

August 1st, 2020

Dear Boquet Valley Families:

The approaching end of the summer is always surprising, wondering how all of that time could have passed by so quickly. This year, in particular, likely has an added set of emotions surrounding the uncertainty of the COVID-19 Pandemic and how that will translate to the health and safety of the staff and students of Boquet Valley Central School. Additionally, we have developed a reopening plan that addresses the academic program as well as our facilities, child nutrition, transportation, social emotional well-being, and athletics and extracurricular activities. The full plan can be found on our website at www.boquetvalleycsd.org.

Public education in New York State has been hundreds of years in the making. To expect any district to produce a perfect plan over the course of a few weeks this summer is not realistic. I stand behind our plan and am grateful for those who volunteered their time to assist in the development. As we move through the school year, we will discover the aspects of the plan that are less than perfect. We will adjust the plan and continue to move forward.

As parents, you have likely given a good deal of thought to the reopening of school, how it will affect your family and what is the best decision for your child. Some parents will decide to send their students to school for our hybrid model, some will decide on a remote instruction option, some will have the need for a full in-person model, and others may choose to part ways with the district in favor of a home schooling model. Whatever you choose, understand that we, at Boquet Valley Central School District, recognize that this was not an easy decision. All of our students and families have different needs and we will support you to the best of our ability. Please contact the district if you have questions or concerns.

Many of the requirements in our plan came in the form of unfunded mandates, meaning that we will need to pull money from some areas of our budget to pay for these new requirements. Some of these changes may be inconvenient. For that I apologize. I assure you that none of these decisions were made in haste, but rather after a great deal of analysis and discussion.

To that end, you will notice some significant changes to our standard operating procedure. We are asking that any parent that can transport their child to and/or from school to please consider doing so. Any additional space on the buses will allow us to more appropriately physically distance our students from one another. Our opening schedule is very different. Not all students will report to school every day. **Please complete the enclosed form addressing transportation and your request for student placement (In-Person, Remote, or Hybrid) and return it to the school by August 15th.** Any forms that are not returned will default to the Hybrid Model.

Parents are required to perform a brief health screening and temperature check every morning before sending their child to the bus or to school. By sending their child(ren), parents will be attesting that the health screening and temperature checks were appropriately completed as per the reopening plan. We are expecting that if we need to close a school building or the entire district, that it will happen quickly. Some of these closures may be only 24 hours, while other may be much longer. We are asking that students plan for this when leaving school each afternoon.

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We are striving to be as flexible as we can be with our students and our families during these unusual circumstances. Any flexibility that families have demonstrated and that they can continue to demonstrate as we move through the school year is appreciated. Our schedule is very different from what we have done in the previous years. In an effort to ensure that our protocols and procedures can be implemented with fidelity, and that we can initially limit the number of students on either campus at one time, we are implementing an age-appropriate schedule for each campus. The schedule will be evaluated every 5 weeks to determine if any adjustments are needed.

New school years are exciting and 2020-21 is no different in that regard. This particular year does come with several other emotions as well. Please have open conversations with your children about their concerns. Be patient with other families as they are trying to decide what is best for them and their situation. Be patient with teachers and other school employees as they are trying to manage these unprecedented time. I commend all of our students, parents, employees, and other school community members for all the thought that you have given to the reopening of the school district and how it will affect you and your family. This year will be full of difficult decisions, and both major and minor adjustments to our protocols and procedures. I appreciate the opportunity to serve this school district and wish all of you the best of health as we navigate our way through it.

Sincerely,

Joshua R. Meyer
Superintendent of Schools