July 22, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians and Community Members,

As we continue planning for the start of the 2020-21 school year, we are offering two options for parents/guardians: at school/on-site learning and online/offsite learning. The at school/on-site outline will follow the Yellowstone County Health Guidelines of social distancing, hand washing/sanitizing protocols, and wearing masks. The school reopening plan will be discussed at the July 27, 2020 board meeting in the Laurel High School Auditorium at 6:00 p.m.

Current transportation routes are not able to accommodate students living within three miles of their school; nor can we accommodate in town transfers. If your child is an eligible rider and you can transport them to and from school, this would assist families who rely on us to transport their children.

While this situation changes daily, this letter is intended to outline where we are today and what options are available for families. Parents/guardians know what is best for their children, and some of you have already made a decision regarding your children’s education opportunities this fall. We understand and respect that parents/guardians will make the best decision for their family. We will collaborate with you to educate your children to the best of our ability under changing circumstances.

I also want to thank all the parents/guardians and community members that have offered ideas, support, and encouragement throughout these challenging and difficult decisions.

Please review the two options below before completing an online survey to assist us in planning for the start of the school year. You will be asked to make a preliminary decision as to your child attending 100% at school/on-site or 100% online/offsite. We are not pursuing a blended learning model at this time. The survey also addresses transportation, connectivity, and meals to ensure we understand the specific issues to your family.

Thank you in advance for completing this important survey!

Dr. Linda Filpula
Superintendent
AT SCHOOL/ON-SITE LEARNING

Elementary School Structure
Students will remain with their cohort as much as possible throughout the day. These cohorts will have recess together and eat together. Procedures will be in place to enter and exit the building. Traffic patterns will be in place to facilitate social distancing. Recess times will be staggered to reduce large groups of students congregating. Lunches will be Grab-n-Go and eaten in the classroom. Students and staff will be required to wear masks.

Middle School and High School
Students will remain in cohort groups as much as possible. Procedures will be in place to enter and exit the building. Traffic patterns will be in place to facilitate social distancing. Passing times between classes will be staggered to reduce large groups of students congregating. Students will use their backpack for carrying items to class. Lockers will not be assigned to reduce congestion. Lunch will be Grab-n-Go and eaten in the classroom for 5-8 grade. The High School will continue with an Open Campus. Grab-n-Go Lunches will available for 9-12 students eating on campus. Students and staff will be required to wear masks.

ONLINE/OFFSITE LEARNING

Students engage in remote learning by:
Participating and “engaging” online daily with teacher. Ensuring they have a device and can connect to the learning platform. Being prepared for online instruction with appropriate materials. Attending online daily at times designated by teacher. Daily Attendance is required. Submitting assignments by the due date.

Families support remote learning by:
Ensuring children have access to a device and materials supplied by the teacher. Ensuring children have access to adequate internet service. Knowing how to contact their children’s teachers. Ensuring children have a “work space” to attend lessons and complete work. Ensuring children are in attendance daily and communicate with teachers if children are unable to participate that day.

Teachers support student learning by:
Building strong relationships with students and families. Providing quality instruction that focuses on student engagement and mastery of course content through a variety of activities, projects, and assignments. Providing weekly learning agendas communicated to students and parents/guardians. Grading student work and providing feedback in a timely manner. Taking attendance and tracking engagement on a daily basis. Scheduling student meetings and teacher office hours to support student learning.

Follow this link to complete the Parent Guardian Planning Survey for the start of the 2020-21 school year.