

14 August 2020

Dear Columbia Family,

I hope you are well and looking forward to a start of school full of optimism. While our school situation is unprecedented and not ideal for any of us, and yes, there will be a big learning curve as we discover what we've overlooked or procedures we need to refine, in looking at it through a positive lens, I find myself getting quite excited about the academic opportunities that are before us. We have an amazing school faculty. I am excited to see the magic we'll be able to do with having half the students at school every other day. These smaller numbers will allow for more personalized instruction with the same amount of tremendous support staff. I hope and believe we will see greater academic growth in a shorter amount of time than we ever have before.

As I'm sure you may understand, we are striving to keep on top of getting prepared for the start of school with guidelines that change so often. Class lists are not quite yet finalized, but we expect they will be today, likely this morning. You will know they are finalized when you receive a welcome letter from your child's teacher. If you were led to believe finalized class assignments were already made, I apologize, but as I've said in prior messages, I'd let you know when class lists are finalized. They will be finalized and shared with you today.

Please try to be satisfied with the class assignment. A tremendous amount of analysis and effort (off-contract time for teachers) has been made to get them right. It is unlikely that we will be able to make additional changes, however, if you have a huge conflict you may email our secretary, Julia Worthen, [jworthen@dmail.net](mailto:jworthen@dmail.net). She will record your information and if there's any wiggle room, we'll try to adjust before school begins. Please don't request changes due to friend issues. Children are excellent makers of new friends and that experience is good for them.

You can expect another more detailed message from me next week. In that email I'll share our current school safety and procedural plan. I'll have information about our "Back-to-School Night" plan and other information. I'll be meeting with teachers next week for training and planning to work out many of these details. We'll do our best to think through as much as time and opportunity will allow.

Now please, stay healthy and enjoy this time with your children. Assure them that all will be well. Know that everyone who works at Columbia is here because of the great love we have for your children and of our desire to help them grow and learn (in a healthy and safe learning environment).

Even with all the changes and uncertainty we're facing, I truly believe we are about to experience the most amazing, and certainly unforgettable, school year ever.

Sincerely,

Dr. Denhalter