

THOMPSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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August 21, 2020

Dear Mary R. Fisher Families,

On behalf of the faculty and staff, welcome back! The Mary R. Fisher Elementary School is excited to open full time on Monday, August 31, 2020 for all students, Preschool through Grade 4. While we are all looking forward to resuming some sense of normalcy, it is important to note that when children return to school, there will be numerous changes in the day to day procedures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our priority is the safety of your children and to that end, faculty have been working throughout the summer to craft a schedule that ensures just that.

Students are required to wear masks as they enter the building and keep them on throughout day. Mask breaks have been included in your child's schedule. Please be sure to reinforce this with him/her at home. Additionally, per guidance from the Connecticut State Department of Education and Department of Health, schools must maintain social distancing guidelines between individuals to reduce transmission of the virus. The faculty has modified classroom totals to smaller numbers, adjusted recess times and scheduled bathroom breaks along with other plans to accommodate social distancing.

With respect to arrival/pick up/drop off procedures, please adhere to the following guidelines. When parents drop their children off, no student shall exit the vehicle before 8:25am. Parent pick up at the conclusion of the school day will begin at 2:45pm. Please be sure and put your placard (will be sent home) with your child's name and grade in your car window to identify who needs to be picked up. You will need to show your ID as well. In addition, **no parent shall exit** the car and approach the school with their child. There will be a designated drop off/pick up area in front of the school Parents can only drop off/pick up their children within this designated/marked-off area.

Buses will drop students off at school at 8:15am. Members of our security team will ride the buses to assist with rules associated with masks and exiting/entering the bus.

In the event that you must dismiss your child early, please send a note in with your child or call the main office **before 1:00pm** on the same day. If dismissing early, parents should present identification and sign their child out. This process will take place outside of the school building as parents should not be entering.

Superintendent Smith recently indicated in her district wide communication that parents must be prepared if the district needs to shift to a hybrid program or a full distance learning program. In the event that we shift to hybrid, teachers have separated their classes into two groups (A and B). If your child is in the A group, then he/she will be onsite on Monday and Tuesday and distance learning from home on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. If your child is in the B group, then your child will be onsite on Thursday and Friday and distance learning from home on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. No student will be onsite on Wednesday as this day will be utilized to deep clean between the A group and B group.

The expectation is that students will attend both onsite and distance learning regularly. Attendance will be closely monitored. It is also important to note that distance learning will not and cannot replace onsite, in-person instruction with regard to quality interaction and timely feedback to students.

School will begin on August 31st for onsite students and September 8th for students that are distance learning. Superintendent Smith recently sent out communication indicating pick up times for technology: Monday, August 24th 8:00am-4:00pm (PreK-4) and Tuesday, August 25th 8:00am-4:00pm and 6:00pm-8:00pm (PreK-4). Distribution will take place at the Thompson Public Schools Auditorium and you will be required to sign a couple of forms to accept devices.

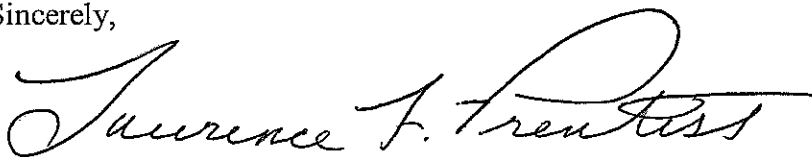
The elementary school had many staff changes over the summer. Full-Time substitute, Tina Nolin will fill in for Lauren Howard while she is on maternity leave. Lindsey Exarhoulias will be providing instruction to a Kindergarten cohort for Carolyn Martineau while she is out on maternity leave. Judy Fairly will be providing instruction to a Kindergarten cohort. Jenn Bessenaire is providing instruction to a Grade 1 cohort. We welcome Nicole Beck who will be a long-term substitute in Grade 1 replacing Carla Thompson. Katie Butler will be providing instruction to a Grade 2 cohort. Jesse Duquette will be providing instruction to a Grade 3 cohort. We welcome Stefanie Dufault who will be filling in as a long-term substitute for Sandy Cox in Grade 3. Michaela Parenteau will be providing instruction to a Grade 4 cohort. Jennifer Errichetti has resigned as Speech/Language pathologist. Mary Thompson has resigned as the districts BCBA (Board Certified Behavior Analyst). William McDonald, Assistant Principal, retired and will not be replaced. Alaina Wiehn will be a long-term substitute Unified Arts teacher. Vicki Krom will be a long-term substitute Unified Arts teacher. Jonathan Borowko will be filling in for Lynne Glode, Media Center Specialist, as a long-term substitute. Lastly, Deb Dumouchel has resigned from her position as school nurse.

Faculty and staff will be reporting to school on August 24, 2020 to begin their school year with Professional Development activities. During this time, faculty and staff will be working, learning and collaborating on how to best serve the students of Thompson with emphasis on preparing for distance learning if needed.

Various documentation will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. Please sign and return to school by the indicated due dates. Parents, please be reminded to read the student handbook with your child that can be found on the district website; thompsonk12.org.

Again, on behalf of the faculty and staff here at Mary R. Fisher Elementary School, welcome to the 2020-2021 school year. We have missed you and your children and are excited to connect once again. Enjoy the rest of summer and let's have a safe and productive school year when we all return!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurence F. Prentiss". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laurence F. Prentiss

Principal, Mary R. Fisher Elementary School