

To: WT Families
Cc: WT Staff
From: District Leadership
Re: Special Board Meeting Regarding Reopening of Schools
Date: July 13, 2020

Please carefully review the Board Statement and Board Resolution that was approved at this morning's special board meeting. **The board voted to postpone reopening of schools for in-person learning due to COVID-19 safety concerns. July 30, 2020 WT Schools will only open virtually for at-home learning. We will share more details in the upcoming days as our staff needs time to plan for this change in reopening of schools.** We appreciate your continued patience, flexibility, and support.

[Board Resolution on Reopening Schools 7.13.20](#)

Statement from the WT Board of Education:

MSD Washington Township School Board policy provides that in making any decision board members must always think of our students first. While we do so today, we have also considered what in our judgment is in the best interest of our students' families and of our dedicated faculty, staff, and administration and their families.

As the global coronavirus continues, and through July 11, 2020, approximately 134,000 Americans have died and over 3,213,000 million have been diagnosed with the coronavirus. This past weekend the Marion County (Indiana) Health Department announced that over 51,000 Hoosiers have been diagnosed with COVID 19 and that approximately 2,500 Hoosiers have died from the virus. On Saturday, July 11, 2020, it was also reported that Indiana, for the second day in a row, had seen its highest single-day increase in cases since early May.

Experts caution that students themselves may become infected and that even if they do not become seriously ill they may pass the virus to adults with whom they reside, including those who are immunocompromised or are vulnerable for other reasons. We acknowledge in this regard that our African American families are particularly at risk.

While the Administration has worked tirelessly on a school reopening plan, when the Board recently approved the plan it acknowledged that our situation was fluid. The Board observed that its school reopening plan would be implemented whenever students returned to their classrooms. The Administration has collaborated with the WTEA, surveyed families regarding their thoughts, and asked families to indicate whether they wished to opt for e-learning or returning to a traditional classroom.

Given the unprecedented situation that we find ourselves in, we have received significant feedback from our students' family members and our educators regarding what our District's response should be to the Coronavirus. This feedback has encouraged the Board to review a wide variety of options representing the full spectrum of potential

choices. Many of these choices present valid concerns and even compelling reasons to take action one way or another. The Board is in a difficult position given limited specific guidance from the Governor, the Mayor, and public health officials. We appreciate the engagement of our stakeholders and the perspectives which they have offered during this difficult time.

While several of the most significant numeric and statistical measures relating to the coronavirus continue to rise, and while we understand our continuing responsibility to address students' educational, social and emotional needs, it is the Board's judgment that the best course of action in the near term is not to have students return to the classroom while coronavirus indicators increase. Therefore, while we will reopen beginning July 30, as previously decided, today the Board has voted that all classes will be virtual until the Board determines otherwise. At each of our upcoming Board meetings we will carefully examine where we are locally in the fight against the coronavirus as we consider when students may return to the classroom.

The MSD Washington Township School Board firmly believes that its decision is in the best interests of Washington Township's over 11,000 students, our faculty, staff and administration, and the families of each of these groups. The Board believes that its decision is the best course of action in the near term in response to what we are experiencing locally regarding the coronavirus.