



VALLEY PARK  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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November 20, 2020

Dear Valley Park Families,

As the Thanksgiving holiday quickly approaches, I want to extend my gratitude for the grace, understanding, and flexibility that every member of our community has demonstrated as we respond to COVID-19. The pandemic has challenged and stretched our school community in ways never seen before, and I am proud of how we have responded.

I want to extend a special appreciation to all the Valley Park teachers. These past few months have been hard. You and your colleagues have had to transition from your “normal” teaching practice to distance learning, setting up new lesson plans, devising and recording instructional videos, preparing materials, and finding new ways to check-in on and connect with your students. You were then challenged with the idea of teaching students in-person with increased safety measures, several unknowns, and tasked with instructing remotely for quarantined students at the same time, and you have done this while navigating the uncertainty of the pandemic and juggling the effects of COVID-19 on your family and personal lives.

I am not surprised by the innovation, creativity, brilliance, sensitivity, and care our teachers have repeatedly demonstrated during this crisis. Education may look different right now, but the commitment and care that our Valley Park educators provide students and families is a consistent part of our school system. Please accept my sincere gratitude and acknowledgment of your hard work, initiative, and flexibility. I know that this situation has not been easy. But in circumstances none of us would have chosen, you continue to rise above. You consistently come up with creative ways to deliver content, but more importantly, you always come up with deliberate acts to make sure your students know they are loved, seen, and valued. I am impressed by your ingenuity, resilience, passion, and strength as we have navigated unprecedented challenges over the past few months. Now more than ever, I am proud to be an educator and grateful to have such wonderful colleagues in all of you.

Parents, it is always true that you are your child’s first teacher – and the most essential teacher throughout their lifetime. Thank you for stepping up to support your child’s education in a whole new way this school year. Thank you for the grace and patience you have shown our staff. While there have been many challenges and likely many more still to come, I am grateful for your efforts and kindness.

As we prepare for Thanksgiving, I want to remind every student, staff, and family member to be mindful of the importance of wearing a mask, washing your hands, and following social distancing guidelines. We’re all anxious to put the pandemic behind us, and we can get to the finish line as quickly as possible by remaining vigilant in our practices. Our intentional actions over the next several weeks will ultimately determine our ability to keep our schools open and our community healthy and safe.

Thank you to everyone in the Valley Park community from the bottom of my heart for all you’ve done during this most unusual school year to continue to educate students socially, emotionally, and academically today in preparation for tomorrow.

Our community is always uppermost in my mind and heart. I wish you a restful weekend.

*Dr. Tim Dilg*  
Superintendent



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## IMPORTANT UPDATES

### LEARNING PATHWAY SELECTION SECOND SEMESTER

Registration is now open for families wanting to enroll their students in virtual learning for the 2nd semester. If you choose this learning pathway for the 2nd semester, you are committing to virtual instruction from January 19, 2021, to May 27, 2021. Please complete the survey by **December 9th** for each student in your family you would like to enroll in virtual learning. You must *only complete this survey if you are enrolling your student in one of our virtual learning pathways*.

Virtual Learning Registration 2nd Semester: <https://tinyurl.com/VPVirtualJan-May>

Information on Valley Park school District Pathways to Learning: <https://tinyurl.com/VPvirtual>

### NOVEMBER 25th FOOD SERVICE

The district will offer **FREE** curbside meal service on Wednesday, November 25 from 10:30-Noon for families who register in advance. Families that register will receive 6 total meals for each student 18 and under. 3 breakfast meals and 3 lunches for Wednesday-Friday. Meals will be distributed outside the Field House. To register, please visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/VPThanksMeals>

### ST. LOUIS COUNTY RECOMMENDATION THANKSGIVING TRAVEL

St. Louis County released new recommendations regarding travel and large gatherings, which state: "If you have participated in a gathering such as a wedding, a party or a funeral, or if you have traveled to see others, it is our strong recommendation that you immediately self-quarantine for 14 days." [St. Louis County Recommendations](#)

### THANKSGIVING BREAK

All Valley Park School District schools will be closed from **Nov. 25–27** in observance of Thanksgiving. Normal hours of operation resume on Monday, November 30th

### REPORTING ABSENCES

The Valley Park School District is following the [Washington University School-based guidance for student absences](#).

- If a student has one low-risk symptom and no known exposures to a person with COVID-19, they must stay home until they are symptom-free for 24 hours. **Low-risk symptoms** include congestion/runny nose, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, sore throat, headache, body aches, and fever (greater than 100.4)
- If a student has two or more low-risk symptoms, OR one or more high-risk symptoms, and has not had any known COVID-19 exposure, they should stay home (or will be sent home from school) and must-see their doctor or receive documentation from [St. Louis County that they are COVID negative before returning](#). **High-risk symptoms** include cough, difficulty breathing, and loss of taste or smell. If the student or staff member tests negative for COVID-19 OR the physician determines symptoms are non-COVID related, then they may return to school 24 hours after symptoms improve.

### SPORTS GUIDELINES:

St. Louis County Department of Health (DOH) revised their youth sports guidelines and face-covering guidelines effective November 18th. The biggest changes include that athletes must wear a face covering while playing or practicing a sport indoors even while physically exerting themselves and that due to ongoing widespread community transmission of COVID-19, it is recommended that persons who are not essential for athletic activity operations including spectators, volunteers, parents/guardians, or non-essential visitors, not be allowed. Competitions are still allowed at this point, but tournaments are not permitted. For winter sports events taking place at any St. Louis County public school, no



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spectators will be allowed at any events and facemasks must be worn at all times by coaches and players during practices and games. These guidelines will be revisited once St. Louis County revises their Safer at Home guidelines. District Activities Director, Adam Hamilton made it possible for all games to be viewed online at [www.vp.k12.mo.us/vpactivities](http://www.vp.k12.mo.us/vpactivities).