July 31, 2020

To Staff and the Twin Rivers School Community,

Throughout the world, people are acting in solidarity to help others deal with the pace, pressures, and pain caused by the coronavirus. We see donations of food and health supplies, gestures of support, and gratitude for public servants and healthcare workers. And we see expressions of hope and resiliency. I personally enjoy seeing the colorful art and inspirational messages that many people, including children, are adding to driveways and sidewalks. Yesterday, I passed a home with this message on the sidewalk, “We may not control the wind, but we can adjust our sails.”

As I reflected on the power and truth of that sentiment, I thought about the amazing work that the hundreds of employees in our District are doing to prepare for a most unusual school year, the work they are doing to adjust our sails.

Unique in many ways, the coming school year presents new and varied challenges. Those challenges are being met with a tireless commitment to take care of our employees and maintain a shared focus on our students and families. Each week, I write to you to provide an update on our progress. In part, I want to shine a light on our team’s great work. More importantly, we want to make sure that we are doing our best to keep our families informed. Here is the latest information on our progress toward the coming school year.

Distance Learning

- Schedules to pick up textbooks and other materials will be sent to families by site principals (backpacks for every child with supplies, as well as Chromebooks).
- Our school offices are open for phone calls starting Monday, August 3.
- It’s important for parents to update information in the Aeries Parent Portal prior to the start of school.

Aeries Parent Portal

- We are excited to introduce the Parent Portal to our parents/guardians this year. The District’s Information and Educational Technology Services (IETS) department will email/text all parent/guardians an access code and instructions to log on to the Parent Portal. The Parent Portal provides parents/guardians the ability to view their children’s attendance, report card, progress report, and grades. It is very easy to use, secure and confidential. Please keep an eye out for this communication from IETS.
Expanded Learning Program
- The program will offer daily academic support and enrichment activities for students in grades K-8. Online registration begins August 3. Click HERE.

Free Meals for Students
- 1 million free meals served since March 17! Free meals will continue for TR students during distance learning. Student ID cards or ID numbers will be required. We’ll have more information for you next week.

Facilities
- Sites and support locations are set up to support staff (e.g. plexiglass, stickers, soap and more).
- Rigorous disinfecting regime for school sites and the District Office.
- Piloting a visitor management system to ensure the monitoring and safety of staff and students at sites.

Professional Development
- This week of PD we had 76 sessions, trained over 702 certificated staff, 28 being subs working on their Teaching Permit for Statutory Leave (TPSL) credential, and 60 new certificated staff members. Our Totally Techy Tuesday session had over 150 people in it, and topics covered Google Classroom, Google Slides, Digital Citizenship, Creating Video Lessons and Workflow Management: Tips for assigning, monitoring and grading online learning. We also have our wonderful English Learner Services department holding a three day Twin Rivers EL Institute, which has over 100 participants in it. Lastly, we have great participation in our SMART Notebook trainings. Teachers are eager to have this training as they are learning how to create engaging, high quality lessons in SMART and link them with their Google Classroom.

Inspired by the theme of solidarity and with the goal of working together to adjust for a challenging new year, I have a favor to ask of you. If you use social media, will you please consider sharing this message with those who follow you? By posting this message, you will help us reach more Twin Rivers families with important updates on our re-entry to school.

Folks can follow us by clicking on the following:

With deep respect,

Steve Martinez, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Twin Rivers Unified

*Every Student, Every Day. Leaving No One Behind!*