



JAMES IRWIN CHARTER SCHOOLS

Character Development and Academic Excellence

May 14, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It has been a while since I took time to update everyone on what we have been doing at James Irwin Charter Schools. This has been a crazy year for all of us, and I know that we are all ready to return to some sense of normalcy in our schools, work, and personal lives. I hope that, despite the turmoil that has occurred the last year, you have experienced some joy and happiness during these times.

As an organization we have learned a lot about what we can do when faced with adversity, and I know that the constant, unplanned shutdowns and quarantines have been a struggle for families. As the leader of this amazing organization, I am impressed with how well families have handled these challenging times, and I thank you for sticking with us as we navigate rough waters. We are currently of the mindset that quarantines will look quite a bit different next year. Although nothing is official, school leaders across the state are pushing hard to minimize the frequency of quarantines for next year and we are attempting to eliminate the requirement for healthy people to quarantine. As soon as I have more information about this topic, I will forward it to everyone.

Despite the media reporting that 40 percent of teachers are planning to leave the profession at the conclusion of this school year, we have experienced one of our lowest turnover rates in our 21-year history. This is exceptionally good news because we know that having returning teachers and leadership equates to a better education for our students. In the business office, we are working diligently to refine our processes, reduce waste, and find ways to improve salaries for our teachers and staff.

I have had several parents reach out to me about the possibility of continuing remote learning for the next school year. After discussions with your principals and other school leaders, we have made the decision to not offer full-time remote learning for the 2021-2022 school year. The workload created by allowing full-time remote learning is not sustainable for teaching staff, and the divided attention makes it extremely difficult to maintain high quality instruction. If state and local officials require JICS to quarantine, then we will teach all students remotely, however this will no longer be a full-time option for families. We know that in-person learning is best for most students, but if remote learning is something that you desire, we would be happy to advise you on other options.

Two weeks ago our trade school, Power Technical, was included in the filming of a documentary that discusses the need for skilled trades and more schools like Power



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Technical in our nation. The film will be released nationally and features the well-known advocate of trade education, Mike Rowe! We are excited to be included in this project, and I am told the film will be released later this summer. I will send a link to everyone once it becomes available.

As the school year ends, I hope that you and your family are doing well. I am always interested in feedback and suggestions on how we can improve. I am a part of JICS because I was looking for a better education for our own children, so your feedback and ideas are particularly important to me. Thank you for your continued support of JICS!

Sincerely,

Rob Daugherty, CEO

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