



Buena Vista School District

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BV Schools COVID-19 District Response UPDATE 4.21.2020

On April 20, 2020, Governor Polis announced the *Stay at Home* Order for the state of Colorado would expire on April 27, 2020 and he provided guidance for a "*Safer at Home*" phase focused on continued protection while also moving to recovery. To view slides from the Governor's press conference, [click here](#).

The *Safer at Home* phase gives guidance that education should remain closed to in person learning. The press release stated, "There are three levels of social distancing, which include: *Staying at Home*, *Safer at Home*, and *Protect our Neighbors*. On April 27, the state will be moving onto the *Safer at Home* phase. During this phase Coloradans will no longer be ordered to stay home, but are still strongly encouraged to do so. Vulnerable populations and seniors must continue staying home except when absolutely necessary and K-12 school districts and postsecondary institutions will continue to suspend normal in-person instruction until the end of the school year." Governor Polis' Executive Order related to school closing will be coming shortly.

While we are saddened to know we will not be returning together, this was expected, and we will continue a high level of connection with all of our students. As well, we will continue to work with our local public health agency to create plans for phased, small groups of students to return to the building for pick up of personal items, eventual return of student devices and books, and other closing activities. We will do so with strict physical distancing practices in place and following all established protocols. We want our students to be able to end this most unusual school year with some visual closures and connections to the spaces where they have grown this year. Plans will be forthcoming.

The end of in person learning also marks the end of our spring sports seasons. To our student-athletes, and especially our seniors, we are so very sorry you are not able to participate this year. Our hearts are heavy for you.

The announcement of continued distance learning through the remainder of the school year was anticipated and likely not a surprise to most. However, with it now being a reality, we all need to pay attention to our mindsets regarding this extension. There will likely be new challenges ahead in the remainder of the school year; there are immediate challenges I believe we need to address together: four additional weeks will take a toll on sustaining engagement for students, teachers, and families alike. Our teachers have already been working together to envision new and "fresh" ways of connecting with students to keep them inspired, positive, and excited during these last four weeks of school. Our driving question will be to ask ourselves, "How can we keep them coming back?" Families, keep encouraging your children, continue to give them space to explore their interests, and be assured knowing we will get back on track in achieving academic milestones in time. We will continue to provide opportunities and practice for your children through these four weeks and our promise is to build upon the growth from this entire year, both in person and distance learning, when we return so each student reaches the peak of success.

We will continue our meal program at least through the school year and are evaluating the need to continue this program through the summer.

Please see at the end of this update information about our new Grove Early School Director/Assistant Principal, Liz Barnaby and new BVHS principal, Jon Ail. As we continue to navigate our present reality, we look forward with excitement in welcoming these two new leaders to our district.

Now, maybe more than ever, is the time to stay connected. There is a lament in this time and sharing in the loss, as well as celebrating our collective hope that it will not always be this way, is essential to living in community.

well. Please join our staff and families every Friday through the school year at 7:30 pm for *Friday Night Lights* parade. We will turn the lights on at our football stadium and baseball stadium (at the River Park) and staff will be lined up to wave and see you all. Take time to hop in the car and join us for this weekly connection. It is worth it.

Take Care. Be Well.



Lisa Yates
Superintendent
Buena Vista School District

Meet Ms. Liz Barnaby, The Grove Early School Director/Assistant Principal



Liz joins the district team with 13 years of teaching experience and has served as an assessment coordinator for her district. Liz is eager to join the staff in continuing and building upon the excellent early childhood experience at the Grove. Liz is credentialed as a principal and will bring this knowledge and skill to support preschool and kindergarten students and staff. She believes in leading others by empowering them to see their greatest potential.

Liz is excited to serve the Buena Vista community with experience and energy. She loves children, learning, and empowering others. "I plan to build trust by connecting, supporting, and showing value to the vision of the Buena Vista School District."

Liz and her family are adventurous, enjoy being outdoors skiing, hiking, camping and kayaking and are looking forward to their transition to Buena Vista from Woodland Park.

Meet Mr. Jon Ail, Buena Vista High School Principal



Jon is excited to work and live in a school district where he can build close, meaningful relationships with staff, students, and families, pursue academic excellence for all students, and anticipate the next state championship waiting just around the corner.

As an educator with 20 years of experience, he's taught high school math in PA, KS, and CO at a variety of schools and in a variety of settings. Jon has sponsored a number of student groups, coached several sports, and even presented at the NCTM Conference in Boston, MA. These last four years, he served his community as a high school principal where he led his young school to its first ever US News ranking as one of the top 1,000 high schools in the country. He is passionate about pursuing academic and athletic success, ensuring school safety, and promoting the wellbeing of hardworking staff and students.

When he's not roaming the hallways, visiting classrooms, or attending Friday night football games, Jon might be seeking some quiet time mountain climbing, hunting, or doing odd jobs around the house (which, oddly enough, he loves to do). Or he may be enjoying time with his wife watching *This Is Us* and *Yellowstone*, walking their dogs, or cheering wildly for the Philadelphia Eagles.

Jon and his wife are very much looking forward to this next step as they pursue their dream of living in the CO mountains within a community of wonderful, caring people.