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**HOLLAND INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**SHANE DOWNING, Superintendent**

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July 31, 2020

Dear Students, Parents, Faculty and Staff:

Holland ISD is so ready to see, interact, teach and support your students. We are sorry we could not begin in August, but it just did not work out. This has been a crazy ride, and we know the students will need additional support and time to get back into the learning process.

Collaboratively, the Bell County Superintendents and the Bell County Health Officials agreed that our county is not in a good position to begin school in August. After the Attorney General released his opinion concerning the Health Departments Authority, we still believe it is not what is best for our communities at this time. I can tell you that it is everyone's plan to offer in-person and at-home learning on September 8, 2020, as long as, our communities continue to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

The new calendar for 2020-2021 has several changes to it. The format is different, but we will also be attending school 20 minutes longer than last year, 480 minutes per day. We will be on a nine week grading cycle instead of our typical six week cycle. This plan offered some flexibility to us, and we had already been exploring the nine week cycle option as a possibility. Unfortunately, there is a possibility that we will have to close school for short periods of time for cleaning. Therefore, we added a few bad weather days during our November break. Lastly, the semester usually ends before Christmas, but we could not get enough days in before the break, so it will end in January.

We have been working hard on a calendar and a plan to create the safest learning environment for our students and staff. We seem to have a difficult time reading the minds of the many officials that are giving school districts recommendations, and then it changes multiple times in a week. Currently, we have a plan for re-opening our school district that will be publicized at least a week before registration.

The goal has been for Holland ISD to provide parent/student choice for the delivery method of instruction to the students. The survey results from early July stated that most students were planning to return to school in person, so starting school remotely was not the best option for our community. The current calendar will provide the opportunity for a student to receive their instruction on-campus or at-home starting September 8, 2020.



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Registration will take place on August 25 and August 26 from 9:00am to 7:00pm. The process will be spread out in the new Hornet Gym, Cafeteria and Cindy Gunn Student Center. We will limit the number of families allowed inside the buildings. More information about the process will be coming soon. **At registration, parents/students will choose on-campus or at-home learning for the student.**

On-campus and at-home instruction plans are being finalized. Most of the information from our survey seems to be meeting our needs at this time, but, just like the weather in Texas, give it an hour and it will probably change. The on-campus learners will have challenges with masks and separation from others, but the at-home learners will need to be an independent, motivated learner to keep up with the daily expectations without a teacher prompting them. Each parent/student will have to decide quickly what works best for their family.

Please continue to visit the Holland ISD webpage or Facebook for more information. We will also continue to send emails through our broadcast message system.

Thank you for your patience through the pandemic, please stay safe and healthy,

Shane Downing  
Holland ISD Superintendent