



August 5, 2021

Greetings Lac qui Parle Valley Students and Parents!

The LQPV School Board agreed to employ me as the interim superintendent during the 2021-2022 school year. I am looking forward to working collaboratively with all district stakeholders. I have enjoyed working with staff to develop our “Back to School” activities leading up to the start of school!

This letter is my first effort to share information about our current plans for the 2021-2022 school year. Our construction projects are moving along and the COVID landscape is ever changing! It will be paramount that we all remain flexible as we move through this year. A primary goal for me will be to communicate with you often so you are aware of district expectations related to all school related topics.

STATUS OF READINESS OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS:

I am excited to report that **we are planning to begin the school year on time!** All three of our buildings continue to be under some kind of construction and there may be a few rooms not quite ready for occupancy. However, we will work in collaboration with the construction crews. Our building principals will be heavily involved with making sure the construction workers can continue “on site” as they finish their business. We will have to endure some inconveniences, but safety of our staff and students will not be compromised.

This will require all of us to be "flexible", "nimble" and have an “attitude of support” for one another as we work through the final stages of construction. I was assured at my most recent weekly construction meeting that the construction crews will be focused on student/staff safety during this time.

I also want to express, on behalf of our School Board and entire staff, an “attitude of gratitude” for the investment the citizens comprising the LQPV communities have made in our educational facilities. There is much to be grateful for! Your willingness to support the upgrade of our facilities will enhance the chances students will learn in modern facilities for years to come. Once all construction is finished, we will plan “open houses” for everyone to get a first hand look at all that has been accomplished.

STATUS OF COVID-19 RELATED TOPICS:

Lac qui Parle Valley School District (LQPV) is committed to the safety of all students and staff. The ***LQPV 2021-22 School Opening Plan (shown at end of this letter)*** was created using the requirements and recommendations set forth by the Federal government and State of Minnesota, along with feedback collected from stakeholders over the summer. Our plan has been reviewed and approved by the LQPV School Board.

Please review the plan carefully or visit our website <https://www.lqpv.org/News/121#sthash.NH8H4UKu.dpbs> to review it. Throughout the year, any changes will be posted on our website. Checking in regularly will help you to be informed about changing COVID plans as they develop.

Also please know that throughout the year, we will continue to depend on our collective "capacity to adjust and be flexible” as the COVID information avails itself to us. We will continue to rely on the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) regarding school and extra-curricular programming. Should LQPV leadership receive word that “recommendations” change to “requirements” or “mandates”, we will implement “requirements” or “mandates” as directed.

REQUEST FOR HELP--FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM UPDATE!

We have some very good news to share! The Minnesota Department of Education and the USDA has extended the *FREE meals to ALL of our students again for the entire 2021-2022 school year*. This includes breakfasts and lunches for **ALL students**.

Having shared that news, the school district asks for your help! If you have not already done so, **please complete the free and reduced lunch application form for the 2021-2022 school year on-line (on JMC)** or complete the hard copy plan that you receive in your “back to school” packet being mailed to you early next week.

It is vitally important to us that you do so because each student who qualifies generates significant compensatory revenue for the school district that we depend on (\$536,000 last year). Those funds are used to provide programming identified on the brochure you find attached at the end of this letter. During the month of September, we are intending to call each of our LQPV families requesting you complete this form. The completed application **MUST** be received by the school district by October 1st.

To fill out the Free/Reduced Meals Application online, **click the link [Free & Reduced Meal Application](#) (which takes you to the JMC login site. Enter your user name and password, then click on Register 2021-2022, then click on “Meal Application” shown at bottom of that screen and complete and submit the application)**. If you have any questions, please call Lisa Bungarden in the District Office at 320-752-4813. She will be happy to guide you through the process.


FINAL NOTE:

Although I have been working in the LQPV School District for only a month, I have been very impressed with the conversations I have had with employees, students and area residents. It seems to me that we have similar values on many fronts. The most important of those values calls for high levels of transparency related to school district topics. Transparency is vital in being sure our goals and strategies are aligned with decision-making. Honestly communicating that information to our public will be a high priority. It’s also important we recognize we are **all** here to serve our students and their families.

The attitude we adopt navigating through the 21-22 school year will be a **“choice”** for all of us. I **encourage everyone to choose to “embrace the challenges” instead of “running from or complaining about them”**. My focus will be on supporting each of our staff members and working collaboratively with you. The school board and I hope you join us in holding high the qualities of selflessness, communication, transparency, trust and respect. If we join together in these expectations we can make the 2021-22 journey one we all enjoy!

Again, in the next few days, please expect another email or letter from your school level Principal with further information related to our return to school this fall. Enjoy the remainder of your summer and please don’t hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Most Respectfully,



Rick Ellingworth
Interim Superintendent

Attached: SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN and FREE & REDUCED MEAL IMPACT BROCHURE

LQPV Safe Return to School Plan 2021-2022

Status of COVID-19 Related Topics:

Lac qui Parle Valley School District (LQPV) is committed to the safety of all students and staff. The LQPV 2021-22 School Opening Plan was created using the limited number of requirements set forth by the Federal government and State of Minnesota, along with feedback collected from stakeholders over the summer. Our plan has been reviewed and approved by the LQPV School Board.

LQPV will return to typical (fulltime, In Person) school operations and programming in the fall of 2021. This includes:

- All students will be in school five days/week.
- Normal start and end times will be in place.
- Sites will return to their typical days and hours of operation.
- Students will have lunch in the lunchroom(s).
- Students will transition from class to class, following a normal schedule.
- Special area classes (music, art, PE, etc) will be held in their classrooms
- The 2021-22 calendar posted on the district's website will be followed.

The following information will provide greater clarity:

Face coverings:

- Face coverings are optional within our school facilities. LQPV will maintain a limited supply of face coverings for students or staff who choose to wear them.
- Face coverings are still required while on a school bus.
- It is recommended that all **unvaccinated** people present in school buildings and district offices wear a face covering. This is a recommendation and not a requirement. The school will not require the wearing of masks unless it is a requirement of MDE, MDH or the CDC.
- The face covering recommendation does not apply to children under 2 years of age or people of any age who are unable to tolerate wearing a face covering because of a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability.

Child Nutrition – Meals:

- Meals will be available at school. Students may also bring their lunches as in the past. The USDA is continuing to offer free meals for school breakfast and lunch throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

Field Trips:

- Students may be scheduled to go on field trips throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

Transportation:

- Regular transportation routes will be used.
- Current federal regulations **require face coverings to be worn while riding on buses**. At this time this is a requirement, not a recommendation. If this changes from being required to becoming a recommendation, the school transportation regulations will change.

Physical Distancing:

- There are currently no physical distancing requirements.

Vaccines:

- Vaccinations for students, staff or visitors/volunteers are not required by LQPV.

Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities, including Improving Ventilation:

- HVAC systems are running to maximize air flow and monitor air quality.
- Cleaning practices continue to support mitigation of COVID 19.
- Routine cleaning is scheduled when students and teachers are not occupying the space,
- Drinking fountains and water refill stations are open with no restrictions.

Health Screening, Quarantine and Isolation:

- Self-Screening for symptoms of illness is a practice that keeps us all safe. If you are ill, stay home.
- We are mandated to report any positive cases to MDH.
- Our current practice regarding someone who is in close contact with a person who is COVID positive is to notify any staff, student or family members of a close contact with a positive case and ask them to monitor their symptoms closely.

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette:

- Students will continue to be encouraged to wash their hands with soap and water during bathroom breaks, before meals and any time facial tissues are used.

Accommodations for Special Populations:

- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies and procedures will be provided. To learn more about accommodations, parents/guardians should contact his/her child's case manager.

Coordination with State / Local Health Officials:

- LQPV will continue to collaborate with state and local public health officials.
- We will continue to actively monitor our local COVID data to determine strategies necessary to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

Visitors/Volunteers:

- Visitors and volunteers who are ill should not enter the LQPV buildings.
- Visitors and volunteers will follow regular protocols when checking in at each school building during the day.

Final Note:

- LQPV Schools are committed to providing a safe environment for students, staff and community members. We believe it is important that we all remember to respect the decisions and actions of others in our community while we seek the common goal of a safe environment.

Posted: 8-3-2021

Lac qui Parle Valley ISD #2853



We have some good news! The Minnesota Department of Education and the USDA has extended the **free meal program** for the 2021-22 school year. **This includes breakfasts and lunches for ALL students.**

How Free & Reduced Meal Applications Impact The Classroom

\$536,000

is the amount of funding Lac qui Parle Valley School received last year to spend to support students in the classroom because of the Free & Reduced applications filled out in our district. There are many ways the classrooms and students are positively impacted by you filling out a Free & Reduced Lunch Application.

To fill out the Free/Reduced Meals Application online, click the link [Free & Reduced Meal Application](#) (which takes you to the JMC login site. Enter your user name and password, then click on *Register 2021-2022*, then click on “Meal Application” shown at bottom of that screen and complete and submit the application).

****All information collected is kept confidential****

How is this money used?

Title I Funding	Title I pays for extra educational services to help at risk and struggling students achieve and succeed in school.
Smaller Class Sizes	Compensatory revenue is used to meet the educational needs of the students. We use this funding to hire more teachers to reduce class sizes.
Activities	Families with meal benefits could also be eligible for athletic and extracurricular activity benefits.
P-EBT Benefits	P-EBT Benefits may extend into the 2021-22 school year. To be eligible, students must have an approved application on file with the District.

Prior to October 1, please expect a call from the LQPV School District reminding you of the importance of completing and returning this document. It is so important in helping provide funds to be used by LQPV as described above.

For more information or any questions, call or email:

Lisa Bungarden, District Office

320-752-4813 or lbungarden@lqpv.org

Rick Ellingworth, Interim Superintendent

320-752-4835 or rellingworth@lqpv.org

FILL OUT AN APPLICATION!