

MAYWOOD

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Breathe In.....Breathe Out.... I remember writing these same words back in April when we were in the midst of the pandemic with every piece of news being grimmer than the day before. We are now in July and unfortunately, although the health data may look better, school is in a state of flux. I reach out to simply say that we will get through this together and will look back on this years to come and ask what in the name of god just happened. First and foremost, the district is happy to report that we have heard very little, if anything, on the health front from a negative perspective from staff and district families. After that good piece of news, everything else falls into place and we will continue to work alongside our families to make sure that we do everything we can to make this work.

I thank everyone for their responses to a myriad of surveys, subcommittee attendance, summer remediation work, pickups and drop offs and some more pickups and drop offs! We had hoped that the leadership from the DOE and the state government would have learned lessons from the closure in March so that we would have firm and clear plans for September much earlier than the late summer. Unfortunately, precisely when consistent requirements regarding school schedules, school openings and dismissal times and so many other things that impact our families is needed, there simply are no answers. Local control is the bedrock of public education 99% of the time but when the 1% of time when we all need to be on the same page is during a global pandemic, state leadership needs to make sure we all alleviate the hardships that arise when there are thousands of different opinions. Whether one week on/one week off is right or 2/1/2 or A/B or whatever else one can imagine is correct, this was the time for leadership to step up, in this crisis, standardize aspects of school that are needed for the good of the whole. Instead we have thousands of schedule options, start dates for school, uses of technology and day care offerings. It is a shame and it is wrong but we must live with it and plug along.

Maywood will announce its plan on July 31st, at the same time that it submits it to the County. We indicated that although it isn't due to parents until August 10th that we would do whatever it took to get our parents the information by August 1; and we will hit that target. We will continue to work with the YMCA to see what if anything can be worked out for before and/or aftercare services and we will continue to try to connect district families with each other so as to alleviate the burdens that we will all face. At the end of the day though, we will keep our eyes on the prize, the kids. We will work tirelessly to provide them an educational "experience" whether in school or out of school and we will make it our mission to provide a sense of normalcy as best we can with your support.

There are no right answers and there are no magic potions that will assist with all of the collateral damage that exists when something like this presents itself. I do know though that I would not want to navigate through what we are about to face with any other staff, parents, community members and most of all kids. If March through June was any indication of what we are all made of then we should feel somewhat at ease that we are all ahead of the game when it comes to tackling problems and trying to make things work come September. Will there be opt out questions after the release of the schedule on Friday? Of course. Will there be concerns about what cohort kids will be placed in? Undoubtedly, Will there be challenges with a hybrid model of in person and at home or a full at home presentation? You bet. However, we will face it all together and we will work to come to consensus as best we can.

The District is in good hands because of you and you are in good hands because of the District. Individual issues will be worked on as they always are but now is the time for focus on the District as a whole and as the complete sum of its parts. Together we are stronger and together we will get through this.

Stay safe and healthy,

Michael Jordan
Superintendent of Schools