



**River Valley School**  
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*A safe and happy place to learn*

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February 9, 2021

Dear Families,

We are approaching the 1 year mark of learning about and living with a pandemic. The ups and downs in daily life, workplaces, and the school setting continue, and I know that many are feeling both the economic squeeze and the emotional drain of these incredibly trying times. Thank you for not giving up, for continuing to send your children to us when you can, and for acknowledging the importance of education by riding the waves of change alongside us.

We continue to work at providing the best learning environment we can; meeting your child where they are at academically, and also infusing fun and friendship opportunities wherever possible. With some micromanaging to maintain safety, we have been able to manage a virtual costume parade at Halloween, an address from a local Legion Member at the Remembrance Day service, and continued with the Christmas tradition of Carol Sing and Hot Chocolate in a modified format. Parent Teacher Interviews were navigated online in the Fall, and we were happy to be able to connect with you, albeit in this unconventional way, and look forward to connecting virtually again at March interviews (Mar 29,30,31). We all look forward to the time when these aspects of school can return to normal, but recognize that could still be a ways off. In the meantime, thank you for continuing to support the masking, distancing, sanitizing protocols we have in place to help us continue to be in the building every day.

In looking forward, Valentine's Day is rapidly approaching. We have thought and rethought what makes sense and then Mother Nature has thrown in some Red Days to add to the challenge. To ensure quarantine time/ safety etc. of cards and purchase/packaged treats, we are asking folks to send in their bag of "good things" to the school on Friday (which we hope will be an in-school day). These will then be distributed on Monday, Feb 22, when we return. Classes are still able to celebrate in other ways this week. I apologize for this change in messaging, and appreciate your flexibility as we work within the parameters of our current reality.

Red Days - yes, these do provide more layers of challenge for folks, and we appreciate you may have poor wifi, limited data, or be short a computer or two. Please know that we do want to continue moving learning forward when we can, particularly in light of the last year where we have had so many hiccups in the traditional learning process - online, student or staff illness etc. That said, if Red Day learning looks different in your home, and includes needed downtime and family connection, that is completely okay. Staff will continue to connect when possible through Google Meets and the Google Classroom, but a stack of lined paper and the good old telephone can be used as well, and if Math for a day equates to measuring snowball sizes for the massive snowman being built in the front yard, that's just fine now and again.

The February break is fast approaching, and I encourage everyone to find things to enjoy over this much needed window of time. I personally am planning a tropical "staycation" day with my 4 kids where the menu is fruit salad, the movie is "Moana" and we eat off paper plates so no one has dishes to do (and there may be a Pina Colada or two in my future as well :) We all need things to look forward to - find what works for your crew and enjoy!

Thanks for keeping on, keeping on. Stay well, and connect at any time...Aloha :)

Leslie Cooper-Shand  
Principal  
River Valley School