

**JOHN J. FLYNN ELEMENTARY**

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**Dear Flynn Families,**

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year!  The staff members at Flynn are very excited to welcome your students back in person five days each week! We hope your summer has been enjoyable, and that you and your students are looking forward to the growth that will occur over this school year. This letter provides logistics to start the year. You may also find more details, including the supply list, on our “2021-2022 Back to School Information for Flynn” web page under the “About” tab. Also, the District calendar may be found at the top of each web page.

**Background on Mr. Schmitt, Principal of Flynn**

I am beginning my 32nd year with the Eau Claire Area School District. I came to Eau Claire in 1990 and found it to be a wonderful place to learn and grow. I started my career teaching at North High School for 16 years before working at the Administration Building in a variety of roles (Curriculum, Technology, and now Teaching & Learning). Like other principals at our smaller elementary schools, I will continue to have responsibilities at the District level leading the Teaching & Learning Department. Fortunately, the world of video conferencing will allow me to spend most of my time at Flynn!

**Background on Flynn Elementary School**

Flynn is one of the 14 elementary schools in the Eau Claire Area School District.  Built in 2002, it replaced Boyd Elementary School on Main Street.  Flynn is a beautiful school built with the mindset that natural light in every learning space will help to maintain a peaceful environment and one that helps continue to connect students to the outdoors. Flynn has large classrooms, wide hallways, and individual lockers for each child.  Flynn is also a school that was designed and built with energy conservation in mind.  As a school we practice earth-friendly behaviors and continue to be good stewards of our shared environment.

**Flynn, a school of peace**

Flynn Elementary is an International Peace Site.  Part of the World Citizen group, international peace sites like Flynn, help to empower communities to educate its residents to live in a peaceful world.  Locations like Flynn, commit to five “Peace Actions”:

*Seek peace within yourself and others*

*Reach out in service*

*Protect the environment*

*Respect diversity*

*Be a responsible citizen of the world*

Using this, as we travel far and wide with our families, our family groups and others, we take our peace with us.  This is why you will see maps in the front of the building of locations around the world where students, staff and friends of Flynn bring peace on their travels. If you would like to learn more about peace sites around the world go to: [www.peacesites.org](http://www.peacesites.org)

**COVID-19**

The Delta variant has created new challenges to the District. **Masks are required for all staff and students to start the school year.** Only visitors who are considered essential to the delivery of curricular programming are allowed in District buildings. This also means that activities outside of the school day will either not occur or be held virtually to start the school year. To keep updated on the District’s COVID-19 response, please go to [www.ecasd.us/COVID-19](http://www.ecasd.us/COVID-19).

**Welcome Back Day**

Welcome Back Day on September 1 will be conducted like last year. Classroom teachers will make phone calls to each family on their roster. This is how families will find out who their teacher is, as well. We will also send an email to all families near September 1 with a website link where they can learn more about their classroom teacher and expectations for the school year. Students will attend classes in person beginning September 2. (Half of the Kindergarten students will come on September 2, the other half on September 3, and all of them begin each day the following week.)

**Student Arrival and Dismissal**

School begins at 8:40 am each day and ends at 3:40 pm. We strongly encourage walkers and those being dropped off to arrive to school as close to 8:40 as possible. Students riding the bus will arrive around 8:30. Supervision will begin at 8:30 and all students will go to the playground to line up. The playground will not be available for play before school. Families picking up their students at the end of the day will wait outside of the fence by the playground area.

**Breakfast and Lunch**

Breakfast and lunch will be free again this year for all students. Breakfast will be eaten in the classroom, as it was last year. Lunch will take place in the cafeteria, which is different from last year.

**The Responsive Classroom approach at Flynn**

Along with Flynn being a “school of peace” we are also a school that supports the “Responsive Classroom” methodology to universal teaching and behavioral expectations in school. The *Responsive Classroom* emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. Developed by classroom teachers, the approach consists of strategies for helping children build positive academic and social-emotional competencies and relationships.  For further information on how Flynn uses “RC” please visit: [www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org)

**CharacterStrong – PurposeFull People: Social Emotional Learning**

The District has adopted a new Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum: PurposeFull People, developed by CharacterStrong. This the first time the District will have a coordinated SEL curriculum PreK-12. There will be regular SEL lessons throughout the school year. To learn more, go to <https://characterstrong.com/curricula/elementary>.

**Faces at Flynn**

The start of the 2021-22 school year brings with it new faces to Flynn.

* Eva Peck: Primary teacher
* Brooke Bergeman: Primary teacher
* Annisa Luginbill-Weiss: Intermediate teacher
* Aaron Hanson: Physical Education
* Christine Martin: Special Education Assistant

We also have faces returning to Flynn after serving other buildings last year for the pandemic.

* Nita Sykora: Instructional Coach
* Anjeanette Steltz: Library Media Specialist
* Heidi Wendtland: Interventionist
* Heidi Hebert: Interventionist

**YMCA School Aged Child Care (SACC)**

We recently learned the YMCA will not be running a before and after school program at Flynn to begin the school year. They are currently experiencing a staff shortage and do not have the staff to house all District sites. They will be transporting children to and from the downtown YMCA that are enrolled for care at Flynn elementary. They expressed hope that this will change shortly and they will be able to move back to Flynn.

Throughout the school year you will receive family newsletters from our Partnership Coordinator, Jessica Hoff. We hope you will find these communications helpful in our collective efforts to support your family.

Sincerely,



Jim Schmitt

Principal