

School Families,

The past few months have been challenging for schools across Flathead County as we navigated preparations for opening our schools amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. However, thanks to the support of our parents, students, faculty, staff, health officials, and our community, the 2020-2021 school year is underway.

As the school year continues, Flathead County School Districts, the Flathead City-County Health Department, and Kalispell Regional Healthcare have committed to an ongoing collaboration to continue addressing operational needs in our schools specific to COVID-19 and to protect the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff. By working together, the COVID-19 School Advisory Council - made up of leaders from Flathead County school districts, parents of our students, public health officials from the Flathead City-County Health Department, and representatives from Kalispell Regional Healthcare - will continually evaluate any changes needed as this pandemic continues and will address issues as they arise in a consistent manner.

The school districts will focus on the daily health and safety needs of the schools defined in their operational plans. The Flathead City-County Health Department will provide public health guidance and investigate all positive COVID-19 cases in Flathead County. Kalispell Regional Healthcare will help connect students to primary care, provide testing locations and other health resources, support school nurses, and provide a 24-hour call center to answer questions about COVID-19.

This team has also collaborated on a variety of educational resources for parents, faculty, and staff, which can be found online at krh.org/COVID-19. Most recently, in response to many questions from parents over this first week, new resources have been added:

- [Contact Tracing](#) Steps in the process used to investigate positive cases, including quarantine Requirements
- [COVID Testing Locations](#) What to do and where to go, should your son or daughter need to be tested for COVID-19
- [Community Collaboration](#) The roles and responsibilities of community partners in addressing the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff at our schools

We encourage you to review these and other resources to understand the steps all of us can take to have a safe and healthy school year. If you have questions related to COVID-19, please contact the 24-hour Call

Center at Kalispell Regional Healthcare at (406) 890-7272.

Thank you, again, for your continued support,

The COVID-19 School Advisory Council:

Micah Hill, Superintendent, Kalispell

Dave Wick, Superintendent, Columbia Falls

Dave Means, Superintendent, Whitefish

Laurie Barron, Superintendent, Evergreen

Matt Jensen, Superintendent, Bigfork

Jeremy Marsh, Head of School, Stillwater Christian School

Bill Sullivan, Director of Operational Accountability, Kalispell Public Schools

Teresa Litchfield, Parent and Epidemiologist

Tamalee Robinson, Flathead City-County Health Department

Kerry Knuckles, Flathead City-County Health Department

Brittany Coburn, NP-C, School-Based Clinic, North Valley Hospital

Ryan Pitts, RN, Kalispell Regional Healthcare Chief Nursing Officer