



MONTICELLO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Independent School District No. 882

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Dear Monticello families,

As many of you have likely heard by now, Governor Tim Walz has announced the [Minnesota Safe Learning Plan](#) which guides districts on how they are able to educate during the 2020-21 school year. In short, county transmission rates will guide what format schools should operate in throughout the school year. As the information from the state details, districts across the state will very possibly move between learning models (in-person/hybrid/distance) as the year progresses and the impact of the pandemic ebbs and flows locally. The information released by the state today will allow us to best meet the safety, education, and equity needs of our students and staff using the most up to date information available.

The learning model we use will be based on the most recent 14-day county transmission rate, which will change weekly as we move toward the start of the school year. Currently, our transmission rate is at 12.88. According to the state's matrix, that would allow us to have in-person learning for elementary and a hybrid format for secondary students if school started today. While we know this uncertainty will be challenging for all of us, it's also an important reminder that we need everyone to do their part to keep transmission rates down in Wright County to allow our children the opportunity to learn in person.

What we want to do soon is provide you with the best plans that we can for each option, so if and when we have to move between plans, you are prepared for the change. While we are still ironing out the specifics of those plans and of safely welcoming students and staff back into our building, I can tell you that we plan to take advantage of being able to have kids back in the building as often as we safely can throughout the school year. I believe it is so important for us to be able to have our students back in our buildings while also prioritizing the safety of staff and students, as well as the community at large. As previously communicated, we will have our Monticello Education Plan, which will detail plans for all three learning models, ready to roll out to our families by Monday, August 10. A key aspect of our plan will involve family choice. We are preparing to meet all students where they are comfortable and learn best throughout this school year.

In addition to whatever format the state and county guidance puts us in, families will have the opportunity to opt in to one of two alternative forms of education for the 2020-21 school year. We will be providing a well-rounded, equitable, and engaging distance learning opportunity for all students Preschool through Grade 12 that are not comfortable returning to the building. This opportunity will be a significant improvement to the rushed distance-learning format we deployed last spring. In addition, we are preparing to offer outdoor classroom opportunities for all interested students in Preschool through Grade 5. Additional information regarding both opportunities will be included in the Monticello Education Plan on August 10. Families will be able to register for these opportunities from August 11th-14th. Registration information will be included in the Monticello Education Plan as well.

Monticello School District is an equal opportunity employer.

Tomorrow morning, you will receive a survey from ISD 882 regarding the 2020-21 school year. Please take a few minutes to fill out the survey before Friday, August 7. While we know that many families filled out the MDE survey, it is hyper important that we gather this information locally to help us finalize our 2020-21 Monticello Education Plan. Knowing the exact needs of our community and each family is an absolute must for us to be able to put the finishing touches on an education plan that serves all families in all formats.

I can confidently say that we are finding amazing ways to operate within the guidelines released today while also working to differentiate education and give each and every one of our students what they need this school year.

It is incredibly important to note once more that this school year will not look like any other year, and that is OK. Education has long been great in the Monticello School District, but I don't think anyone would mistake the education system for perfect, here or anywhere else. This year is offering us an opportunity to make changes to better meet our students where they are and to create an education plan that fits our modern (and ever-changing) world. There will be challenges and there will be changes needed as we navigate this together. But, I believe in my heart of hearts, that if we stick together as a community we will redefine education this year and establish a level of excellence that goes above and beyond anything we've ever done for our students before.

I'm grateful for the hundreds of conversations I've had with families this summer, and for the wisdom and perspective I've gained. I'm grateful for the thousands of hours put forth by our educators and leaders to craft the plans that you will see on August 10. And I'm grateful to have the opportunity to pull all of that information and work together and to lead Monticello School District into a new era of education.

Thank you for your help, for your partnership, and your belief in Monticello School District. Even amidst trying times, I know that together we will make this the best year yet.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Eric Olson