***“You don’t have to be afraid of the unknown. It is unknown only to you. God is well aware of where you are and of every step He is asking you to take.” -Unknown***

Many of you have been inquiring about our plans for St. Patrick School in 2020-21. I am happy to report that our Building Leadership team consisting of Angie Dean, Leslie Rhomberg, Ellen Luders, Sheena Bahr, Alyssa Kjeldsen, Lora Sink, Pam Schmitt, Kristine Smith and myself have been meeting weekly to complete our Return to Learn Plan.

We have consulted with the Department of Education, the Archdiocese of Dubuque and the Blackhawk County Emergency and Health Departments. We completed our plan 2 full weeks early!! This plan encompasses many scenarios because at this point we are not 100% sure of anything and need to be prepared for everything that may come our way in the Fall.

**Plan for the Fall**

School will begin on August 24th with the first three days of school being a 1:30 dismissal. We feel this will give us some time to get readjusted to our new normal. We have addressed many safety needs and are working to make sure we can come back in the building with **face to face instruction** and continue to assure the safety of all students and staff. Parents will be asked to use the Mayo Self Checking system to decide whether their child is healthy enough to come to school. I have attached that to this email.

 Many teachers will be wearing face shields and families may choose to provide face coverings for their children. Students will be dropped off as normal but will be directed to go inside to their classrooms instead of socializing on the playground. Upon arrival to their rooms the teachers will take the child’s temperature. If a child has a fever of 100.3 or greater they will be sent home. Classrooms will be arranged for social distancing. Lunch will look a little different with some classrooms choosing to eat outside on nice days and smaller groups with social distancing in the lunchroom on other days.

During lunch breaks classrooms and hallways will be disinfected using a disinfectant mister that is EPA approved for COVID 19. This process has been used in hospitals, schools and businesses across the country. Students will use a disinfect wipe on their desk and chair before moving to another classroom throughout the day.

Teachers will be discussing safety procedures with students such as not touching others faces or hands, washing hands regularly, covering their coughs and using hand sanitizer before and after lunch and recess. Many new procedures will be taught to enhance social distancing in the hallways, at lockers and on the playground.

There will be limited access to our building and parents will be asked not to visit during the school day. The CDC has advised that limiting the amount of people entering the building is a great way to avoid the risk of infection.

We are also working on plans for a hybrid learning model as well as distance learning if we should be instructed to move to that type of programming. Professional development opportunities are being shared and planned for our teachers and staff to assure quality programming.

I hope that this answers many of your questions about what our new normal will look like for the fall. I must remind you that although we are looking forward to coming back in the building, we will follow the Governor’s Proclamation if new guidance should be presented. Please feel free to email me with questions, comments or concerns after reading this letter. I value your opinions and want to keep the lines of communication open during the next few months.

Blessings,

Lynette Hackett