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Factors Considered Prior to Making the Decision to Reopen Ozark Schools on September 8, 2020

We have received several questions related to how we went about making the decision to delay the opening of Ozark Schools, and to open them in a remote format. This document is provided to help parents understand how the decision was made.

1. Health and Safety was and always will be our primary consideration.
2. Dale County is currently in one of the highest risk areas for Covid-19 in the State of Alabama.
3. The infected numbers in Dale County continue to rise. We also have several confirmed cases among employees in the school system.
4. Several parents and staff members have contacted the school system to voice their concerns regarding students returning to a traditional environment.
5. It would not be possible to effectively mandate social distancing in a traditional classroom filled with students.
6. The current mask order has been extended through the end of August. To require a student to wear a mask would have a negative impact on the ability to concentrate and learn effectively.
7. The availability of substitute teachers to fill vacancies is very low at the present time.
8. The new internet voucher program is being set up during the month of August and should be available by the first of September. Providers are sending letters to families in August.

In addition we have posted a Q & A document related to the reopening plan. If you still have questions that have not been addressed, feel free to contact your child's school or the Superintendent's office.

Rick McInturf
Superintendent