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August 13, 2021

Dear Maple Run Community:

Last year, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, our community showed a strong commitment to supporting the health and learning of our students and families. We had to start school with a hybrid model that expanded from two days to four days a week. In order to safely operate our schools, we made changes based upon scientific data. As we move into the next phase of our response, and five-day-a-week instruction, I would like to share our plans to support the health and safety of our students, staff, and families. We will be following the recommendations of the [Department of Health and the Agency of Education](#).

In each of Maple Run's schools and programs, we will expect students and staff to:

- *Stay home when they are sick. This means when they:*
 - Show symptoms of COVID-19;
 - Have a fever (temperature greater than 100.4 F): or
 - Are currently in quarantine due to close contact with an individual with COVID-19 or in isolation due to testing positive for COVID-19.
- *Wear masks when indoors.*
 - All the PreK – 8 schools will be wearing masks. This may change after the age of eligibility for vaccination changes, and we have over 80% of our students vaccinated.
 - We will all wear masks when we have large groups gathering indoors, regardless of the vaccinated status (i.e., open houses, whole school faculty meetings)
 - At BFA and NCTC, we will start schools with all individuals masked indoors for the first ten days, and once we have a student population vaccination rate of greater than 80%, we will re-evaluate our masking requirements.
- *Wear masks on buses.*
 - Federal regulation requires mask-wearing, similar to all public transportation.
- *Continue good hygiene practices by regular hand washing and use of hand sanitizer.*

Since June and the ending of the state of emergency in Vermont, the pandemic restrictions have loosened and quickly gave many of us a new sense of freedom from COVID. With the emergence of the Delta variant and the increased number of positive cases in Franklin County, it is essential to be cautious and prioritize the health and safety of our community.

That being said, there is much to celebrate since the beginning of last year's opening. Some of these are:

- In-school, in-person instruction five days a week.
- The start of fall co-curricular activities.
- The return of many of our routines, traditions, and customs at school.
- New, previously untried school procedures which have increased the ability to help all students access their learning.

We want to reach our vaccination goal of 80% or greater, but recognize some families may need the district's support. To help increase our vaccination status, I want to let all families know that we will be hosting a vaccination clinic at the St. Albans City School at 29 Bellow Street, St. Albans, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on September 1st and 22nd. Later next week, the principals of each school will be providing more details to students and families about our updated procedures. I know that all our staff members are excited to reconnect with your children.

This summer, it didn't take long for me to get used to not wearing a mask. However, I am happy to put it back on at all indoor activities to ensure the safety of our entire community, and to keep our schools open for five days of in-person instruction. Please join me in helping our students understand that by wearing masks now, we will protect our community. We are strong and resilient, and we are starting this year in a better place with fewer restrictions than we did last year at this time.

Once again, I am so excited to see our students back at school starting on Wednesday, August 25. I am hopeful that with the combined efforts of our entire community we will be able to overcome these restrictions as the school year progresses.

Sincerely,



Bill Kimball