

Marcellus Community Schools

305 W. ARBOR STREET • P.O. BOX 48
MARCELLUS, MICHIGAN 49067



Phone: 269-646-7655
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July 13, 2020

Dear Wildcat Families,

Recently, Michigan school districts received important state guidance that must be used in planning for the 2020-21 return to school. The guidance, including the Governor's Return to School Roadmap and Executive Order 2020-142, requires schools to design a compliant return to learning plan, with specific safety requirements and recommendations dependent upon which phase we find ourselves.

The Roadmap provides four options, dependent upon the MI Safe Start Phase we are in:

- Phase 1-3- School buildings are closed to in-person instruction: instruction is provided remotely.
- Phase 4- Schools open with in person instruction permitted and "more stringent" safety requirements (we are currently in this phase).
- Phase 5 - In person instruction permitted with "moderate" safety protocols.
- Phase 6- In person instruction with minimal safety protocols required (post-pandemic).

Over the last two weeks, the district has been poring over Roadmap requirements and recommendations in order to design safe and quality return to learning plans. Critical to our preliminary planning has been input from parents. Last week, parents were asked to complete an online survey or to contact my office for a paper copy. If you have not yet completed the survey, I ask that you contact my office at 269-646-7655 or email me at npauley@marcelluscs.org. District personnel will attempt to contact those parents who have not responded to the survey.

Again, return to school plans are dependent upon the phase our region is in and each phase has specific requirements and recommendations. Our region is currently in Phase 4, which does permit in-person instruction with stringent safety protocols, including required face coverings for all staff and students in grades 6- 12. Please know that, even if we remain in Phase 4, in order to meet safety requirements or recommendations, there may be alterations to the traditional, face-to-face instructional schedule. Additionally, as we all know, things can change quickly, and a slide back to Phase 1-3 means schools will not reopen for face to face instruction, and instruction will be remote. Thus, district plans will be fluid and adaptable so we can meet the needs of students and comply with the state's guidance in any of the six Mi Safe Start phases.

District plans are due to the Lewis Cass intermediate School District by August 15 (and to the Michigan Department of Education by August 17). District officials are working hard to complete the plans before that deadline to allow sufficient time for teachers and parents to prepare.

We understand that some parents may not be comfortable with a return to in-person instruction this fall; thus, the district will offer a completely virtual program for those who choose it. More information about that program will be available in the next several weeks.

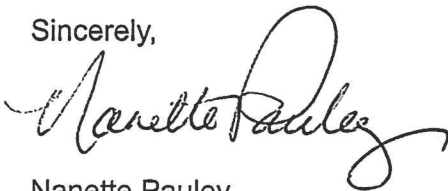
Finally, please know that the district is open to input and feedback as we strive to meet the needs of all students and their families. The best avenue to provide that input or to ask questions is via the survey or by contacting a building or district administrator. The survey allows for comments and questions. Please note that the district does not employ social media (i.e., Facebook) monitors so questions posted on that forum may not be answered in a timely manner. For your convenience, a copy of the MI Safe Schools- 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap Summary is included with this letter.

Marcellus Community Schools is committed to providing a safe and quality educational program for all students, no matter the phase. Undoubtedly, complying with restrictions and recommendations will be challenging. Now, as in the past, it is important that Wildcats come together with understanding, flexibility and patience. We will get through this together.

As a reminder- on August 4, voters will be asked to **renew** the current 18 mill assessment on non-homestead properties. This operational millage has been in place since 1996 and, if the renewal is approved, will generate approximately \$1,680,544 in school funding. These are critical funds used for teachers and staffing, classroom textbooks, resources, and supplies, as well as all operating expenses. If this millage does not pass, the State of Michigan will not replace the funding and cuts to basic school programs will be necessary. Given the potential looming cuts to school funding, this millage renewal is even more critical. Please be sure to vote on August 4.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nanette Pauley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Nanette Pauley
Superintendent