

August 19, 2020

Dear Parents:

Things continue to be COVID Crazy, but our staff is up to the challenge! We are putting the finishing touches on our school facility, as well as our procedures/protocols for keeping students and staff safe. We have received a healthy number of parent questions regarding our new safeguards. Attached is a copy of the Alsea School District Operational Blueprint that we have submitted to the Benton County Health Department and the Oregon Department of Education.

The plan is very comprehensive, but I thought I would mention a few highlights:

Face Coverings: Students are required to use face coverings as much as possible especially at recess, during transition times, and when engaging in certain Physical Education Activities. Coverings include masks and/or face shields, "neck socks," handkerchiefs, etc. that serve to slow the spread of droplets that could contain COVID.

As we ramp up our phased opening, all students will have a shielded workstation assigned to them that is protected via plexiglass from other students in the classroom. When positioned at their workstation, students will have the option to remove their face covering if needed. This kind of accommodation will serve to gain better compliance from students when it is most needed/required, such as during transitions, recess, emergency drills, passing time, etc.

The Alsea School District will provide masks/shields, etc. to any student who needs one. We have you and your students covered:)

Cohorts: As mentioned in my prior email, all students are assigned to grade level cohorts that will have limited interaction with other cohorts. When and if cohorts need to interact, such as during emergency drills, all students will be required to use face coverings, adhere to social distancing, and follow hand washing/sanitizer protocols. Getting used to these new requirements will take a bit of training and reminding, so please support us by encouraging your students to do their best to keep themselves and others safe.

Cleaning and Disinfecting: The Alsea School District has secured extra staffing to provide constant cleaning and disinfecting of our facility during the day to include nightly deep cleaning of instructional areas. Recess equipment will be sanitized in between student cohorts to assure that all students are kept safe from the spread of COVID. I can't say enough about our awesome classified support staff and all the hard work they have put into helping us win the war against COVID!

Prescreening: We will be taking temperatures and screening for symptoms of all students and staff daily. Students who ride the bus will be screened before

loading. Please keep your child home if they have a fever of 100.4 and/or are showing other symptoms of illness.

Elementary: As most of you know, we are opening up for in person instruction for grades K-5 on Monday, August 24th at 8 am! In addition to our COVID protocols, students are now required to eat breakfast after 8 am as per the Department of Education. Eating breakfast later will mean the bus schedules will be altered by a few minutes to facilitate later pick up times. Carmen is working to finalize the last few tweaks to the bus schedule and will be communicating all details shortly.

Many parents have asked if they can bring their students to the first day of school and escort them to their classroom. This is something we are happy to facilitate, as the first day of school is good for long term memory making and serves as one of life's little milestones. However, we ask that you don't stay long once your student gets to their desk, so we can stay within the 35 square foot person per room recommendations and allow all parents to work their way through.

Secondary: Mr. C will be sending a more detailed update, but he and his team have been working hard to get all schedules complete and students/families communicated with. Comprehensive Distance Learning for grades 6-12 begins Monday, August 24th under a "soft start." Students and families can expect to have their chrome books delivered along with student meals between 10 am -2pm on Monday.

We are so very excited to open our doors to students again, and we are working as diligently as possible to make our little school a welcoming and safe place to learn.

As always, we encourage any questions you may have. Please feel free to respond directly to this email and I will work to get you the answers and information you need. On behalf of the staff and the Alsea School Board and Administration, I wish to welcome all of you back to school! Go Wolverines!!!

Sincerely,

Marc Thielman

Alsea Superintendent/K-12 Principal
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