



June 24, 2020,

Fall Planning: Update and Timeline

Dear COLA Students, Families, Colleagues and Partners,

Recently, we wrapped up a school year like we have never seen before that brought uncertainty and unforeseen challenges for our students, their families, educators, and our school communities.

On behalf of COLA, I want to take a moment to thank you for your persistence with this school year. Our students, their families, and every single teacher, paraprofessional, bus driver, food service worker, custodian and administrator worked so hard to make this the best spring it could be. As an educator for over 10 years, my heart was in this every step of the way.

As we look ahead to the next school year, the health and safety of our students will continue to be our number one priority. That's why we're utilizing WERBC, Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidance documents designed to help Minnesota tribally controlled schools plan for the 2020-21 school year.

COLA has been asked to create three different contingency plans based on three possible scenarios that the virus could put us in – in-person learning for all students, hybrid learning, and distance learning. It is possible that next year, just like we saw this year, we may need to shift our educational delivery model's mid-year based on what is best for public health, and the health and safety of our students, their families, and our school staff. We will be reaching out to parents/guardians, of expected students of return for this upcoming 2020-2021 school year, to join focus groups for each possible scenario of return.

Ultimately, we know that schools and families are anxious to know which scenario we will be in this fall and we just don't know yet. However, MDE and MDH have stated commitment to announcing their recommendation for which educational delivery model would be the most appropriate for this coming school year **no later than the week of July 27th**. While we are uncertain about how the pandemic will evolve over the next couple of months, the proactive planning COLA is doing this summer will ensure our school's communities are prepared for whatever this school year brings.

Sincerely,

Jenna Leadbetter
School Superintendent