



VALLEY PARK  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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for tomorrow*

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July 19, 2020

Dear Valley Park Families:

Every year we look forward to our Back-to-School activities as we prepare for another great year in the Valley Park School District. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, this school year will look, feel and be much different than previous years, but in the end what will always remain the same is our dedication to providing a supportive, personalized environment in which students will grow strong intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially today in preparation for tomorrow.

After months of meetings, and webinars, and with guidance from St. Louis County Department of Public Health we have taken the vital feedback we received from our parents and staff, and, as of today, plan to reopen schools for the 2020-2021 academic school year on August 24, 2020. While we believe it is important to provide information about our learning plans, it is equally important for us to express that the reopening plans shared tomorrow could change by the first day of school. On Friday, County Executive Sam Page asked for all school districts to offer access to remote learning and noted it may be necessary to revisit opening schools in the fall.

We understand that allowing your student to return to school or not is a difficult, personal, and individual family decision. We are living in hard times where each decision often comes with multiple corresponding challenges. We acknowledge that the coronavirus is still among us, and we are all taking it seriously and remain extremely concerned about it. As your superintendent I have spent many days and too many sleepless nights agonizing how to best care for each of you. I have frequently hoped for “easy decisions” only to find myself resigned to the fact they do not exist in the environment we are currently living in. I entered education and ultimately educational leadership to do the most amount of good for the most amount of people. I strive to be helpful and thoughtful of others needs and since March 13th have found myself frustrated at my inability to “do more” for our school district.

That being said, I am hopeful and confident that the re-entry framework we release on July 20th proves to be thoughtful, intentional and deliberately designed to do the most good for the most amount of people. It was designed with YOU in mind based on your feedback and the data and resources we have available to us. In reviewing the framework, keep in mind that we must all enter into a mindset of flexibility. Since March 13th we have had to adapt almost by the minute to ever changing conditions. Similarly, we will need to enter the 2020-21 school prepared to continually adapt, grow and change as our environment and world does the same. At times, the uncertainty will feel frustrating, but there is great comfort in knowing as a community that the more we collaborate, communicate, and care for each other, the stronger we will be. I caution that what is



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released on Monday may likely change between now and August 24th, there are simply too many variables and unknowns, but this represents our best thinking right now.

The framework we are presenting provides flexibility and options for students and families. Parents will have a choice of in-person and virtual learning pathways. For those sending your student to in person learning at school, we will do our very best to serve you and to provide reasonable health and safety modifications to make learning an engaging, empowering, and safe environment. We also have created contingency plans (3 Phases) for in-person learning that will be driven by metrics provided by the St. Louis County Public Health Department and factors specific to our school district. For parents who choose to keep your student at home and learn virtually, we will do our very best to serve you with high quality programs and curriculum to meet the needs of each student. No plan will be perfect, but it will be purposeful. At times it will be messy, but we will learn and grow from each experience.

Please take the time to read our re-entry framework when it is released on Monday. Inside you will learn more about the health and wellness protocols we will implement, review information about what each learning pathway entails, and view our contingency plans should the rate of coronavirus outbreaks continue to rise, so you can make the best choice for your family.

We are also in the process of creating an FAQs sheet for families to provide more information to help you make an informed decision. The framework itself is not “all-inclusive.” It is designed to give you the big picture of what school will look and feel like in 2020. Many items are in the process of being operationalized and the framework will continue to evolve. After you review the plan and discuss it with your family, please feel free to reach out to the contact people identified as leaders of the framework’s components. Or, you may submit your questions to [vpquestions@vp.k12.mo.us](mailto:vpquestions@vp.k12.mo.us) and we will continue to add them to our FAQ page as time and information allows.

As we have all learned in dealing with this pandemic since March, things change quickly. As they do, we pledge to be responsive to the needs of our learning community and adjust as necessary. Your patience, understanding and trust are invaluable to us. Everyday we are presented with new challenges, given the opportunity to grow and learn something new, and together WE ARE VALLEY PARK STRONG!

Be well. Be Kind. Stay safe. With great appreciation.

*Dr. Tim Dily*  
Superintendent