



School District of Monticello

334 South Main Monticello, WI 53570 Phone 608.938.4194

"MONTICELLO'S VALUES GROW WORLD READY CITIZENS"

May 27, 2020

Dear Rep. Sody Pope,

I have started writing this communication multiple times and each time I would get caught up in trying to capture my own personal appreciation for our staff during Monticello's school closure and sudden transformation to virtual schooling. I believe that this unsolicited email and single post represent and embody family culture that continued during the pandemic's shut down.

"I just wanted to write in to say that I have been so very pleased with how the multiple teachers of my kids have responded to the online schooling. I have seen creative and relative assignments coming home each week. We have had some teachers personally drop off packets in our mailbox if something was missing for an assignment. We have had teachers start online meetings just to have kids socialize or do fun projects like 'show-and-tell'. Every teacher of ours has stated that they are readily available and I typically have a response to my question within *moments* of my posting. Teachers have checked in later in the week just to see how we were doing if there were struggles earlier on. The support has been incredible! I truly have nothing but wonderful things to say about our Monticello teachers." *Monticello Parent*

One of hundreds of heartfelt posts and communications with our families on Facebook.

Happy last week of 4K! We have 3 more live lessons left! I will see all of you tonight! I will be starting my rounds around 4:00 and hoping to make it to everyone by 7. I will do my best to not get distracted and talk for hours! 😊

To say I am proud to lead while riding the coattails of Monticello's staff through these unprecedented times is an understatement. Our custodians have never stopped working or making our building, though empty, safe and clean for a much anticipated return. Our support staff and bus drivers eagerly signed up for delivering over 250 meals a day to our families free of charge. Our paraprofessionals continued to work virtually, communicate, and became curriers for the students they serve. The teachers....all they did was learn new learning management systems, adapt grading procedures, virtual communication tools, content delivery, manage accountability, and act as social workers. Oh, and they did this practically overnight.

I'm also proud of our families whose lives got turned upside down. Many juggled work or for some, unemployment, along with becoming teacher's aids for their own children. Unfortunately, I know this took a toll on our families and will most definitely have an impact on our students' achievement. This concern weighs heavily with our teachers as well.





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I have two major fears. Even with proverbial broad shoulders, I fear the decisions we have to make (seemingly independently) going forward for summer school and the start of the school year. This is not whining, but reiterating, planning is truly a lose/lose situation. Magnified more than ever, no matter what we do we will be questioned. Mask or no mask? Are buses safe? Can students be together on playgrounds? What about childcare for families if only half of our students can be in school on any given day? We will rely on our health personnel and county to help guide us and make the most responsible decisions for our community.

My second major fear is our budget going forward. The above prideful stories I shared were because of our staff and their passion for Monticello. Our student/staff relationships are the most impactful part of educating our students. Two third of our annual budget are these amazing people. Significant budget cuts will only force us into difficult decisions about those who are the very heart and soul of the relationships that make us whole.

Please consider aiding the county health departments in guiding us. Most importantly, please help support the staff that make rural education in Wisconsin what it is as you fight for us in Madison.

Sincerely,

Allen Brokopp
District Administrator, Monticello

