

July 24, 2020

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ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent/Principal
Paul Clark
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Dear Colton Wildcat Families:

Summer is halfway over and the reopening of schools is right around the corner. I'd like to share some of the considerations the school district is wading through for a return to school in the fall. We miss our kids and our colleagues and the connections that happen when we are in community together.

Elementary Principal
Tim Casey
509.229.3386

The school district's main priority is the safety of our entire community. When school begins in the fall, we must ensure that every individual who walks through the school's front doors is in an environment where they are as safe as possible. This will mean that school will look different no matter how it happens this fall, largely through the use of personal protective equipment in the building. The school district will be partnering with you, our students' families, to accomplish this goal.

The school district feels strongly that having our students in our building interacting with each other is hugely important as we structure school for the fall. With this in mind, over the last few months we have met with the Whitman County Health Department, the Governor's office, the Washington Department of Health, elected representatives of the Washington State Legislature, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and many other organizations whose work is designed around ensuring the safety of our community. We continue to appreciate the evolving science behind how to best serve our community in a safe manner.

An advisory committee has been formed to work through all the facets of school reopening. This committee consists of parents, teachers, administrators, and facilities staff. You should expect to see a digital survey in the next week asking you for your thoughts on reopening in the fall. Please consider filling this out and being direct about your concerns. Your responses will inform how we design educational programming for the fall. You should expect to hear updates from this committee by the second week of August.

We have seen evolving shifts around public health throughout this epidemic. As our understanding of COVID-19 progresses daily, we will continue to look to the recommendations of public health and follow these recommendations to do what is best for our kids, our colleagues, and our families. I am certain this is what other school districts around the county, state, nation, and world are doing and I am painfully aware how much the local conditions differ from place to place and how they affect the decisions that are being made.

What I am certain of is that school starts on August 31st. I hope to see you and your child that morning and look forward to greeting you at the front door, even if I am wearing a mask and if I have to check your temperature with an infrared thermometer. We will get through this together and be a stronger community for it. As always, if you have any questions, you are welcome to contact me at school or via email at pclark@colton.k12.wa.us. Thank you for the trust you put in Colton School to be a part of your child's educational journey.

Respectfully,


Paul Clark