



May 2, 2020

Dear Parents and Community Members:

I hope this letter finds you safe and well. I'm writing to communicate a few district updates and to share some personal news.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Monday brings the beginning of our third week of the distance-learning plan. Just a reminder that May 11 is approaching quickly. May 11 is the deployment date for the second and final round of packets. The same pick-up/drop-off procedures will be followed at each building the same as it was on April 20. Our last day of school is June 3.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the staff, teachers, principals, and parents that have pitched in and made this distance learning plan work. I know these are unusual times, and the plan isn't perfect, but we sincerely appreciate the support and teamwork that has been exhibited over the past few weeks. Keep an eye out for a short survey that will be coming home to families to offer feedback on the distance-learning model. As always, we appreciate feedback from our constituents.

SENIORS

May is a time when we think about commencement and bringing the many years and experiences to a close for seniors. It's heartbreaking to think that our seniors are not experiencing these typical, highly anticipated chapter-ending experiences. We are working to make this month special. At this point, commencement is still postponed. Mr. Williams, our high school principal, will be sending out a survey to seniors and their parents regarding options for commencement. Please look for the survey and take a few minutes to complete it. Your feedback will greatly help in our planning.

THE FUTURE

There has been discussion in the community, the state capital, and various other entities regarding adjusted programming for the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year. I want to be very clear on this: we have no finalized information on how the start of the year will go in regards to state health requirements, restrictions, etc. We are planning for multiple scenarios at this time but a normal start date with face-to-face operations.

PERSONAL NOTE

Lastly, I'd like to share some personal news with the community. I have been offered and have accepted the superintendent position at Mattawan Consolidated Schools. I will be starting there on July 1, 2020.

This is bittersweet for me; the last five years at Lakewood have been some of the best years for me and my family. It just seems like yesterday the Board of Education took a chance on a principal to lead their district. This has been a humbling and highly rewarding experience for me. I have worked alongside some of the best educators I have ever known in my 24 years in education. I have been



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supported by some of the most generous, gracious, and compassionate community members I have ever known.

I am incredibly proud to have been part of the progress this district has made over the last five years. When we started our work together, the district was facing a financial crisis, going through consolidation, declining enrollment, and weathering other storms. Through the significant love in this community for students and families, and resolve that runs deep, Lakewood Public Schools has emerged stronger than ever with a very bright future.

Alongside the leadership of the Board of Education and excellent staff, here are some accomplished goals I am most proud of:

- right-sizing the budget/developing a healthy fund equity;
- adding student support programming and opportunities such as construction technology, AP courses, STEM, PBIS;
- developing a structured curriculum framework, including planning for staffing, materials, and technology;
- developing tailored professional development opportunities for staff;
- passing a 1.2 million energy savings program for necessary non-taxpayer funded improvements;
- finishing the planning and securing construction to upgrade the Lakewood Elementary parking lot;
- improving the age of our bus fleet; adding grant-funded safety features (secure entryways, safety film, new surveillance equipment at no cost to taxpayers);
- completing two strategic plans; and,
- rebranding/marketing efforts made to tell the Lakewood story better.

One success that I'm most proud of is the work done to pay our staff better. I value, and I'm proud of the relationships we formed with union leadership, which led to contract improvements to take better care of our people.

I believe these accomplishments are a solid foundation on which to move forward for the next leader of Lakewood. The future here is bright!

While I was not searching out employment and remain completely happy at Lakewood, sometimes life searches you out. Such was the case with this opportunity.

The board will be communicating information regarding the selection process, which will include community survey opportunities to give input on the next leader. The board is working to have the new leader seated on July 1, 2020.

Go Vikes!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Randy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Randy