



**MCPOLIN OFFICE UPDATES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21st, 2020**

Dear parents and caregivers,

What a difference a week makes. I had anticipated to be writing a light welcome back to school after our Fall Break weekend. COVID chose to interrupt and instead, I have a more courageous message to share involving COVID, positive testing involving McPolin individuals and more. A repeated experience of this COVID pandemic is unanticipated interruptions and the repeated surrender of "It is what it is."

So, what is it Mr. Ed?

- I can confirm we have two positive COVID test results impacting our school.
- We also have several (9) other individuals who have needed to quarantine based on these positive COVID tests, as well as from other contact occurring outside of school.

There are no words to express my concern for the health and safety of our school community as a whole and these specific individuals. I have been processing all sort of thoughts and emotions. Even after enjoying my own quarantine (two times over) I can share the emotions I have personally managed ran the gamut from patience and calm, to exasperation, tears, and a touch of blaming. All very normal and anticipated responses. However, I have made peace with the fact that it is none of us is to blame, our common challenge is COVID. I am reminded once again with more conviction, One for All, and All for ONE!

Based on these recent COVID positives, we are all reminded that our number one priority is staying safe, staying open. I am more confident than ever that staying open is up to all of us:

- Wear masks whenever possible
- Maintain safe distances in all situations, six (6) feet is the minimum
- Wash and sanitize hands routinely
- While at home, we all must be careful with all our decisions. What STARTS at home ENDS at school.

On a lighter note, we will be celebrating Halloween on Friday, October 30th. Unfortunately, we will not be able to have parents attend this year. Teachers will be filming and taking pictures of the festivities that will be shared through Classroom Dojo. Here is what we will be doing:

- EVERYONE will be dressing up in costume to come to school.
 - We will have a parade with the students outside, if the weather is bad the parade will take place inside.
- See the note about the PUMPKIN DECORATING activity. We want every student to participate.
- Our PTO will be decorating the front of the building for Halloween.

Another fun activity that occurs this time of the year is our Red Ribbon Week. Our counselor, Miss Heidi, has been sharing lessons and fun activities about making safe choices for ourselves with all the students. You will see a new banner outside on the fencing as well as some red ribbons. Some of the topics about safe choices are about saying NO to drugs (5th grade only). However, the activities include opportunities for students to learn how to empower themselves, how to identify and manage emotions, as well as how to make good choices when confronted with confusing or dangerous situations by simply leaving and getting help. If you have questions please contact your teachers or our counselor, Heidi Gwinn directly.

Finally, a shout out and appreciation to our McPolin PTO. On Tuesday caramel and chocolate covered candy apples were delivered for the staff. A simple act of appreciation but a huge lift of spirits and morale. I struggle to find the words to help our community truly recognize the amount of work that goes into teaching during this pandemic. The staff has been amazing and the results are seen and heard as the students greet moms, dads, and others with all the fun they are having at school. Just as important is the affirmation that we are in this together; students, families and our school. Good things happen when communities come together. WE GOT THIS!

Sincerely,
Bob Edmiston

Important Dates and Information:

- **Friday, October 30th** Though no visitors will be allowed, students and staff will be wearing Halloween costumes to school! More details to come.
- **November 4th** – Picture Retakes
 - **Our remote learners are invited from 1:30pm-2:30pm**
 - **Please enter through the same side door as you did for the original picture day.**