

August 13, 2020

USD 345 Families & Staff:

As you all know, the board approved the district to open in a hybrid learning environment with August 27, 2020 as the first day of school. Students will be on campus two days a week and learning from home three days a week. By now, you should have your [designated student group and days assigned for onsite learning](#). If you have any questions about these items, please contact your building principal. In addition to the hybrid learning environment, we will also have about 400 early childhood-12th grade students in our full remote environment, Family Choice Remote Learning (FCRL).

The hybrid learning environment and FCRL will require the district to provide support to our families in new ways. Below, I've outlined some of those areas on which we've been focusing.

Internet Access

During last year's continuous learning, we were able to gauge the internet accessibility in our households. We had about 40 households with little to no internet access for various reasons. In order to support the hybrid and FCRL, the district will be purchasing a limited number of AT&T hotspots that will include unlimited data. We will be working with principals to offer these hotspots on a fee based sliding scale according to families' [free & reduced status](#).

Elementary Childcare

In order to accommodate family schedules and childcare needs, the district offered parents the option of switching student groups to better align with parent work schedules, childcare needs, etc. While we hope this was helpful, we understand there will still be a need for childcare during the three days elementary students are home. We are partnering with Boys & Girls Club to provide an educational childcare program that will support students and families during remote learning days. This will be in addition to the before and after school program that will continue to be offered at school sites. Locations and times of school day educational support will be announced once it is finalized.

K-6 Digital Devices

During continuous learning, families with elementary students across the district encountered a challenge with digital device shortage. Many parents had to share their device with kids, while trying to complete their own work. It was also common for a family with multiple elementary students to be sharing the family computer for school work. In order to support remote learning, we will be expanding our 7-12 grade 1:1 initiative to our elementary schools. K-1 students will receive iPads, and grades 2-6 will receive MacBooks (laptops) to use at school and at home. These devices will need to be transported to and from school on the days they are transitioning between on-site and remote learning. More information on device distribution will be coming from principals.

School Breakfast & Lunch

School lunch and breakfast will still be provided to students on days they are away from school. Each month, families will be sent an online order form to select the meals they will need each week. Wednesdays will be breakfast and lunch distribution days at SMS and Logan. If you are a FCRL student and you need lunch and breakfast five days a week, you will pick up five days worth of breakfast and lunch on Wednesdays. If you are a hybrid student, you can pick up three days of breakfast and lunch on Wednesdays. All meal orders will be debited from school lunch accounts based on the student's free & reduced meal status.

More information on all of these items will be coming out soon as details are finalized. We are working hard to support all families in these new learning environments and appreciate your patience and support. Please remember, our R2R plan, FAQs, and calendar are online and accessible by visiting www.seamanschools.org/r2r. Principals and office staff are on duty now to answer your questions and all teachers and staff return Monday, August 17. Look for more information on back-to-school events and details from building principals in the near future.

Every school year brings new opportunities and challenges, and this year is no different. I'm looking forward to working together for another year of #LearningWithoutLimits.

Sincerely,

Dr. Steve Noble