



Minnewaska Area Schools

ENGAGE EVERY STUDENT, EVERY DAY! District 2149

August 7, 2020

Minnewaska Area School Students and Parents

This letter has two purposes. First, on behalf of the entire Minnewaska Area School District (MAS), I want to thank you for participating in the August 4th-5th telephone survey MAS conducted earlier this week. Our teaching staff did a wonderful job facilitating the telephone survey with parents about returning to school in September. The survey provided us helpful information that will assist us in planning for the upcoming school year. More than 98% of the parents surveyed indicated their children will be enrolled in MAS in either distance learning or on-site attendance. We are genuinely grateful for that commitment!

The second reason for writing this letter addresses the **difference each child enrolled in the MAS District makes in maintaining low class sizes, many course offerings, quality extra/co-curricular activity programs as well as our overall financial health.** The school board and I feel the need to share some information for you to consider (that you may or may not already know) about how we can keep the Minnewaska School District family strong AND together as we navigate through COVID and plan the 2020 Return to School. As you consider your final decisions on how/where your children will be attending school this fall, we encourage you to consider the importance of maintaining their enrollment in MAS.

Public schools are funded by children attending them! Without your children enrolled in MAS--either in person, hybrid or distance learning--there will be a loss of revenue that eventually leads to a reduction of programming, activities, and staff. A family choosing to homeschool their children or enroll them in another public, private or online school (outside of the MAS District) creates negative financial implications for MAS that will eventually lead to reductions. On the other hand, enrolling in MAS gives us the opportunity to work with your children and enhances the opportunity to keep MAS strong and get through these COVID times together.

Consequently, we thought it would be wise to communicate with MAS families the importance of the enrollment decisions they are in the process of making. We understand some may be critical of this letter perceiving this is some kind of scare tactic. However, we actually intend it as a sign of transparency and trust! By proactively informing parents about the importance of the decisions they make about enrollment, they can understand implications of those choices at the time they make them. We understand we are darned if we do and darned if we don't when we share these implications. We are choosing to err on the side of transparency and we will trust our parents to make informed decisions.

It is really pretty simple. Maintaining or increasing our enrollment supports the Minnewaska Family spirit that runs through our communities. We ask you to please partner with the MAS District to work through these COVID times together by choosing to enroll with us.

Although these are unsettling times we are in, it is good to remind each other that we also know these times are not going to define the educational foundation of our students. Students will learn things during these times--things they would not otherwise learn--flexibility, accepting things we can't control and growing together as a community. I hope we can all stick together and maintain the wonderful Minnewaska Strong theme that has developed over the years.

Thank you for your past commitment and support. Our staff has missed your child(ren) and they are excited to return to school. We sincerely want your kids to be part of the Minnewaska family. We want to partner with you in keeping Minnewaska Strong!

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Most Respectfully,

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