

Dear FUSD Parents and Guardians,

I know that all of us are anxious and wondering about the quickly approaching start of the 20-21 school year. We really appreciate your patience, flexibility, and support as we work through this very difficult and ever changing situation with new directions, protocols, and guidance coming out almost daily.

As a school district within a county currently on the "watch list", it is now mandated by the Governor as of Friday, July 17, that FUSD begin the school year in distance learning for the elementary and middle schools. This was also the unanimous direction given to me by the Board last Thursday night due to the current health and safety conditions. Any school in a "watch list" county will have to be off the watch list for 14 days before we can consider having students and staff return to in person classes. This means that we will continue to monitor conditions, receive additional feedback/info from the county and State, work with all of you, and calibrate with our neighbors in order to be ready to reopen via distance learning as smoothly as possible as well as eventually transition to in person classes when we get the clearance from the state and county.

We know that beginning the school year and instruction through distance learning will be difficult and contrasts our desire to work directly with our students within the reality of a national pandemic. We expected a three-week closure in March, which morphed into an extended departure of normalcy beyond any initial projections. We agree with many who expect a different level of preparation and outcomes for the fall. We are working with our Reopening Team, our teachers, and staff to improve the distance

learning experience for everyone involved. This will include professional development that focuses on distance learning, our new social/emotional program, and other identified needs of teachers and classified staff.

We will be reaching out to families so that students have what they need, including devices and hotspots, to get them all off to a good start. We are scheduling parent meetings to make sure that we share our plans, answer questions, and report all other important information to make sure you know our expectations for your students but also make sure you are supported and ready to go. Additionally, I am going to continue to send out regular communication to parents/guardians, even if it is to say that there is no new news, so that you are not left feeling out of the information loop.

Thank you to those of you who completed the parent survey. This information will be retained and will guide us when we can open in the future. No further action is required at this point. Distance learning/Independent Study options will continue to be available when our school physically reopens, if your family/student needs that.

On behalf of our Board of Education, I would like to thank everyone for your support during this confusing and frustrating time.

Be well,

Renee Semik
Superintendent/Principal
Forestville Union School District