family to determine the educational setting you feel best supports you, your child and your family. You may send your child to school in August, but perhaps if there starts to be a flare-up in September, you could have your student learn remotely beginning in September. We have built a system that allows for a rigorous curriculum to be taught in a way that doesn’t negatively impact students learning remotely, and at the same time supporting families’ needs for flexibility.

If a student is planning on taking a class or classes remotely, they will need to join the class via the methodology the teacher has selected. They will need to leave their video on and they need to stay online and engaged until the period ends. Students will have the opportunity to put on an educationally appropriate virtual background if they so choose. As noted earlier, teachers will have several options for the delivery of their instruction to students learning remotely.

Daily Schedule
Our school buildings will be open beginning at 8:00 a.m. each morning for students who may want or need extra academic support or, because of parents’ work schedules or family needs, students have to be dropped off prior to the first class period beginning. Buses will arrive around 9:45 a.m. for the alternating day schedule below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Day</th>
<th>B Day</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zero Hour</td>
<td>Zero Hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.</td>
<td>8:45 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 6</td>
<td>Period 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Period 2*</td>
<td>Period 1*</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15 a.m. – 12:55 p.m.</td>
<td>11:15 a.m. – 12:55 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Period 3</td>
<td>Period 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 p.m. – 2:10 p.m.</td>
<td>1:00 p.m. – 2:10 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 4</td>
<td>Period 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:15 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.</td>
<td>2:15 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Periods 1 and 2 include a 30-minute Independent Student Work break
Since Rolling Meadows was already on a block schedule, their schedule will be as follows with 6th block continuing to be Seminar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Class 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:45 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.</td>
<td>Gold Day Zero Hour</td>
<td>8:45 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.</td>
<td>Purple Day Zero Hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.</td>
<td>Period 1</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.</td>
<td>Period 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15 a.m. – 12:55 p.m.</td>
<td>Period 2*</td>
<td>11:15 a.m. – 12:55 p.m.</td>
<td>Period 5*</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 p.m. – 2:10 p.m.</td>
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<td>Period 7</td>
</tr>
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<td>2:15 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.</td>
<td>Period 4</td>
<td>2:15 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.</td>
<td>Period 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Periods 2 and 5 include a 30-minute Independent Student Work break that will be detailed below.

Independent Student Work Time
All schools will have a 30-minute Independent Student Work time built into the daily schedule where students will have an opportunity to purchase food or eat a snack or lunch they bring from home. When the weather is nice, students will be able to go outdoors and as long as they maintain social distancing, they can take a break from wearing their mask. We know it is going to be challenging (especially at the beginning of the school year) for students to keep their masks on the entire time they are in the building, which is why we wanted to create a break for both students and staff. On a daily basis, half of the school will have this Independent Student Work time built into the beginning of their second block class and the other half of the school will have this time built into the end of their second block class.

Open Campus
For the first semester, we will be moving to more of a Collegiate-style Open Campus where sophomores, juniors and seniors do not have to be on campus if they don’t have class, they have parent permission and they are meeting academic achievement targets. Freshmen may have a late arrival or early departure, again with parent permission, if they have lunch, a study hall or a PE waiver during Period 4, Period 5, Period 6 or Period 8. If a student is struggling academically, the administration can suspend or revoke the Open Campus privilege and the student will be provided appropriate academic support and interventions.

Athletics and Activities
Athletics and Activities will occur within the guidelines of the Illinois High School Association (IHSA), the Mid-Suburban League (MSL), specific activity governing bodies and local, state and national public health organizations.

Fine and Performing Arts
As you know, District 214 has a nationally renowned fine and performing arts program and it was very important to us to ensure our return to school plan supported the fine and performing arts. As a result, you can see from the schedule that we will be modifying the order that classes run on a given day. This will allow our larger fine and performing arts classes an opportunity to use the Zero Hour period if they would like. Because we can only have 50 individuals in a gathering, we are going to need to segment some of those larger ensembles first semester.
Food
To ensure we only have a maximum of 50 individuals in a space, we will have multiple food pickup locations throughout each of our buildings and we will have multiple locations for students to eat throughout each school campus. Students will have access to purchase one of two different pre-packaged meals each day. Due to the challenges of food preparation and food distribution, we will not be offering a la carte selections during this first semester. Students on free and reduced lunch will continue to receive a pre-packaged meal at a free or reduced rate. We will work with those students who are on free or reduced lunch and whose family has decided that they will learn in a remote setting to ensure they receive their lunch as well.

Lockers
We will not be using lockers for at least the first month of the school year. We must keep students moving in the hallways during passing time getting from class to class. With the alternate day block schedule, students will only have four of their classes on a given day which should assist students being able to carry their materials with them throughout the day. This will be reviewed after the first four weeks of the school year. While we will have a significant number of additional hand-sanitizing stations throughout each school and water-fill stations will be available for students who want to fill or refill their own water bottle, the bubbler fountains will be disconnected.

Face Coverings
IDPH and ISBE have also mandated that all individuals in a building must wear a mask/face covering for the entire time they are in the building with several exceptions. The first exception is during lunch while students are eating. When students have finished eating, they must put their masks back on. Students may also take their mask off while doing an outside co-curricular activity. As of the writing of this note, IDPH has mandated that all individuals doing indoor co-curricular activities must keep a mask on for the entire time they are engaged in that activity (additional information regarding physical education will be sent out in the next few weeks). The third exception is for individuals who need to use their mouth to play a musical instrument. Social distancing must exist in order for this exception to be implemented in a school. While a mask/face covering will be made available to all staff and students as they return to school in August, students will be expected to bring their own mask on the first day of school. If this will prove to be a challenge for your family, please reach out to your Associate Principal of Operations and one will be provided to you for the first day of school.

Summary and Conclusion
I know many of you were hoping to receive this information sooner, but I do hope you can appreciate the level of detail that went into building this plan. We will be releasing a much more detailed document within the next seven to 10 days, but this high-level summary provides the core content of our return to school plan for District 214.

If you have any comments or questions at this time, please share them via this FORM where we will review for a response and to create a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document. As a follow up, we will also be sending out a survey the first week of August to gather feedback on your family’s plans for our return to school next month.

It is very important to note that this plan may need to be modified based on updated guidance from local, state or federal officials and/or any flare-up of cases we may see in a school or community. This is the most accurate and up-to-date return to school plan we have developed based on the information currently available. Thank you for your review and consideration and we look forward to implementing our back to school plan in collaboration with our staff, students and families. I hope you have an enjoyable remainder of your summer.

Sincerely,

David R. Schuler, Ph.D.
Superintendent