

August 10, 2020

Dear Hilltop Families,

I hope you have had and continue to have a safe and enjoyable summer. There is still one more month before school starts, although sometimes those school supply sales make us feel otherwise! Labor Day is late this year, so 1st-6th grade students start school on Wednesday, September 9th. The current plan is to have Kindergarteners start school on September 14th. The week before school starts, all families can expect an email with the name of each child's teacher, a small supply list specific to home learning, and information about grade-level curbside pick-up of learning materials/books during the first few weeks of school. If you pre-ordered school supplies, the PTSA will contact you soon. Supply lists for the entire school year are located on our website.

I know the BIG question on everyone's mind is, "*What will school look like this fall?*" We are working on detailed answers to this question that will be shared with you prior to school starting. It is certain that we will be doing remote Continuous Learning 2.0 until at least November 11th. The school district has teams of teachers and instructional specialists scouring the new state OSPI requirements and looking at what works best for remote learning. They have created frameworks that will allow teachers to stay more on track with teaching grade-level standards and meeting the needs of students who need to catch-up on any missed learning. The daily time students spend learning will be longer than in the spring, so students should expect to have a daily schedule with multiple lessons and occasional small group learning led by a teacher or para. The length of lessons, amount of independent work and motivational strategies will be adjusted to match the grade level. We are going to get more details later this month. As you can expect, our Hilltop teachers have already been collaborating about how to best engage students, and their work will continue throughout their professional development time during the week prior to school.

Some of you are wondering how to prepare your students to start the school year during this unique situation. Here are some ideas:

- 1) A couple weeks before school starts, start adjusting bedtime routines to match the school year. Discuss how your child might take breaks in between assignments, similar to recess at school.
- 2) We encourage every student to use their school Chromebook. If your child does not have a Chromebook you can make an appointment during August to pick one up from the district office: [techsupport@edmonds15.org](mailto:techsupport@edmonds15.org) or 425-431-1211.

- 3) Set up an area for your child to work and to store school materials. My kids will use the kitchen table, very near to where their dad will be remote working, and they have to sit so we can see their screens at all times. (Yes, given the chance, my kids will wander off into cyberspace.) If I'm working from home that day as well, we divide up the kids and we have one sit next to each of us.
- 4) During the week before school, a letter will be emailed to each student from their teacher. Please read this with your child so they can learn a bit about the teacher they will meet via Zoom on the first day of school. We will not be giving out class placement information until these letters are emailed out. There are a number of factors that may cause us to make adjustments to classes prior to the week before school starts.
- 5) If your child is experiencing anxiety about being on Zoom for class meetings or about the school year, you are welcome to contact Counselor Denise Mullins (mullinsde@edmonds.wednet.edu) or Corey Anderson (andersonc693@edmonds.wednet.edu) who can arrange some support for the first week of school.
- 6) Whenever we offer curbside pickups of school materials for your child's grade level, but sure to come. You and your child might get to see your child's teacher in person to say a social distant, "Hello."

COVID19 is going to impact each family in different ways. Be sure to check the district's [family support page](#) if you find that your family is in need of financial assistance. I'm attaching a flyer for rent support in Snohomish County. Also, please don't forget that any student can pick up a free week's worth of breakfast and lunch at [these locations](#) until August 27th.

I look forward to another school year at Hilltop. Please know that our staff, teachers, PTSA and myself are going to work really hard to keep us all connected, supported and learning during the upcoming school year. We have a number of ideas of ways to do this. Stay tuned! More information will be coming this month.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Somoza". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melissa Somoza, Principal  
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