



HIGH PLAINS HAWKS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
— EVERY CHILD · EVERY DAY —

August 13, 2020

Dear High Plains Community,

Hello and Welcome Back!

I would like to start by thanking you for welcoming me to the High Plains community. Since the day I was announced as Principal, I have received a continuous flow of kind emails, phone calls and even flowers! I know that many of you had to make tough decisions about how students would return to school. Some families chose to attend the K-5 online program. We will miss them this year! I believe once a hawk, always a hawk, we still consider you part of the High Plains family and hope that you will continue to stay in touch with our community events via messages sent through Blackboard Connect and PTCO communication.

The staff at High Plains have been working hard all summer to plan for a safe opening of school and to implement best practices to mitigate the risks associated with Covid-19. All classrooms and learning spaces have been modified to increase social distancing. Signage was placed to indicate the “highway system” for walking in halls and physical distancing and our schedule has been modified to allow for time for masks breaks, hand washing, and opportunities to access outdoor learning spaces. Also, stronger emphasis will be placed on teaching culturally responsive social emotional learning; teachers will deliver instruction using the Second Step program in all of our K-5 classrooms.

We know this will be a non-typical year and it will present challenges; however, we are going to stay planned and positive. Our theme, “We got this!” will be exemplified throughout the year. Your partnership and support are key to ensuring that we are able to maximize each student’s skills and talents. To that end, we encourage a positive home-school relationship based on the mutual goal of providing the best learning experience possible for all of our students.

I am eager to open the doors for students! It is an honor and privilege to serve as your Principal. I will be outside each morning and afternoon so please stop by and say hello. Together, I know we will make this unique school year one that exemplifies creativity and growth for all children. As always, please reach out if you have any questions and I look forward to meeting you soon.

Warmest regards,

Unique Cooper
Principal

Important information is detailed below:

New Staff

Karina Lozano-Martin - Karina has a unique story! She always knew she wanted to be a teacher! She attended High Plains as a student, student-taught at High Plains and will join the 4th grade team this year.

Sarah Frederick -Coming to High Plains as an instructional coach in CCSD, Sarah brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience. She will join the 3rd grade team this year.

Megan Minno- Megan is new to Colorado and has lots of classroom experience. She is excited to work with our Talent Pool and Gifted and Talented students.

Jocelyn Cummins- A new arrival from Arizona, Jocelyn will be a part time Learning Disability teacher.

Amanda Castanuela- Amanda will be our part time Speech Language Pathologists.

Welcome to all the new Hawks in the building!

Facilities Update

In preparation for the upcoming year, some changes have been made to increase our safety protocols. The following changes are listed below:

- A three-person hand washing station was installed in the cafe to provide wash their hands before they eat;
- New concrete was poured for the back sidewalk;
- All classrooms and spaces for student learning have been cleaned and rearranged in order to provide students with more space in the classroom;
- Signage is posted to indicate the “highway system” for walking in halls and physical distancing;

- Informational decals placed in bathrooms to indicate maximum capacities;

A huge thanks to David Brown for keeping our building top notch!

Masks/Face Coverings

Our motto is “Keep your teacher healthy, wear a mask!” In order to keep everyone safe, all students and staff are required to wear a mask/face covering. While there are students who will not be able to wear a mask/face covering due to health conditions, we will work with them to ensure the best plan for safety. We will have times such as lunch, recess and during strong physical activity that masks/face coverings can be removed.

First Week Schedule

As mentioned in the Community Forum, school will look very different from past years. In an effort to prepare students for the changes, we will utilize a “phase in” process for the first week only. In an effort to provide support to students and staff and to ensure that everyone understands safety protocols, we will implement a gradual return to school based on the following schedule. **Monday 8/24 will be the first day when all students will be in the building at the same time.**

Monday 8/17: 5th grade only

Tuesday 8/18: 4th grade only

Wednesday 8/19: 3rd grade only

Thursday 8/20: 2nd grade only

Friday 8/21: KG/1st grades only

Reminders

Please see the list of reminders as we work together to provide a safe and secure environment for our community:

- Students will have a “soft start” to the day beginning at 7:45 -8:15 each student will wash their hands before they go into the classroom;
- **Breakfast begins at 8:00 a.m.** and will be delivered to the classrooms;
- We will not have visitors and volunteers in the building to prevent the spread of virus;
- We recommend that student bring a clean water bottle to school each day;
- Changes in morning drop off and afternoon pickup will require parents to have patience while they go to the designated locations for their students
- There will be no Lost and Found, so please remember to write your child’s name on their items

