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Ypsilanti Community Schools Family:

Thank you for your ongoing support of our school district. Your resilience and ability to pivot and partner with us when changing our instruction to remote learning at a moment's notice has been a challenge, but with a dedicated staff and the support of families, we have been able to adjust and provide a collaborative learning environment that emphasizes our value of being "Stronger Together".

Fall Planning

With just two short weeks left in the school year, we have turned our attention to what education in our district will look like for the 2020-2021 school year.

While we continue to hope that face-to-face learning, five days a week, will be possible for the fall, it is prudent for us to plan for multiple alternatives as directed by our public health officials and the Governor's office. Our goal in this planning is to make sure we can meet the educational and safety needs of all of our students and staff and we want to ensure that we include your voice in this process.

We have been collaborating and convening internally as the 20-21 task force has been meeting weekly. This group is made up of educators from each building and administrators who have a shared goal of identifying the challenges and opportunities we face as we prepare for the next school year. This group is innovative and creative and has been sharing ideas that will allow us to offer safe, flexible, and robust educational options.

As you are aware, this pandemic is a public health crisis and our status when we begin in the fall will be guided by direction from the Governor's office and our public health officials. We are unable to make specific predictions about what our course of action will be for the district at this time. Instead, like other districts across our nation, we will prepare to implement several different scenarios with varying timelines and contingencies. The scenarios that we are currently considering range from coming back full-time face-to-face, a blended model which includes a combination of face-to-face and remote learning, and an all remote learning model.

This planning process includes a "go slow to go fast model" that we embrace as a district and includes a process to incorporate the voices of students, staff, and our community stakeholders' to guide our decisions. Our goal is to make sound, comprehensive decisions in the best interest of **our** students, which may mean the decisions seem delayed. Your patience and understanding is appreciated.

There are many considerations within each of the scenarios listed above that need your input. Our committees and task force groups are utilizing the MI-Excel Blueprint system of meetings and planning tools to address questions, prioritize work, develop innovative methods of providing high-quality instruction, and finally to create action steps.

Stronger Together



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Survey

You will be included in multiple ways, the first is a survey. This survey is designed to gather your specific family/staff preferences to guide our planning process. The enrollment survey is for family input. The staff survey is for current YCS employees' input. Please take a moment to share your thoughts and needs by clicking on the appropriate link below:

[Enrollment Survey](#)

[Staff Survey](#)

Once we have gathered your feedback, we will incorporate it into our plans and invite you to a virtual presentation to learn more and be able to ask questions and provide suggestions. This will be a collaborative effort as we work toward our goal of meeting the educational and safety needs of all of our students and staff. Please continue to look for our updates as we continue to intentionally plan for the 20-21 school year.

Budget

You may have been reading or hearing about the shortfall in the State's budget due to COVID related factors. The School Aid Fund relies heavily on sales and income tax revenue, which has seen a sharp decline because of our current situation. Thus funding to schools is projected to decrease sharply, as well. This affects schools because our funding comes from the School Aid Fund.

After the Revenue Consensus meeting, it was shared that we can expect a cut of around \$700 per pupil. For YCS, that translates to a \$2.5 million loss. While challenging, please know we are exploring a wide range of solutions to solve this budget problem while protecting our programming for students. We expect to hear more about how the State will solve this budget problem and are hopeful that cutting funding to schools will be eliminated from any solution.

Graduation

The high school administration has been meeting virtually with our seniors and has also shared a survey. The response of our seniors was that they overwhelmingly prefer a face-to-face graduation ceremony in August. Last week, seniors were able to participate in a drive-thru pick up of their caps and gowns, t-shirt, personalized yard sign, and yearbooks. Moving forward, we will keep this choice (Face-to-Face graduation ceremony) as the primary target while taking into consideration that if new information concerning public health concerns is provided that removes this option as a possibility, we will enact plan B for an alternate graduation ceremony for our seniors. Additional information will be shared regarding the detailed plans as they are finalized.

Personal Belongings

Our operations department and building administrators have been working together to create a process for staff and families to collect personal belongings from the schools. This will be done in a curbside fashion, similar to how the device, food delivery, and cap and gown distribution has been coordinated. We have identified the first few weeks of June for pick up. You can expect to hear from the building administrators with specific dates and times and other details included in the process.

Food Service



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We are excited to announce that we are still serving more than 30,000 meals per week. We are proud to continue to provide students with this necessary nourishment during these times, even though we can't wait to see their smiling faces inside our building. Food Distribution will continue until June 25, and then we will transition to our annual Meet Up Eat Program.

We are proud to announce a new partnership is with the Heeren USDA Farmers to Family Food Box Program. The program will begin this Tuesday, May 26, at the Willow Run Middle School campus from 12-2 pm. This program will run weekly, every Tuesday, until the end of June 2020. 200 boxes of fresh produce will be distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis to our YCS families!

Communications

As we approach the end of the 2019-2020 school year, although we had a bump in the road, we are grateful that we have endured and have arrived close to the finish line. Remember, the last day of school is Friday, June 12, 2020.

YPSI Live

Please note that FREE Internet services are still available for families who need reliable internet services in their homes. If families need Tech Support, please email techsupport@ycschools.us. or call our YCS hotline at 734-221-1061.

COVID-19 Testing

Free COVID testing sites are also now available at two YCS schools--Ford Early Learning Center and Perry Early Learning Center through the Washtenaw County Health Department. If you have COVID related questions, please call 734-302-2606.

We will continue to utilize the data and guidance from our health officials, learn from what other states and countries are doing to provide safe and equitable environments for students and staff and collaborate to provide strong educational opportunities in whatever format is necessary. We are dedicated to this work and capable of this challenge. Go Grizzlies!

Thank you for your support and remember we are "Stronger Together"!

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Superintendent of Schools