



WAUSAU SCHOOL DISTRICT

Longfellow Administration Center

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Dr. Keith W. Hiltz, Superintendent of Schools

November 2020

Dear Wausau School District families,

First, please know that we are doing all we can to safely accomplish our mission to advance student learning, achievement and success. Also, we'd like to thank you for your patience as we navigate in-person and virtual learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. While it hasn't been easy, our students and staff continue to do a great job following the mitigation strategies we have in place, like masking and social distancing. If there's anything we've learned over the last few weeks, it's that those strategies are working. As we look at the number of quarantines and positive cases within our District, most, if not all of them, are attributed to community spread.

That said, our greatest challenge remains our ability to staff our buildings and keep them open for in-person learning. Because there's so much community spread, there are hundreds of students and staff in quarantine at any given time. That means we have to be creative about how we deliver a high-quality education to our students. As a result, our teachers and staff are shifting their schedules to help cover classrooms. In many instances, they're teaching not just in-person students, but those who are learning remotely as well. So, getting ample preparation time and time to analyze student achievement data, as well as, communicating with families has become increasingly difficult for our teachers and staff.

That's part of the reason why starting next week, our Wausau Board of Education has voted to shift all of our elementary schools, including 4K, to a 4-day week. Students will attend classes Monday through Thursday. All Fridays, going forward, will now be non-instructional days. That allows elementary staff to have a much-needed workday to plan for both virtual and in-person learning and to analyze student learning data and plan for the upcoming week. You can expect more information from your child(ren)'s school about this change. It's important to note that this move only affects elementary students, not our middle and high school students. Fridays at the middle and high school level will continue to be asynchronous learning days.

Even though in-person elementary students will not be in our schools on Fridays, if they are in need of meals on those days, please contact Ann Bunkelman at 715-261-0807 or email her at abunkelm@wausauschools.org. You can also reach out to April Susa at 715-261-0807 or asusa@wausauschools.org to make arrangements.

We know this may create some issues for families, but this move will ensure that your student(s) continue to receive that high-quality education you expect and we pride ourselves on. Again, thank you for your flexibility.

Please continue to wear a mask out in public, social distance, wash your hands often, and stay home if you are sick.

Sincerely,
Wausau School District Administration