



*P.O. Box 10 - 333 G Street  
North Powder, OR 97867  
Phone 541-898-2244 FAX 541-898-2046*

July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Dear Parents, Community, Board Members and Students,

Once again the educational and governmental landscape is faced with an ever challenging and evolving landscape as we traverse the many concerns and frustrations that define the Covid - 19 Pandemic. As we have always done, North Powder School District will provide students with a high quality, safe education during the 2020-2021 school year, but that may not begin with the on-site plan that many staff, community members and the administration developed and put out a couple weeks ago. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and under the mandate of Governor Brown, all public and private schools will open this fall using one of the following learning environments:

- On-site/In-person
- Comprehensive Distance Learning
- Hybrid (combination of the two)

Our district's goal and highest priority is to hold on-site, in-person instruction on a consistent basis, while providing for and protecting the health and safety of students and staff.

**To hold in-person instruction**, our county and state must meet certain metrics established by Governor Brown that reflect COVID-19 rates of residents. Based on the first set of metrics presented by Gov. Brown, Union County, nor the state meets the criteria for offering in-person instruction at this time. If a county is close to meeting metrics and schools meet certain additional criteria, there may be exceptions that allow a school to hold on-site instruction.

With this new information from Gov. Brown and ODE in the last two days, North Powder administration and staff will continue to define, restructure and develop a rigorous online educational program, as well as be prepared to offer onsite learning that we are all accustomed to. The district will continue to invest resources to meet the learning needs of all our students regardless of the learning environment the school is in. In every learning environment, North Powder School District will:

- Continue to focus on student identity, belonging, care, connection, wellbeing, and mental, social and emotional health;
- Actively engage and nurture relationships with students, families and community;
- Center equity in all efforts with parents and caregivers;
- Provide high quality, well-rounded learning opportunities; and
- Encourage, support, and provide opportunities for active collaboration and communication between school leaders, teachers and all local staff.

If comprehensive distance learning is the fall opening model mandated, it will be a planned response and will look very different than it did in Spring 2020. North Powder students will have access to rigorous, standards-based, grade-level educational materials and interaction with a teacher skillfully guiding their educational experience. Attendance will be taken and grades earned in addition to other accountability measures families are accustomed to. Our staff learned a lot from the experience this past spring and as always stand prepared to do whatever it takes to be ready.

I know on-line is not a popular choice. However, if that is the direction mandated as school begins and your child is not on-line here, they will most likely be on-line elsewhere. I can only ask that you as parents and community members will continue to support the district and allow us to educate your children. Your decisions today will have a long lasting quality of education impact on the district that will still be felt even after

this pandemic is behind us. **Together we will succeed** and we will provide quality instruction in one manner or another.

Much could change between now and our opening dates. The district's Operational Blueprint will remain in place and promote on-site instruction when the situation allows. We will monitor health metrics and will continue to work closely with our families to collaborate around instructional models being considered. Depending on the model decisions concerning other issues such as meals, transportation and etcetera will have to be made..

We honor and value each opportunity to educate North Powder children. We will continue to advocate for metrics to appropriately represent and manage the COVID-19 risk for North Powder students and residents.

Please help us achieve our primary goal of holding on-site instruction for our students this school year by following the guidelines outlined by the Oregon Health Authority to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

Thank you for your support – the District Board of Directors, staff and administration are proud to represent public education in North Powder. We will continue to update you as we gain more insight and move closer to the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Please contact the district with questions, comments or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lance L. Dixon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lance" being more prominent than the last name "Dixon".

Lance L Dixon

Superintendent