September 24, 2020

Good afternoon,

I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy. I wanted to take a few moments to update the community and parents on the latest information dealing with school. Whether we like it or not, we are in a new world of education.

COVID incident rates: Back in August school districts in the Okanogan county were denied the ability to have students come to school in person. As of last week, the incident rate in the county has dropped to 18/100,000. These new figures are a result of everyone taking an active approach toward prevention. As we begin to reopen our schools, the one thing we don’t want to do is have an outbreak and have to shut down again.

Current status and plan: As everyone are aware there is a Chromebook shortage and our order has been delayed until October. With that said, teachers continue to put a lot of effort into distance learning instruction. We recognize that this delay is putting a lot of stress on not only staff, but parents and students as well. Last night I received approval to begin transporting students without electronic devices to school in order to utilize the computer labs. We are currently working out the logistics to start scheduling students on Thursday Oct. 1st. With the Governor’s “social distancing” order still in place, we still need to limit the number of students in a room. There are 4 labs in the HS and 1 in the ES that will accommodate 50 students at one time (10 per lab). If your child does not have a Chromebook or other device expect notification from the school. If you have not been notified by next Tuesday, please contact the school.

School board meeting: As you have probably guessed, the special board meeting on Tuesday night was canceled because of the loss of internet and phones. We have decided to wait until Monday night’s regular meeting and have updates then.

Calendar changes: Back in August the start of school was delayed (Sept. 8th instead of the 2nd) in order three days to reflect this delay. Native American Day, Columbus Day and one day during winter break were added to the calendar as school days. If your child is absent during any of these days they will need a note from their parent/guardian in order to be excused.

Attendance update: Attendance has been pretty good so far. We continue working through issues but for the most part everything is working well. Keep up the good work.

Meals Update: Meals served continues to increase. Please refer to our website for delivery information. Also, we have applied to OSPI for acceptance into the free meals program. Our application has been approved. If you owe meal charges from previous years you are still responsible for this cost. Going forward, your student will be able to eat breakfast and lunch at no cost.

Levy:
In order to meet the extra expenses this fiscal year and expected shortfall when the legislature budgets the next biennium, the school board has authorized running a levy for an additional $1.00/$1,000. This additional levy will return the overall tax burden back to pre-2019 levels just over $4.00/$1,000. I will be setting up a Q & A on this the week of October 5th. Stay tuned.

Community Q & A:
I will begin hosting community Q & A’s again beginning next Thursday Oct. 1st at 5:00. The link for the Q & A

https://gcdsd.zoom.us/j/98616618322?pwd=Q2tObWt5OVlSWVhwZDFyYkUrYXROZz09

Distance learning update:
Parents, whether we wanted it or not distance learning has become part of the new norm. We recognize there are many difficulties that families will need to deal with, we will continue to help where we can.
Students, now is the time to really become engaged in your learning. Ultimately, you have to make the step and accept your role as learner. Both your teachers and your parents are here to help but you need to take on your responsibility.

Please have GRACE with one another and COMMUNICATE often.

Mr. Turner