

Dear BCS Community,

Today's communication deals with cohorts. A cohort by definition is a "group of people banded together or treated as a group." This year BCS will be utilizing cohorts to minimize risks and mitigate transmission opportunities. Here is what a cohort is at BCS:

**Elementary School - an elementary cohort is an individual classroom**

Elementary cohorts will feel very similar to a normal year in many ways. An elementary class eats together, goes to recess together, and goes to specialties together. The difference this year will be that specialty teachers will rotate to the individual cohorts in their classroom. Cohorts will go to recess as a cohort, lunch as a cohort, and transition in between as a cohort. There will be some times when an individual cohort will be with other cohorts but those opportunities will be outside with social distancing being maintained individually and cohort to cohort.

**Secondary School - a cohort is the homeroom classroom**

Secondary cohorts are different than normal. This year there will be no passing periods in between classes and no locker access. This means that students will report to their homeroom and teachers will rotate to this homeroom/cohort rather than students leaving and walking in halls from room to room. Here are some of the ways that secondary cohorts will work:

- For electives such as band and choir, cohort integrity will be maintained in that students will go to the band hall or to the CSA stage for choir but they will stay with their cohort and their cohort will be distanced from other participating cohorts.
- For certain classes such as AP classes or Honors classes, certain members of the cohort may leave to go to another room where the advanced class is taught but it will be only with cohort members. For example, Calculus may be taught in the cohort and AP Calculus at the same time in a different classroom. Only members of the same cohort will attend both. This simply means there will be a smaller student to teacher ratio for these classes.
- During lunch, students will have assigned tables within their cohort but will be able to choose seats at that table. They will be able to see other students not in their cohort and will be able to talk with them but they will be distanced at all times

Cohorts minimize the number of people our students will be in contact with and mitigate risk opportunities. Our goal is to make as many opportunities as possible for students to see friends and feel normal. These opportunities will occur frequently and will be planned for distancing between cohorts. We will have All Community Chapel on the athletic field with distancing between cohorts. We will have Christmas Caroling in the parking lot with all students singing together with distancing between cohorts. We will have outdoor pep rallies and fun events but cohort integrity will be maintained.

The bottom line is that things will be a little different but the students will be moving around campus, seeing other students, and maintaining cohort integrity through social distancing. One of the critical aspects of education is the maturing of social skills within the context of advancing academic and intellectual knowledge. This critical social and emotional development occurs during purposeful social interaction and this vital educational component is a strong part of our cohort planning, both on campus and online.

Tomorrow's communication will detail the process for accessing and participating in Online Bears and Friday's communication will detail the processes for dropping students off and picking them up each day.

School is a week away. May God bless BCS.

It is a great day to be a Bear!

***Blessings,  
Jay Burcham  
President***