

June 29, 2021

Greetings Lincoln Educational Stakeholders:

Fans of Harry Potter will instantly recognize the phrase "He who must not be named" referring to Harry's arch nemesis, Voldemort. I'm not sure about all of you, but I feel like the words, "pandemic", "covid", "new normal" and "social distancing" are now words and phrases that should fall into the category of "those words that must not be named". Maybe not quite yet as we are just putting the pandemic in the rear view mirror, but I am very hopeful for the future! If I am honest, I would also be totally okay with never hearing the words "new normal" "virus variant", "contact tracing" or "you're on mute" any time soon either! This past year, our students, parents/guardians and teachers spent a year like no other learning a lot about how strong we are, how we can adapt, a bit about our weaknesses and a whole bunch about our resolve to give our kids in Lincoln the best education we can even in the face of a global pandemic. A special "thank you" needs to be said not only to our teachers and administrators, but also to our parents/guardians for helping us get through this year. Your patience, understanding and most of all, trust was so very appreciated as we navigated this new territory. Your words of encouragement and kind emails were so well received on those days when we were fighting to keep our schools and district afloat. We could not have done all of the planning and execution without the help of our covid reentry task force, our town officials, EMA Director Sean Thompson, and of course, Lincoln's own, Dr. Phil Chan from RIDOH. It was a team effort and our collective success should be celebrated.

Even while dealing with the massive barriers and obstacles that covid (whoops...I just said it) presented, our district continued to collaboratively work on high quality curriculum, Vision Of a Graduate, district technology initiatives, rolling out new websites, K-12 Lincoln Lion Learner objectives and finalizing a high school construction/renovation project. This was done on days when we had between 80 and 100 staff members out across the district. With teachers and staff being affected by covid and having to take care of family members, everyone's spirit and mettle was tested. But we did it. We made it, and we should be proud! Our teachers and administrators carried on this work while they were teaching online and in-person, being stressed about the virus or sick family members, and just generally being worried about the future like many of us. As parents/guardians, I am sure you all felt the same stressors as you navigated your own personal lives while helping those that are close to you. Last year was difficult and the effects will linger for a while, but we are a stronger district and stronger individuals for having gone through it together.

This summer will be shorter than others and before we know it, we will be planning for our comeback. Please be safe, but more importantly, please take some time to do the things you missed last summer and make some memories. In the next few days, the Governor's office will be sending districts the reopening recommendations which we will address with our reopening task force in the upcoming weeks to plan for the opening for all of our schools in the Fall.

We are excited for next year! Our high school renovation project will be completed and we will be planning for a grand re-opening. Our administrators will be trained on utilizing our newly redesigned school and district websites for faster communication to all parents. This will be done by leveraging various social media platforms which populate directly to our websites and vice versa. Our work on high quality curriculum will continue across the district to address learning loss and higher academic standards. Specifically, we will be implementing this high quality curriculum for English Language Arts in grades K-12 beginning in September. We are excited about the implementation and look forward to seeing what our students produce! To support the K-12 Vision of Lincoln Lion Learner, we are focusing on developing the skills of our students across all grade levels. We are also planning for future capital endeavors which include upgrades at all of our elementary schools as well as continued planning for a Physical Education Center on the LHS campus.

Thank you again for being such a supportive community for our Lincoln Lion Learners, our teachers, administrators and staff members. We look forward to welcoming your children back at the start of school!

Have a happy and safe Fourth of July!

Sincerely,

Dr. Filippelli

Superintendent of Schools