



RINGGOLD SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

During the past weeks we have continued to watch the changing, and sometimes competing, guidance from local and state agencies. As a District, we have remained committed to providing the students of Ringgold the best education possible and we believe that the optimal conditions for learning occur when students are physically in our schools, and being taught by our teachers, who are in our schools.

I realize that the pandemic creates levels of uncertainty, hesitancy and frustration that are unprecedented. I also realize that during these times, our students continue to need the stability and certainty that Ringgold schools provide. Be assured, the decision to keep schools open is not one that has been done without great consideration. In fact, the decision has been centered squarely on the physical, emotional, social and intellectual health of our children, staff and community.

Today, however, we have received information that Washington County's "incident rate per thousand" and "PCR percentage" has placed our District in the state's definition of "substantial". Since the onset of the pandemic, we have been committed to continuing to follow the state guidance and we are continuing to do so. That guidance for schools who are in counties where the level of the transmission rate is deemed to be 'substantial' is that students will transition to a full remote model of learning for a two week period of time. As such, the Ringgold School District will be transitioning, effective Monday, November 23, 2020 to a full remote model and students will learn from home for two calendar weeks. The return date for students will be Monday, December 7, 2020.

We recognize that this decision will be met with varied responses from our students and families, which we understand. Be assured, our first and foremost priority is the safety of students and staff and to that end we will continue to follow the guidance of our state and local officials and experts upon which they rely to provide advice to schools and communities. We are so grateful and fortunate that our students have had the opportunity to benefit from 11 weeks of 5 day per week, in person instruction and we look forward to seeing them back in our schools shortly.

In the interim, even though our students will be learning in a virtual/live (synchronous live teaching) environment, our staff who will continue to work from our facilities. The District has spent considerable time, money and effort in creating a robust infrastructure of facilities, technology and personnel support that cannot be matched in our personal homes. Without a doubt, the resources available to teachers in schools is bountiful and includes items such as: our labs/chemicals, our principal instructional support, internet resources, additional and replacement technology when needed, technology support, teacher materials, manipulatives, projectors, elmo's, etc. We have continued our dedication to mitigation procedures and efforts, and our schools are safe places in which our teachers and staff can continue to work.

~ Preparing students today for the challenges of tomorrow ~

In addition to and beyond the aforementioned, the physical presence of our staff in our schools and delivery of instruction that occurs in our schools and from our actual classrooms provides a sense of continued consistency and connection between our students and their school buildings and systems. Continuing to provide that consistency and connection can provide social emotional benefits for students that may not be readily apparent and may not present themselves in the immediate. Indeed, in the changing world we live in, our schools (and all of the employees who work within them) provide a continued presence that is essential and is a strong support for our children and community.

As always, I thank each of you for your continued support. While these are challenging times unlike any we have experienced in the recent past, I am confident that our Ringgold Family will work together to emerge even stronger than before.

On behalf of the Ringgold family, we wish each of you and yours a Happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Randall Skrinjorich

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Acting Superintendent