



Carl J. Florea
Office of the Mayor
City of Leavenworth

August 19, 2020

Community Members,

It is hard to believe that summer has flown by and we are discussing fall and the changes that will come with that. We will be missing our festivals in an effort to keep our community safe. As we have seen from our recent past, and the ongoing challenges that have come with opening up our economy in the midst of this pandemic, this battle we are in is much more like a marathon than the sprint that many of us were hoping for when this began. It is a long, frustrating, exhausting journey we are on. But at least we are on the journey together. The cooperation, support, encouragement, understanding, and patience we can and do give to one another makes this place extra special. We continue our cooperative meetings with the Chamber and other businesses about what is working and not working to keep us moving forward safely downtown. It is gratifying to see how many more of our visitors are respecting the need to wear masks. We know that is a key to get our cases down to continue to move forward.

But lately, my thoughts have been focused around our schools. Our students, their families, our teachers and administrators and their families. The rest of the Cascade School District staff. There is nothing about this that is even close to ideal, and much of it is, through no fault of anyone involved, downright detrimental to our kids, their learning needs, and their socialization needs. We know that there are stubborn food security issues that are complicated by this pandemic. We know that there are home environments that are less than conducive to learning. We know that there are child care issues that are difficult, despite the best efforts of our district and the YMCA to address them. Yet, despite all of these challenges, all the difficulties that will need to be mitigated and somehow endured, school will begin, and they will do their very best to educate our young people the best they can, given these conditions.

And that is where the rest of us come in. We keep saying, throughout this pandemic, that we are all in this together. Let's show that with our schools. My wife and I, in all honesty, have said a number of times how fortunate we are that we are not trying to raise our three boys during this pandemic. Parenting is a challenge under the best of circumstances. I really cannot fathom how families are holding on and holding together during these added stresses. All I can say is, I want to encourage all of us, whether we have children currently in school or not, to find ways to support all those involved. One huge thing we can all do is to encourage all of those involved. Appreciate them and their struggles. Offer help when you can, by watching a neighbor's kids, by sharing a meal, by giving heartfelt messages of appreciation. And by offering lots of grace and space to struggle and do the best we can, which might just mean withholding criticism. If we have suggestions, let us offer them in as positive a way as possible. Let's remember that no one, not administrators, not teachers, not parents have taken any classes or done any previous trainings for the situation we are now facing. Let's give them support, let them know they are appreciated, and cheer them on as best we can. Let's look out for one another, check in with one another, ask how best we can support and ease the struggles of our fellow community members. Each small thing we can do might just make a big difference in the lives of our neighbor, whether student, teacher, helper, caregiver. No one should have to face this marathon alone. Let's make sure they don't! Stay safe!



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