

July 22, 2020

Dear Ira A Murphy Families,

For a technology survey in English [click here](#).

Para una encuesta tecnológica en español, [haga clic aquí](#).

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones healthy and safe. The 2020-21 school year is upon us and our entire staff is excited to support you and your child. I look forward to the moment when I can welcome our new and returning families to our campus in-person. Until then, we have been working hard to prepare for this online learning adventure which will begin on Wednesday, Aug. 5.

I want to thank you for your patience and support as we get ready to launch this virtual learning experience. I know you have many questions about what the start of the school year will look like and I would like to share the following details which should help address some of those questions.

Welcome Back Events

Although many of our traditional back-to-school events will look different this year, our teachers are excited to meet all of you. This year, we will be holding a virtual “Meet the Teacher” event! We will be sharing a video with all families on August 4th with teacher introductions to help you put a face with a name. We will also ask each of our homeroom teachers to call their families, introduce themselves, and answer any questions you might have. Those calls will be made between July 30th and August 3rd. You may also ask your child’s teacher to FaceTime or Zoom meet with you when they call to help your child better see his/her teacher. Please make sure that we have an updated phone number and email address on file for you. If you have recently changed either one, please contact our office at 623-412-4475.

Kindergarten Information

If you are a kindergarten family, we want to welcome you! We are equally as excited to get to know you and your child. In addition to the virtual format, we will have take-home kits available with materials to help your child learn and interact at home. These kits provide your student with some fun activities, art supplies and opportunities to get acquainted with some of the learning fun we will have in store for them this year! The items will be available for pick-up at our school during the following times: **August 5th 8:00-3:00, August 6th 8:00-3:00 and August 7th 8:00-3:00 in our Front Office.**

Class Lists

Due to confidentiality concerns, we will not be posting class lists on our windows. Your child’s homeroom teacher will contact you between July 30th and August 3rd. You will have the opportunity at that time to get to know him/her. We will not be making any classroom changes at this time.

Daily Schedules & Logging-in

Establishing routines and schedules for your student will ensure their overall success. Your child’s teacher will be reaching out to you during their first few days on campus to introduce themselves and provide a sample schedule to support your child’s success in their classroom(s). We understand that every family will have unique scheduling needs due to parent work hours, etc. Please work with your child’s teacher to determine what will work best for your family. Students will be required to be engaged in learning both online with their teacher as well as on the learning platform. Teachers will be recording their online learning sessions to allow for students to view these at times that work best for their family. However, the more often students can interact in the live sessions with their classmates, the better connected they will feel.

A reminder that the first three days of school will be shorter days for students while we ease into our virtual learning. For the first eight days, we will pay particular attention to the social and emotional needs of our students, building strong relationships in this new environment and ensuring their comfort as an online learner.

Additionally, you will soon be receiving information on the process to log-in and connect on the first day of school.

Technology Distribution

We understand starting school in an online environment may create challenges for some of our families if there is not adequate technology in the home. If your family does not have consistent access to a computer, please complete this brief survey in [English](#) or [Spanish](#) so we can begin to identify how many families we have in need.

If you do have devices at home and want to know whether they will work in this virtual environment, it is helpful to note the following:

- A desktop computer or laptop computer works best in the virtual format.
- Chromebooks are also a suitable option.
- Tablets, iPads, and mobile devices may not meet the needs of your child's course and are not recommended.
- We suggest students have a Windows or a Mac-based computer to complete their coursework.

If your child already has access to a laptop or computer, there is no need to pick up a district laptop. If your home computer was purchased within the last two to three years, it should work fine.

We have created a schedule for families to pick up a district laptop if you do not have one at home that your child can use. Our computer laptop distribution will take place July 29th, July 31st, and August 3rd. You have received detailed information regarding those dates, times, and how to sign up through your email over the last few days. That information is also available on our Facebook page.

Please keep the following in mind if you are checking out a laptop from our school:

- If you have children attending more than one school, you will need to go to each school to pick up a laptop.
- If your child cannot be present to log in to the network on the laptop prior to leaving the school grounds, we will help with that.
- Only the parent/legal guardian can be present to sign for the device and school staff will be checking identification.
- If you still have a district laptop in your possession from spring, we cannot check out another laptop to you until you first return the original one to be serviced, updated and sanitized for re-use.

In order to participate in Virtual Instruction, internet access/WiFi will be required. We are aware that some families may not have sufficient internet access at home to support remote learning. There are a few affordable options that families can consider for adding Internet or WiFi in their homes listed [on the district's website](#).

If you have concerns about internet access and the resources provided on the district's website, please contact us and we will try to resolve these challenges for you.

Athletics, Clubs and Extracurricular Activities

Peoria Unified is currently waiting for an update from the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA) for the fall 2020-21 school year regarding high school athletics. The AIA determines when sports can resume, which is determined by when students can safely return to school in person. Elementary schools also rely on this guidance to provide programming that mirrors the safety measures at the high school level.

More information about extracurricular activities and clubs will be available once we get closer to returning to school in person. If opportunities should arise to hold such activities in a virtual environment, we will share that information with you.

School Supplies

We are working diligently to ensure we have needed supplies available for students when they return. We will provide a specific list of recommended supplies as the date of physical return grows closer. In the meanwhile, here are some recommended supplies for learning at home:

- Pencils
- Lined and unlined paper
- Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils
- Glue stick
- Scissors

Learning Materials

We will be communicating with you once school begins days/times that we will be distributing paper learning materials and/or needed supplies. These materials may include Foundations books, MyMath books, etc., and are dependent upon grade level.

Please expect to receive additional communication in the days ahead about the start of school. We appreciate you all for your patience and support during this unprecedented time. Remember, we are all in this new online learning adventure together and we can't wait to connect with your family to begin our school year! If I can provide any additional support or answer any other questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Aubree Mills
Principal
Ira A Murphy Elementary
623-412-4475