



**West Valley School**  
**Above and Beyond**  
**The West Valley Way**

4/30/2020

Dear West Valley Families,

I hope you are all doing well as we continue with our new normal in dealing with Covid-19. As most of you know, Governor Bullock has opened up many of the businesses in Montana and declared schools could reopen on May 7. Local school boards will, and have made decisions already on how school will be delivered for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year. As of the writing of this letter, every school district in the Flathead area will remain with online learning for the rest of the school year. The decisions made by each individual school board are done with as much information as we can provide and with the understanding that the most important part of the decision is student, staff and family safety.

I have been a part of at least 15 meetings since the school closure directive with educators from across the state, as well as, local superintendents, health directors and other healthcare personnel. The NWMASS group, comprised of all the NW Montana Superintendents, 25 or more attending meetings, have discussed the best course of action for the school districts regarding the remainder of the school year. I can tell you that there isn't one of us that wanted to make the recommendation to our school boards to continue with remote learning for the remainder of the school year. While the Governor did allow districts to open on May 7, it came with very stringent guidelines that would be very difficult and, in many ways, less effective than staying with online learning.

**During a special board meeting on Tuesday, April 28, the West Valley School Board voted unanimously to continue with remote learning for the remainder of the school year.** We will continue to provide for West Valley families with the best online learning possible for the rest of the year. With parents beginning to go back to work, we understand the challenges of balancing work and helping your kids with their school work. We will be flexible and continue to help you in any way we can. We have staff who can help kids who are struggling with academics, as well as, social/emotional needs. Please continue to reach out to our staff for any assistance

you may need. It was a very tough decision for the school board to make and I want to thank them for putting the safety of students, staff and families first.

While we certainly don't know exactly what the future holds, we are starting to plan for the beginning of next school year. We are listening to national, state and local health departments and what they are saying about Covid-19 through the summer and into next year. The leading authority at the federal level, Dr. Fauci, believes there will be Coronavirus this fall. To what levels in each individual state, county, or area is not known. We will be keeping you informed about the rest of this school year and, as much as possible, what next school year will look like.

The students will be receiving lessons from their teachers through May 29. The days in June will be making sure all the kids are caught up with their work, giving extra help to those needing a little more one on one, collecting materials, and having families pick up any items left at school. Mrs. Blair and Mr. Gross will be working to set up schedules with their staff for the end of the year, for the families to pick up and drop off Chromebooks and other school items. Thanks for all your hard work and understanding during this trying time!

Take Care and Stay Well!

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