

# **GREAT MEADOWS REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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December 23, 2020

Dear GMRSD Community:

Welcome to the end of 2020! The past year will certainly be remembered as the "Year of Covid-19," as a global pandemic that began on the other side of the globe made its way into our daily lives. And what began as a planned two-week hiatus and virtual learning experiment in March became a months-long process that upended education as we knew it. A time of shutdowns, lockdowns, hybrids, and masks descended upon us quickly and our view of the world was altered.

I wish to begin by sending well wishes to anyone who has been affected by Covid-19. While the pandemic has touched all of us in some way, there are many who have felt its impact much harder. Please know that we in Great Meadows Regional School District are here for you should you need support or assistance and our condolences are with those who have suffered a loss.

While 2020 will always have a negative connotation, there were also many positives from which we can build as we move into the new year: the teamwork on display in March as teachers and families prepared for the unknown; the early days of Twitter videos and Google Meets and the way teachers and students connected; virtual morning announcements and daily story times; a community united in its efforts to do whatever it took to provide for our students; virtual band performances; improved internet capabilities and each student getting his or her own device; and the resilience shown by teachers and students to adjust to the new norms and continue growing. This process has not been perfect, but the collective effort of our school community has kept us moving forward despite the obstacles we have faced.

As the dawn of 2021 approaches, so does the potential for great things. The possibility is growing that we can move past Covid-19 and return to focus more on student achievement and less on pandemic planning. We can, perhaps, unplug our devices and celebrate our achievements together. We are not there yet, but we will be. And when that time arrives, celebrate we will!

Today, I wish you good health and safety and may you enjoy the holidays and Winter Break with those you love. You have all worked extremely hard as teachers, parents, and students. You have earned this time to relax. Thank you for supporting our efforts and know that we are always stronger together. Have a wonderful holiday and an even better 2021!

Sincerely,

Michael Mai  
Superintendent of Schools  
Director of Special Services  
Great Meadows Regional School District