

July 23, 2021

USD 345 Staff and Families:

I hope this message finds you all enjoying your summer with excitement building for the 2021-2022 school year. It is my hope that our year ahead looks and feels more “normal” for our staff, students and families while keeping everyone healthy and safe.

Please take some time looking over our [District Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services](#) for the 2021-2022 school year. Please note that safety measures may change as we follow the impact of COVID-19 in our community. At this time, masks and other COVID related mitigation strategies will be optional for students, staff, and visitors in our buildings when we return. Unvaccinated individuals are encouraged to wear masks inside our buildings.

We continue to work closely with the Shawnee County Health Department as we monitor and respond to positive cases in our buildings. The health and safety of our staff, students, and community remain our number one priority as we move forward with the new school year. Please be aware of additional vaccination clinics scheduled in our community as they become available. [USD 345 hosted clinics will be posted to our vaccination webpage.](#)

As we work through the impact of the pandemic, especially to address learning loss and social-emotional needs of our children, we are met with a new item of concern with national discussion around critical race theory. Critical race theory is not a part of USD 345’s academic standards, [which align to KSDE standards](#), and I would like to take a moment to share a statement from the Kansas State Board of Education regarding critical race theory.

[Kansas State Board of Education response to critical race theory claims](#)

Our vision is, “**Learning Without Limits,**” and our mission specifies, “**To prepare each student for lifelong success through strong and healthy relationships, rigorous and relevant learning, and a responsive and caring culture that maximizes student talents, aspirations, and community contributions.**” Diversity, equity, inclusion, and academic achievement are important and relevant as we continue to focus on the different needs of each student. We succeed in our vision and mission when each student feels safe, supported, accepted, challenged, and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Our community values the importance of togetherness, family, and supporting each other. The work around diversity, equity, and inclusion with our administrative staff is an effort to ensure that all of our families and students feel they are connected to our school community. We will always strive towards an educational environment of respect, integrity, and understanding.

In closing, I am proud to serve as your superintendent of schools. Our school community is a great place to learn, live, and grow. Our collective efforts on behalf of all of our students will help

them achieve their fullest potential. Let's work together to make this the best year ever of, "Learning Without Limits."

Sincerely,

Dr. Steve Noble
Superintendent