



# West Irondequoit Central School District

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## Family Thought Exchange Summary

What are your thoughts, questions and concerns around a return to school in the fall?

### **Top 10 Responses & Most Commonly Connected Thoughts:**

- 1. If distance learning continues, provide teachers with training on how to best teach students through distance learning. Some teachers seem more comfortable and effective than others.**
  - My teenagers find it challenging to keep up as each teacher communicates differently. Please consider using only one platform and streamlining communication. As a parent, I receive so many emails it is impossible to keep up.
  - If online learning is required/chosen, offer live broadcasts of actual classroom lessons taught by an actual teacher and follow a normal daily schedule. Some students struggle with online learning and/or the feeling of seclusion. Live lessons offer more interaction and understanding if they have questions.
  - Orientation for parents to remote learning. If we are virtual in the fall, this has to happen. I think there was a misunderstanding related to how much kids could manage on their own.
  - Not all teachers 7-12 post grades to Infinite Campus. Some are grading in different ways. If online continues, please have each teacher post to Infinite Campus with a consistent schedule, allowing parents to access this information easily.
  - Teacher contact time should also be defined, and clear expectations should be published. Some teachers met each week with students. Other teachers had NO contact at all.
  
- 2. If learning continues to be remote or a hybrid, how can teaching be more authentic? Everyone has done a good job, but my girls miss the regular interaction with their actual teachers.**
  - Kids need to have opportunities for social interaction and social-emotional development during face-to-face time mental health!
  - My son is a bit shy and needs that social interaction and connection with his classmates and teacher. He thrives on this interaction and consistency of being in a classroom.
  - There is no substitute for in-person schools. My child needs interaction with teachers and peers.
  - The lack of schedule and interaction is disappointing and unmotivating. Online learning that incorporates attendance, participation and daily interaction might inspire a stronger desire to learn.
  - Students need students. My son stated, "It is frustrating to learn this stuff and not be able to talk about it with classmates." Small groups are better than no groups. Social interaction helps teens learn and feel motivated.
  
- 3. How can we work together, families and school, to make the "back to school" plan a success? I'd like to see us all think outside the box for solutions. We all need to be open and understand that this is uncharted territory in which we can create a new way of doing school.**
  - District leadership needs to share its struggles You have been trained to do so otherwise. Share with us your process and struggles without alarm and we will work better together. Transparency is key.

- 4. What are the possible plans for returning in the fall? We as parents have heard nothing about what it may possibly look like. Parents need to plan ahead, if it will be every other day, half day, etc.**
  - How will the fall look different? Parents need to know in advance what plans are.
  - What will classrooms look like? In the school district that I work in, we have a massive number of students. A lot of classrooms are already overpopulated. How do you compensate?
  - Schedules: What will the school year, weekly and daily schedule look like? As a working parent (and teacher in another district) will my child's schedule align with mine or will it impact my work?
  - If attendance is staggered it is my hope my children will attend on the same days. My husband and I work and 7-8 hours is a long time for even older children to be without support and supervision.
  - What safety precautions will be taken? What will be the policy for notifying parents when a student has tested positive? Timely transparency is important so parents can make decisions about their children.
  - My concerns are that the teachers need to have day-to-day contact with children and work with them throughout the week. As a working parent, and I understand we were not prepared the last few months, but I can't sustain working and being a teacher.
  
- 5. Teachers are really trying- Thank you! No one knew online approaches were going to be needed. We appreciate the effort being made, many while having their own kids at home.**
  - Teachers and principals have done an amazing job adapting and rolling with these changes. This is not someone anyone expected or asked for and staff did as good of a job as we could have asked for. Thank you!
  
- 6. How are we as a community going to ensure the safety of high-risk individuals while getting our kids back into their classrooms? It's important our kids go back to school but it's also important we protect vulnerable populations. If the kids return, schools need a viable plan.**
  - When implementing a plan, the safety of the staff and students are most important as well as the practicality of any plan that is executed.
  - I would like my children to return in the fall in an environment where I can look them in the eye and say you are safe going to school.
  - How will we ensure our kids' safety if they return to school in the fall? The health of my kids' is the most important thing to me.
  - Science and safety should be the only determining factor for opening. If we cannot, then let's start focusing on the needs of every type of student.
  - What kind of social distancing can you implement at school that's effective and enforceable to ensure the health and safety of students and families?
  
- 7. I would love to be surveyed about specific things teachers have done that have worked and not worked. Let's compile some best practices so teachers can improve their distance teaching if needed for the fall and winter.**
  - Concerned about the possibility of a fall/winter shutdown with distance learning as the only option. Distance learning understandably lowered educational expectations, and that is a long-term problem.
  
- 8. I appreciate what the school did to try to build community during this difficult time. It isn't easy but I recognize the effort. Building community will be even more critical next year.**

- 9.** How are we going to address mental health? Some of my kids are nervous to interact with others. I am anticipating that there will be a considerable amount of anxiety regarding resuming school
  
- 10.** How will we support children with special needs? While service providers have provided parents w/basic lessons it is not the same.