

Springfield Public Schools

Search. Learn. Serve

September 5, 2020

Dear Springfield Students, Families, Staff, and Community Members:

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year! There is no question that this is a genuinely unprecedented school year. Since joining the district in July, I have had the honor to work with our district and school leaders to make the appropriate adjustments and shifts necessary for our schools to provide meaningful instruction during these challenging times.

As of yesterday, September 4, 2020, all school principals shared their school-specific opening plans and student schedules. If you have not received that information, you can find copies of the communication by going to the schools' sites on www.springfieldschools.com. School-specific meet and greets, including pick up of materials, have been scheduled by the schools. Also, for students in Grades PK-8, additional classroom and grade level communication will be shared next week before the start of schools.

Attached to this letter are two critical documents: the updated 2020-2021 School Calendar, in a new format we hope you will find helpful, and the "Springfield Public Schools Guide to Virtual Instruction." The guide provides information about the expectations for schools and students as we begin the year in an all-virtual mode, as well as school schedules, and instructions for logging into the two most critical district applications, OnCourse, and Clever. It is lengthy, but please know it is meant to provide support and general information about the virtual instructional model.

Like many of you, I am working to prepare my children for a new school year that is so different from what we know. As an educator, my heart hurts in the empty hallways. But as a leader, I am starting this year with optimism after listening to our teachers during our first professional development days as they shared their passion, energy, and commitment to our students. It has reminded me of a quote by Haim Ginott, the psychologist and teacher who noted, "I've come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather."

As we start this year, Springfield families are our co-teachers. Together, it is up to us to "make the weather" for our students to learn. While we know that there will be difficulties ahead, please know that the entire district stands together to provide support for our students and families. I hope you will join us as we work to give our students the sunniest of skies in the days ahead.

Sincerely,



Rachel Goldberg, Superintendent of Schools

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