

WINSKILL ELEMENTARY

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Students and Parents,

I hope this letter finds you healthy, happy and excited for the 2020-21 school year. Many of you know me, but for those of you that do not, my name is Brad Sturmer. I graduated from LHS in 1997. I taught high school math for 15 years in the district, served as an assistant principal at the middle school and high school for 3 years, and now I am very grateful to have the opportunity to serve the district entering my 3rd year as the Elementary Principal.

As we look at the upcoming school year, we all understand that things are going to look different but that doesn't mean things are going to look bad. In fact, I expect a great year of tremendous growth for our kids, our staff, and our community. We've all been through a lot together. We've seen growth already. Let us continue that progress together.

One key to success every year, but especially this year, is one of our collective commitments in our vision statement. The statement is 'As Flying Arrows, we will build supportive relationships, model a culture of respect, and reinforce kind, positive behaviors.' This statement is a key component to our vision of creating a welcoming environment which is foundational in generating high levels of learning for our students.

That statement is very parallel with my expectations for our students. They are simple and easy to remember. Be Kind – Work Hard – Be Safe. When our students can meet those expectations and our staff and community follow the collective commitment above, what a great school and community we have.

As an administrative team, this summer, we had a lot of work to do. Our central focus was getting kids back to school. Just as important, is when getting kids back to school, we need to do what we can in order to keep our kids in school. Hopefully you've been able to view our videos on our school website and read our 'Be Safe - Be Successful' document. As we've also stated, if you have any questions, please ask. We are here for you.

The main things that come up with best practices for stopping the spread of COVID and therefore increasing the probability of avoiding school closures are: hand washing, keeping your hands off of your face, social distancing, and face coverings. Face coverings can be a polarizing topic but again, no matter where your opinion is with this, we have to move forward in the school setting, as a unified force. None of us want to see our kids wearing masks and many adults don't want to wear masks but if that's what it takes to get our kids in school and gives us the best chance of keeping kids in school, then that's what we need to do at school. Therefore, the expectation for all kids and adults is that they should be wearing an approved face covering while in the building during school. They will be optional whenever we are outside.

We will be scheduling breaks for our students and we will be going outside as much as we can. If kids are struggling, you can be confident that we will do what we need to do to make them feel comfortable. We will never lose sight of our vision of our welcoming environment, where we strive to make sure everyone feels emotionally, physically, and intellectually safe.

If you are worried about your child wearing a face covering, I can tell you that summer school was a huge success. We had 170 students attend. Week 1 masks were optional and we had to change that going into week

**We strive to create high levels of learning in a welcoming, collaborative environment
that nurtures personalized success for all Flying Arrows.**

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2 because of the mask mandate. I was extremely impressed with how the kids handled it. They do better than most adults, myself included. So please, be confident your child can handle it as well, as your encouragement and confidence can only help them.

This letter is getting long and I have a lot of information to share yet. Here are some important bullet points that I can think of sharing right now.

- I just completed class lists. Thank you for your patience but I needed to wait until all registration packets were in before creating class lists. I wanted to see how many students were choosing the virtual choice option so that I could spread them out appropriately. Your child's homeroom teacher will be reaching out to you via email to let you know who he or she is. That information will be coming your direction by the middle of next week.
- Students need to be in their classrooms and ready to learn by 8:00 AM each day. I would encourage students not to arrive any sooner than 7:30 as supervision outside doesn't start until then. I'd suggest a 7:35 arrival time for students that want breakfast. I'd suggest a 7:45 arrival time for those not eating breakfast. After arriving to school and getting breakfast, kids will head to their classrooms. For the sake of spreading kid's entrances around, please make an attempt to enter as listed below.
 - 4K, 4th and 5th grade students should enter door #1 (4K doors closest to the playground area)
 - 1st, 2nd and 3rd should enter door #2 (office doors)
 - Kindergarten and breakfast takers should enter door #3 (presentation doors)
- For the time being, there will be no parents or visitors allowed in the building. Another one of many measures taken to raise the probability of avoiding any school closures. I don't like to do it, but that means no parents in the building on the first day of school. Please take your pictures at home or away from the main entrances to avoid congestion. If your child has anxieties and is struggling entering the building, we will be there to help you out.
- Students not riding the bus will start being released from school starting at 3:12. If you are picking up your child please arrange a place where you will be meeting them after school. If possible, we'd ask that you'd stay in your vehicle but completely understand if you'd rather meet them outside. For our younger students, please arrange a pick up location with your child's teacher.

In between arrival and departure, be confident that we will do everything we can to provide a safe and welcoming environment for your child(ren). Refer to our website for our previously released documents and videos for our enhanced safety precautions that we will be taking. We love our students and look forward to getting the regular school year back going again. As always, reach out to us with any questions and we'll do what we can to help you out.

Kind regards,

Brad Sturmer