



SPRINGTOWN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

MIKE KELLEY
Superintendent

August 14, 2021

Dear Porcupine Families,

After more than a week of preparation, our staff is ready to welcome Springtown ISD's students back for another terrific year! Regardless of their role, our District's employees are committed to fostering a safe and secure environment in which every child can develop into a successful adult. Through words and actions, Springtown's stakeholders are demonstrating they support these goals. Last week's turnout to "Meet the Teacher Night" at elementary campuses and "schedule pickups" at secondary campuses significantly exceeded expectations, Springtown's Lions Club recently delivered school supplies to all our campuses, and several local churches are hosting "Back-to-School" events throughout this weekend. With a strong foundation, we have every reason to believe the Porcupine Family will accomplish great things as we move forward!

Over the summer, our administrative team worked hard to prepare for the 2021-2022 term. Especially noteworthy achievements include the following:

- Our Trustees approved proposals to add at least a half-dozen teachers to our elementary campuses and three counselors at the secondary campuses.
- Portable classrooms were purchased and existing facilities were refurbished to provide additional instructional areas throughout the District.
- Our Curriculum Department collaborated with campus-level leaders to develop instructional programs and secure resources that will continue driving up our academic achievement levels.
- Our Child Nutrition Department secured funding to provide free breakfast and lunch to every student in the District.
- Our Transportation Department spent considerable time modifying routes in response to the enrollment growth and changing roadmaps. A new "[Shuttle Schedule](#)" for the pickup hubs in Springtown can be found [here](#).
- Our Technology Department repaired/replaced hundreds of laptops, chromebooks, and desktop units in addition to upgrading our infrastructure.

Despite countless hours spent planning and preparing, the coming year will almost surely bring both new and "traditional" challenges. We ask that our stakeholders grant patience to our employees and to each other...

- **Be prepared for a great deal of traffic on campuses during the first few weeks of school.** The number of parent pickups/drop-offs is always exponentially higher in August and early September, and the additional enrollment counts at each campus will lead to especially crowded lines and parking lots.
- **Construction projects on Hwy 199 and Hwy 51** will cause major backups, particularly in the morning commute. [Information from TXDoT regarding new detours and rerouting can be found here](#). We cannot possibly project how lengthy the traffic delays might be in Springtown, but we expect them to be significant.



- **Directives regarding COVID-19 protocols** from local, state, and federal authorities continue to change as we learn more about the virus and its spread. “Never” and “always” are words we should avoid when outlining procedures the District will follow. [A summary of our current response plan is found here](#); highlights of the plan include:
 - A “**virtual learning**” option is not currently available through Springtown ISD. Without a change in Commissioner Morath’s position or legislative action, attendance rules will not fund programs mirroring what was offered in ’20-’21.
 - Neither **immunizations** nor **masking/ facial coverings** have been mandated. Governor Abbott’s Executive Order (GA-38) prohibits public schools from requiring masks, but does encourage individuals to wear masks in environments where social distancing is not feasible.
 - Individuals **confirmed to have an active COVID-19 infection** are restricted from attending school or participating in any school activities for at least 10 days from the earliest of either a) the date of the positive test, or b) the onset of symptoms. This “**isolation**” restriction applies to students, staff, and any potential visitors to the campus.
 - Current TEA guidance reflects that **contract tracing** and **quarantines** are no longer required in public schools. At this time, Springtown ISD will not assign quarantines due to exposure, but the District **does** intend to publish notifications (on our website and FB homepage) if/when an infection is confirmed on a given campus. Additionally, information about specific, individual exposures that would have previously triggered a quarantine will be shared with parents through ParentLink if and when campus-level leaders have certainty “close contact” definitions were met. *We are counting on parents and guardians to keep students who are symptomatic or may be sick (due to any illness, including COVID-19) to keep their children at home.*
 - As participation in after-school activities and events is voluntary, attendance will not be restricted at this time. However, restricted/reduced visitation to on-campus activities (including lunches) will be in place as we work through the new school year.
 - The District participates in a **COVID-19 testing program** administered by the Texas Department of Emergency Management. Our staff has been trained to administer the [BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag CARD](#) rapid tests. The test utilizes a nasal swab specimens and will be available to students after parental permission forms have been signed and returned.

Please do not hesitate to contact your child’s principal with questions about campus-level procedures or guidelines that might be unique to the campus, and contact my office directly with questions or concerns about policies and/or programs implemented and applied across all six campuses. We look forward to seeing all our Porcupines on August 16th and beginning a new year full of academic, social, and emotional growth and fulfillment.

#itsagreatdaytobeaporcupine!

Mike Kelley, Supt.
Springtown ISD

