



January 28, 2022

Dear Helena Public Schools Families and Staff,

First light is brightening our morning commutes, the sun is shining, and we have successfully completed a full week of school. I would like to thank each and every one of our families for making this week possible. We may not all agree on the best approach to COVID, but it's clear that our school communities are pulling together to fight it.

At the district level, we're encouraged by lower COVID case numbers over the past few days. We will closely follow case rates through next week and will be ready to adjust our response protocols as appropriate. As always, we continue to work closely with local health officials to consider county-wide conditions, such as hospitalization rates. However, I see light at the end of the tunnel and expect that one day soon COVID will no longer be a recurring topic in my Friday messages.

While the virus has, out of necessity, dominated many communications you have received this school year from me, your school principal, and your teacher, it hasn't dominated our work with your child. Your teachers and para educators have shown extraordinary resiliency over the past six months to provide students with as normal a school experience as possible. Meanwhile, they continue to deliver sound instructional practices to ensure that students are academically and emotionally supported, challenged, and ready to learn. At the end of an especially challenging week, please take the opportunity to thank them.

A primary focus for teachers and para educators this school year has been closing learning gaps resulting from the pandemic. Today I'm sharing the district's [Mid-Year Report to the Community](#), which details our initiatives to identify learning deficiencies and provide students the support they need. The report also outlines the district's broader academic, health, and operational progress and goals. We are committed to keeping you well-informed and hope you enjoy this snapshot of all that is happening in the district this year. We will have a further opportunity to share academic progress with the release of our iReady student assessment results in the coming weeks.

The forecast says it will be a beautiful weekend. I hope you can find a bit of time to get outdoors and soak up the sunshine.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Rex Weltz', is positioned below the 'Respectfully,' text.

Rex Weltz  
Superintendent, Helena Public Schools