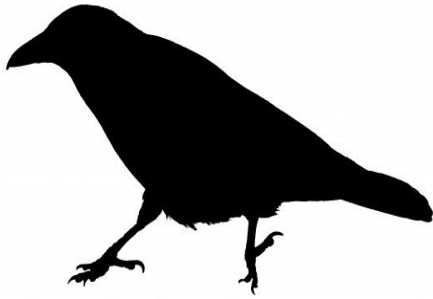


"As the Crow Flies", Vol. I, #14

-Blogposts by Patrick Walsh, BBE Superintendent



Good Afternoon, BBE! We are now at the end of the first quarter; it seems like such an achievement, thank you to everyone for getting us this far. Educationally, things look pretty normal at school with fun, educational activities, and school, other than the social distancing and masking reminders. We are always thinking about safety.

We had a great Ground-Breaking ceremony on October 12. You are seeing more fences, big vehicles and other remodeling from the project. Can you imagine how happy we will be next Fall when this project is done and we will be fully back to being the BBE we know and love? Like you, everything we speak of is muffled by COVID and the pandemic.

I wonder how our children will look back on this experience? As a young kid, I remember doing nuclear fallout drills in school. We would all get in line and march down into the fallout shelters as a function of the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1961. This was 1970-1972 before we quit doing it. I remember the curiosity of looking at the barrels of food that were down there (crackers, MRE's, powdered goods, etc.). In the long run, I don't think it affected us that much, even to the point that many of my classmates don't even remember doing it. So, there is optimism that our children can access the future. They'll probably have many great memories through this, as well as some not-so-good ones.

As the letters home attest, we did see a rise in cases in our JKC/Preschool last week. This caused a lot of stress for families, and quite frankly, our school this week. I have to hand it to everyone (admin, teachers, parents, students) in the district for even making this week happen with all the circumstances we had to put both the ill, quarantined and the people in attendance under. Once again, great job BBE! **Reminder: Monday, 10/26 is an E-Learning for all students K-12.**

Health officials are telling us to remind people of the pods you and your families are spending close time with. They expect COVID numbers to rise quickly in the flu season. For us, we know that this will result in more quarantines and infections, as well as many more staff being out, either sick or being quarantined. The more we can avoid any breakouts, the better chance of us remaining with daily attendance. As a district, we believe that we are *at least* as safe from a COVID spread perspective by going to school each day as opposed to Distance Learning.

However, if we are in DL, we still need to begin the planning process of how to make this method of learning be a winner, too. We need to look at doing DL for a long haul situation--as many students in K-12 and college are doing so--and how we can find its advantages, too.

The COVID numbers in Minnesota, Stearns County and BBE are rising, and ultimately, these are the numbers we need to base our decisions on. We are lucky that we do NOT have a lot of cases of staff and students at BBE. This allows us to continue with our current plan as long as we can do it *safely*. **We are still planning on our current learning models for the period from November 3-12.** Despite this, we do know that any negative statistics that COVID progresses in our area will cause us to have no decision to make. We will likely be in Distance Learning soon.

Overall, this could result NOT from staff and students that have COVID in our school district, but also because of the numbers of students and staff that are having to stay home on quarantine due to COVID-related concerns. Thus far, we have had some choice, but we are ever so close to the levels that have been set up to go Distance Learning by the State. **By November 3, I want every family to have an e-learning plan in place for your children -- all children in the BBE school district -- so they are ready if/when we go to full Distance Learning.**

If we do have to go full DL, we will be planning a great education in spite of it. There are outcomes in DL that we probably can't achieve in traditional schooling that we need to be mindful of. I was just in a meeting with Ms. Field this morning; it made me think how I can do things better during those DL times, as well. Just to try something, I am hosting a Parent Zoom on Monday to try to personally become more involved in DL as an administrator. I admit; I haven't done that as well as I could. Join me [HERE](#) at **12:30pm on 10/26 for a Parent Zoom** on how we as parents can help to shape online learning experiences. Passcode: bbesupt

We want to thank you for your pre-screening that you are doing at home. "If you are sick, stay home" is our message. When people develop symptoms, eventually they are screened for COVID. Always consider the potential for contraction. If you do go to new areas and new people, use social distancing with these people, consider social pods that you will feel safer with, as well as masking when and where it is recommended. We are currently "on fire", but we will get by it soon. I will leave you with a quote below that reminds us that eventually the "wood" will run out. Go Jaguars! ~Mr. Patrick Walsh, BBE Superintendent

["We weren't sure what this coronavirus would do because we've never witnessed a pandemic of a coronavirus before. Now we know it's kind of a super forest fire. It just keeps burning and burning and burning wherever there is human wood."](#) ~Dr. Osterholm, U of M, Aug 16, 2020