

May 15, 2020

Dear students, staff, families and community,

I am pleased to announce that the Whatcom County Department of Health is seeking ways to increase access to COVID-19 testing in rural areas. May 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> they will use the MBHS parking lot as a testing site from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Individuals with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 are encouraged to schedule an appointment for testing (symptoms can include fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, diarrhea, and/or body aches). Appointments can be scheduled by calling 360-738-7654 and leaving a message with your name, symptoms, and a phone number where you can be reached. You will receive a return call to establish your appointment time. You are encouraged to share this with community members who might benefit from this service being provided in our area of the County.

There are 23 school days left this year with June 19<sup>th</sup> being our last day. I miss all of you as well as the activities, performances, celebrations, and energy that normally comes with the end of the school year. Together we will make our final days of the 2019-20 school year as special as possible and go out in Baker style.

It was fun to see seniors picking up their caps and gowns last Friday. Although the last day of school for seniors is June 12<sup>th</sup>, graduation is officially set for August 7<sup>th</sup>. The hope is we will have moved to phase 3 or 4 by that time giving us more options for the ceremony. A committee of student, parent, and staff representatives is planning for several different scenarios to fit all of the possible circumstances we may face in August. The final outcome will be based on the phase we are in as well as guidance from the Department of Health. We are extremely proud of the Class of 2020, and we will honor them.

There are many questions about the start of the school year. The fall of 2020 will probably not look like the fall of 2019. While we won't be able to go back to normal, we can go forward to a new normal. This is difficult and stressful because there are so many unknowns we have to plan for in the upcoming months. A taskforce at the state level is studying a continuum of options for considerations to give districts guidance in reopening. We are also researching, discussing, and planning at the district level. Change is often transformational, and I believe we have learned a great deal from this situation. We will continue to learn and grow to become even better at meeting the needs of students. Three positives that stand out to me are the flexibility, resilience, and compassion people have demonstrated. These are traits you can't learn from a textbook but are important life lessons we want our students to embrace.

Please visit our website for updates at [www.mtbaker.wednet.edu](http://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu). We love seeing comments on our Facebook page. If you have pictures or stories to share, please send them to [ktotten@mtbaker.wednet.edu](mailto:ktotten@mtbaker.wednet.edu).

I challenge all students to give this last 23 days their all and to have fun engaging with their teachers. If you are struggling with anything, please contact your student's teacher, counselor, or administrator. If you have questions that I can address, please email me at [msewright@mtbaker.wednet.edu](mailto:msewright@mtbaker.wednet.edu) or call me at 360-617-4600.

Take care of yourselves and each other. We are blessed to live in a proud, strong, and caring community. Go Baker!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Sewright". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "M".

Mary Sewright, Superintendent