



CLINTONVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

45 W. Green Tree Road
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Dear Representative Tauchen, Representative Peterson, Senator Olson and Senator Cowles:

Greetings from Clintonville! I hope this letter finds you, your family, and your colleagues well. The purpose of my communication with you today is to provide a brief update from our School District as we work to address the daily challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I first want to share some TRUCKER POINTS of PRIDE. When the pandemic hit, we were among the first districts to focus on the basic needs of our children through the pick up and delivery of meals. We now are preparing and distributing on a weekly basis over 5000 breakfast/lunch meals to our student population of just under 1300. With a free and reduced rate of over 50%, our families have appreciated this outreach. Secondly, learning has not stopped. Although it is not ideal and we have encountered several obstacles and additional expenses, our teaching staff and administrators have gone above and beyond to maintain contact and provide learning opportunities to the best of our abilities. They are largely not virtual educators nor learning packet developers but have met this challenge head-on with professionalism and care despite receiving no guidance from state or federal departments of education. While some districts saw virtual or on-line education as an option, Clintonville saw it as a significant challenge that continues to mount. Please allow me to explain. After surveying our families, we learned that around 15% of our households had no internet connection and over 30% did not have immediate reliable internet service. Those with service are also significantly impacted by multiple family members needing access for work, lack of devices at home, and most recently - an increase in families being forced to cancel service due to loss of income from being unemployed. As a result our best option was to provide learning packets with teacher follow up by phone or email. Despite our success with this model, we have experienced equity issues with our youngest learners and those with english language or special needs. Again, our staff has risen to the occasion to support them as best as possible.

I want to conclude with a huge shout out to our parents who have partnered with us to take on this learning challenge. Unfortunately, one missing element continues to not be addressed, and that is mental health. Quite frankly, despite 28 years in education, I do not have many viable solutions on how to best address that growing concern during the pandemic. What I do know is that what children will remember most about these historic times is how they felt and how they were treated during and after this all passes. Schools must be prepared to play a significant role before and during the recovery process.

Thank you for your time and especially your leadership in the State of Wisconsin. Finally, please consider this an open invitation for me to provide on-going updates, information, and answers to any questions you may have. We all can agree that much work remains as we finish the current school year and make plans for summer and fall educational programming.

Sincerely,

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Excellence, Effort, & Ethics - Every One, Every Day

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