

Good afternoon parents, this is Vaughn White, Superintendent of Hesperia Community Schools with an important update.

Parents, our Return to School Roadmap Committee has been meeting and preparing for our return to school this fall. There are many decisions that are being made to provide a safe and healthy environment for students and staff as we move closer to a 5 day a week schedule beginning August 31.

Despite our best efforts to provide a safe environment, we acknowledge there are parents that will choose an online school option. Parents that make this choice could be sending their students' dollars to a virtual school somewhere else in Michigan or even the Nation. Because we wish to keep your child part of the Hesperia Community School District, our Roadmap Committee has worked to produce an online learning option that keeps local dollars flowing to our district. I would like to announce the launching of **Panther Virtual School** as an alternative choice for in-person instruction.

Much work has gone into producing this virtual school option. Even though a vast majority of the instruction will be provided by a third-party vendor, we feel it is important for students to still have that personal connection with our teachers.

The virtual school for the elementary K-5 is provided by an online learning system called **Calvert**. Calvert has been around for quite some time and has a history of proven effectiveness. Students enrolling in Calvert will be assigned their own on-line teacher to move them through the learning program. As part of the plan, elementary students will be assigned an in-district teacher to check-in and mentor students.

The secondary, 6-12 grades will have a virtual learning program run through Edmentum. Edmentum also has many years of experience with virtual learning. Students will work through course offerings with the support of our in-district virtual learning liaison. Because students working through course work will need support for content questions our in-district teachers will provide mentoring support.

Parents, you may learn more about Panther Virtual School through our District website. The deadline for completing the on-line application is Friday, August 14. Please note that should you choose this educational delivery model you will commit to a semester of this type of learning. You will also find that as a student of Hesperia Community Schools, you will retain the benefits and opportunities for participation in school events, sports, and extracurricular activities.

We know that an online option is not for everyone and this decision will be made carefully to assure the best learning for your child. Our teachers and staff miss your kids and are eager to get them caught up with their education after this significant time away from school. We hope to see most of them in the fall as we begin the school year and we can only hope that this pandemic will subside soon. Thank you and have a good evening.