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ONEIDA SCHOOL DISTRICT #351  
195 S. 300 E.  
Malad, ID 83252

August 18, 2020

Re: Back to School Questions

Dear Parents,

As we prepare our children to return to school, it is important to help minimize the stress and fear of returning. I encourage you to take the time to visit with your child and answer any questions they might have regarding their return. Teachers and staff have received training and worked hard to put safety protocols in the school and classroom. These practices will help to safely re-open schools. Along with the additional safety steps, the district has also hired additional cleaners to work during school hours to clean and sanitize areas of the school.

Having your child at school is important for both academic and social/emotional development. It offers structure, routines, and positive social relationships. In our small school settings, teachers, staff, and administration provide a safe, supportive, and supervised space for our children. Given that a child has no “high risk” conditions, **we feel that the brick and mortar setting offers the best educational opportunity for our children**. If your child has any doubts or hesitations about returning to school, please reach out to our counselors. They can work with you to minimize apprehensions.

Here are some facts about COVID-19, which you may want to share with your family.

- **Masks: Should masks be required or not?**
  - At this time, the School Board has not mandated but **recommends wearing masks**.
  - More and more research has shown that wearing masks prevents the spread of COVID-19. When we breathe, speak, cough, or sneeze, small droplets of fluid leave our mouth and nose. These droplets carry the COVID-19 virus away from the body. Masks help trap the droplets or prevent them from traveling as far as they would otherwise.
  - There are medical exceptions for wearing a mask.
- **Busses:**
  - Students will be expected (not required) to wear masks
  - Social distancing will be accommodated to the best of our abilities.
  - Hand sanitizer will be available on every bus.
  - Buses will be disinfected after every load.
  - Routes will run as normal.
- **What else can I do to minimize risk:**
  - Social distancing and careful handwashing are some of the most effective methods of reducing the spread.
- **What do I do if my child has symptoms:**
  - It is important to check your child for symptoms before sending them to school.
  - If your child shows COVID-19 symptoms, we strongly encourage you to contact local health facilities.
  - If your child is tested positive for COVID-19, we ask you to contact the school immediately.
- **What happens if my child or someone at the school comes down with COVID-19:**
  - To date, school-aged children and adolescents are less likely to have symptoms or become seriously ill from COVID-19, but they can become very ill.
  - If your child has a confirmed case of COVID-19, they will have to **stay at home for at least ten days**.

- They can continue to access their classroom online during that time.
- If there is a confirmed case at school, students will be asked to wear a mask for three days following that potential exposure. This is to minimize the risk of possible spread during the incubation time.

**There may be a setting or situation where students are asked to wear a mask for their safety and others.** How can you help your child feel more comfortable wearing a mask? Here are some tips:

- Explain the need for wearing a mask.
- Make mask-wearing fun. Let your child participate in choosing, making, or decorating their mask.
- Let your child see you wear your mask.
- Maintain a positive attitude around mask-wearing.
- Make sure the mask fits well. It should cover the nose and mouth and not be too loose or tight.
- Remember to wash the mask after each day's use.

If you have any questions regarding safety and health protocols at your school, please contact your secretary or administrator for answers. We are excited to open our doors again! We are looking forward to a happy and successful school year

Sincerely

Rich Moore

Superintendent

Oneida School District #351