

August 28, 2020

Dear families,

Happy Friday! We've had a very productive preparation week for our hybrid learning model with which we are starting the year. Earlier this week, you should have seen an email from your class teacher with curricular design information and schedules. Our K/1 teachers also welcomed our youngest families into a class zoom space to begin building those critical informal connections that, in a normal year, would happen in an in-person gathering.

These are just the first stages in communicating the details of our model for the year ahead. Our teachers came in for two additional work days this week before their official before school work week that starts on Monday. We anticipate a very full work week ahead with routine planning, schedule reviews and team curricular work. This will set us, and your children, up for a very successful start to the year.

Some updates...

### **Goal - Setting Conferences**

A key part of our planning to support families around this new model is the shift of goal-setting conferences to **Tuesday, September 8 and Wednesday, September 9**. Look for an email from your classroom teacher with sign up information. These will be virtual conferences. School board approved this revised 2020/2021 school calendar. [2020.2021-Updated-Approved-8.27.20.pdf](#)

### **Cultural Competency Workshops**

The fact that this is an exceptionally busy start to a school year, will not sway us from our mission-centered commitment to educating for equity. Last night, our board participated in a two hour workshop on Cultural Competency with Equity Alliance of Minnesota. On Monday morning, we will begin our back to school all staff work day with the first of session of cultural competency workshops this fall for all our school staff.

### **Buildings and Grounds**

Oh my, have we been busy around this old place! Science tells us that one of the best ways we can reduce the risk of virus spread is to position ourselves and the children outside, or socially-distanced and masked up in the most well-ventilated spaces available.

We are innovating in response to what we continue to learn during this ever evolving pandemic. The first tent to support outdoor learning went up last weekend. It has already been tested out on faculty workshop days. A volunteer crew is erecting more tents for our students to use this weekend. We will also be buying and constructing furniture to support the children both inside and outside as we implement the safety guidelines of the hybrid model. We are tackling creative solutions to internet

needs outside so that teachers have tools to support both in-person and those in remote learning locations.

Our spacing in the building will be centered around placing small pods of children in well ventilated indoor rooms if children need to be inside. We are fortunate that all our classrooms have great windows. I suppose that opening a window was how you air-conditioned a building 100 years ago! This is Minnesota and winter will be coming. A significant update of our filters and ventilation systems is underway to support the best possible indoor air quality.

If you are a social media user, know that I'm going to share out photos of these innovations and developments over the coming weeks: @PrairieCreekMN (twitter) and prairiecreekmn (instagram).

### **Arts' Update**

As you know, we are passionate about the arts at Prairie Creek. Angie and Olivia have been busy adjusting schedules and planning to support children in the hybrid and distance learning only models. Children will continue to receive music and art instruction on a weekly basis. Olivia will be sharing out information about orchestra with 4/5 families closer to the start of the year.

Since we are in such unusual circumstances, we have determined not to fill the open Spanish specials' position until we have more certainty about how the year will proceed. This enables us to plan flexibly to support and resource staffing needs for our hybrid model.

### **Device Pick-Up**

Thank you for returning your ipads and chromebooks. Our tech team is currently cleaning, refreshing and upgrading devices ahead of the new year. We will have a pick-up slot here at PCCS for families who will require a device to support learning at home during hybrid and distance learning only on **Tuesday, September 8 from 3 - 5pm**. Parents who are unable to come out to school at this time can contact us at [tech@prairiecreek.org](mailto:tech@prairiecreek.org) to make other arrangements.

### **Emergency Card / Releases / Health Declaration**

If you have not yet returned paperwork to the office, please do so ASAP. Thank you!

I hope you all have a wonderful weekend!

Sincerely,

Simon

[styler@prairiecreek.org](mailto:styler@prairiecreek.org)

### **Calendar Reminders**

September 8     Goal-Setting Conferences  
September 9     Goal-Setting Conferences

September 10 First Day of School (Blue Cohort - in person)  
September 24 School Board Meeting (7pm)  
October 15 / 16 No School: Fall Break (MEA)