Dear Parents,

We will be starting in-person schooling on August 17! It is our hope that we can keep the school open all year. However, we acknowledge that we may be required to close school for a time if the situation warrants that action. There are many challenges to in-person schooling with COVID-19. If all of us involved (staff, students, parents) do our best to keep ourselves and others safe, we can minimize the chance of having to close school. Please help us in this effort!

Here are some reminders and information as we begin in-person schooling:

* If your child is sick, please do not send them to school.
* If your child has been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, please don’t send them to school until it has been determined how many days they need to stay home.
* Masks are an important part of our safety plan. Practice and discuss with your child the importance of wearing a mask. Masks will be worn on buses, during entry and exit of the school, when social distancing is not possible, and any time students are moving around the school. Masks may be removed if there is proper social distancing in the classroom, on the playground and during lunch.
* Please keep your visits to the school for emergencies only. If you must come on campus, you will be required to wear a mask.
* There is a parent acknowledgement and disclosure form that must be signed by all families. I will post one on the school website. Please make yourself aware of the guidance this form provides in supporting safety for our students and staff.
* The protocols we will follow if a student or staff member contracts COVID-19 will be guided by our County Health officials. Obviously, a student or staff member who contracts COVID-19 will be required to stay home. Contact tracing will determine who else needs to stay at home. Each situation will be different, but adhering to social distancing and wearing a mask will lower your risk of being sent home.
* Any student who is required to stay home due to COVID-19 will still be able to complete their work through our online instructional delivery. As long as they complete the assigned tasks, they will not be counted absent. In addition, if you feel it is unsafe to send your child to school, they can continue the remote learning from home. Students who are sent home for a period of time may return to school when their time is up. Those students who stay at home and participate remotely by their choice may only return at the beginning of each quarter.

This has been a difficult time for our community since the start of school closure following spring break. I am excited to get our students back to some sense of normalcy even though the way we must run our school has changed. Although we are returning to school, we need to understand we are not through with this Pandemic. Weekly and sometimes daily changes have been the norm for some time now. The best way for us to communicate with parents is through our two facebook pages and on the District Website. If there is any information that needs to be sent to our families, it will be posted there first.

Thank you for your support of our school. I look forward to seeing the students on Monday!

D. Eldon Merrell

Superintendent, Duncan Schools