

Mrs. Piper L. Bognar, Superintendent

August 16, 2021

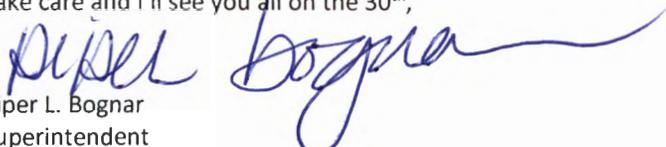
Dear Van Dyke Community:

In two short weeks, our new school year will begin for all K-12 students. This is an exciting time, although I know it's met with some trepidation due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis. I want to welcome you all back officially and give some long-awaited information about our protocols for returning face-to-face this fall. Please read these details carefully, and you'll also be able to look for more specifics from your child's individual school(s).

- We do plan to return fully face-to-face on **Monday, August 30, 2021**. We will have a half-day of school on that day. Times are posted on each school's website, and bus schedules will be posted soon. Please call your child's school if you have further questions about the starting date or time. Our offices will be fully staffed beginning next Monday, August 23 and you may also email staff before then.
- **Everyone in our district will be required to wear a mask** while indoors or on a school bus, per CDC and MDHHS guidance, regardless of vaccination status. Masks will be optional for outdoor activities. MDHHS specifically states that schools should:
  - Promote vaccination for eligible students, staff, and families.
  - Require universal masking for students, staff, and visitors regardless of community transmission rate or vaccination status.
  - Implement layered prevention measures.
- **Prevention measures** will include the following:
  - Class sizes will be smaller, with the intent of 20 per classroom in the elementary grades and 25 in the secondary grades' core classes. This will make social distancing more feasible and will allow for learning recovery and acceleration for all students.
  - A disposable/recyclable water bottle will be provided daily for each student. This will eliminate the need to use shared water fountains.
  - Cleaning and disinfecting of buildings will continue to follow COVID-safe protocols, and pre-moistened wipes will be available for students to use throughout the day if necessary (before lunch, etc.).
  - Disposable masks will be available for anyone who does not enter the building with their own mask.
  - Hand sanitizer will be in all offices and classrooms, as well as in hallway stations.
  - All staff members will do a self-check health screening daily.
  - *It is expected that all students **do a self-check health screening before leaving home each morning**. If students come to school with symptoms of COVID-19, they will be isolated until they are able to be transported home by a family member or emergency contact.*
  - Visitors will be very limited. If you do not have an appointment, you will not be able to enter the building without pre-approval by the principal or a designee of the Superintendent.
- For further reference, the newest versions of toolkits and guidance from the MDHHS and the Macomb County Health Department are on our website at [vdps.net](http://vdps.net) – District info – COVID 19.

I'm so looking forward to seeing everyone in person, safely, to continue our achievement as a school community. Over half of our district's students were enrolled in Summer School this year and saw great gains. We will proceed with caution, care, and compassion, most importantly giving each other grace as we navigate all that comes our way. We're in this together for the sake of our students' success.

Take care and I'll see you all on the 30<sup>th</sup>,

  
Piper L. Bognar  
Superintendent