

## **Mount Vernon Community School District Families and Community Members:**

So what's next?! A swarm of locusts descending upon us?! Please know I am thinking of all of you and wishing you the best as you work through the latest challenges thrown at our area with the aftermath of the storm from last week. If we can be of assistance to you in any way, please let us know. The Mount Vernon Community School District School Board held its regular monthly meeting last night, a meeting that had originally been scheduled for August 10<sup>th</sup>. During the meeting, we discussed the latest issues impacting the start of the school year due to the continued impact of COVID-19 and the storm. Here is a summary of key items discussed, along with items you need to know for the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year:

**New start date for school:** School will now begin on **Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup>** on the hybrid schedule. The 31<sup>st</sup> will be an "A" day, and the 1<sup>st</sup> a "B" day. Both days will be early release days with dismissal at 1:05 p.m. Teachers lost an entire week of critical planning time last week, and families need additional time to deal with the aftermath of the storm. The school buildings escaped largely unscathed, the power is back on, but time is still needed to clean up debris from the campus and to ensure all critical systems are in working order. The remainder of the school calendar will remain the same.

**Building Meetings:** The building meetings that we originally scheduled for last week will now be held as one meeting on Thursday, August 20<sup>st</sup>, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Each principal will spend 20-30 minutes providing building-specific information regarding the beginning of the school year, and we will also take time to answer questions that we did not get to in the town hall meeting of a few weeks ago. This meeting will be a virtual meeting via YouTube Live. The link for the meeting will be sent out later this week.

The respective buildings will host a few back to school events at the following times:

Washington Elementary Supply Drop-Off and Meet the Teacher Event: The event will take place during the day on Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup>. Washington Elementary will send out a schedule prior to the event.

Mount Vernon Middle School 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Meet and Greet and locker set-up: The event will take place during the day on Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup>. Mount Vernon Middle School will send out a schedule prior to the event.

Mount Vernon High School Freshman Orientation: The event will take place on Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Students will report to the Performing Arts Center.

**Survey Information Needed:** The most critical information needed at this time is your choice of learning models for your children. In the survey sent out to you earlier this month you were asked to identify if your children would be attending school in the hybrid model, would be learning from home via the District-provided remote learning option through a third party provider, or would be Homeschooled by you. The survey also had questions regarding technology and food service issues. If you cannot find that survey, please let us know so that we can send it to you again or contact you to get this information. It is important we have this information for all students so that we may finalize the A and B groups, and share information with those choosing the remote learning option. We need this information by the end of the day on Wednesday, August 19<sup>th</sup>, if at all possible.

**A and B Day Groupings:** The A and B day groupings will be shared with you by the end of the day on Friday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Remote Learning Information:** The District has changed the third party vendor for students in grades K-5 from Edgenuity to Edmentum. The products are very similar in nature, and are of the same quality. The people at Edgenuity could not guarantee that its product could be provided to us by the beginning of the school year, and could not promise we would have access to the most academically robust features of the program. Edmentum will be ready to go for the start of the school year, and we will have access to all elements of its program. Apex will remain the option for grades 6-12.

**Registration:** E-Registration continues online, and we ask that you complete this process as soon as possible. If you lack reliable internet access, you may contact Amy Weber at 319-895-8845 to set up a time to come to the District Office to complete the process.

**Child Care:** As was shared earlier, the District only has capacity to provide child care for its employees, for some preschool students, and for students who are eligible for services through the Department of Human Services. We regret that we are not able to offer this to all families in need, and we will continue to seek out resources to assist you in this matter.

**Technology Update:** Washington Elementary will provide pick-up of devices for students who are learning remotely on Thursday, August 27<sup>th</sup>. Directions and a sign-up sheet will be sent out by the school to all remote learning families. Pick-up for middle and high school students who are learning remotely will take place on August 31<sup>st</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup> between 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. Further details will be sent out in advance of those pick-up days.

**Extracurricular Activities Update:** Fall practices began last week for football, volleyball, and cross country with new guidelines in place with regard to the wearing of face coverings and maintaining social distancing as much as possible. The coaches have done a good job of implementing new practice protocols, and student athletes have been responsive to the changes. The activities are following all guidelines put forth by state and national organizations governing these activities, as well as additional guidelines developed by the District. The District is also finalizing guidelines for attendance at competitions and events that will include social distancing, the mandatory wearing of face coverings, and limited attendance. Final plans for attendance at the first events of the year will be shared with the School Board later this week.

I will continue to provide periodic updates the next several weeks as we get rolling with the 2020-2021 school year. Thanks again for your patience and understanding as we work through these unprecedented challenges. Our team is strong, our community is strong, and we will thrive despite the challenges!