



# C.W. RUCKEL MIDDLE SCHOOL

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PAUL WHIDDON

Dear Parents,

Thank you for one of the best starts to a school year. The students have been great. I know that they are excited to get back to some normalcy. That normalcy was slightly altered during the first week of school. Because of the increased outbreaks of COVID the guidelines have been altered. We were looking forward to having our first pep rally in over a year and celebrating with our students. For now, all large events that are difficult to contact trace are on hold. We will reevaluate at the end of the month. Open House is also on hold along with school dances. It is our hope that we will be able to get back to these events before the year is over. The OCSD will outline all changes in a message that will go out Thursday evening.

We are going to have a PTO meeting on August 24th in the Media Center at 5:00pm. All parents and teachers are welcome. If we have a large turnout we will move to the cafeteria. Due to COVID, PTO has not had much activity for over a year. The money that has been raised by PTO over the years has been important in supplementing student and teacher needs, particularly in the area of technology. PTO uses school dances and a walk-a-thon to raise that funding. We have traditionally scheduled the walk-a-thon for October. Hopefully we will have a break in COVID and be able to host that event and have some school dances. Because of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation we need to fill all PTO officer positions. We will have a nomination and election on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

The School District is also in need of workers. As of now I have four jobs posted for which no one has applied. They are 10-month custodian, lunch room monitor, ESE classroom aide and classroom aide for band. If you are interested in one of these jobs or know someone that would please apply. There is also a need for bus drivers. I read a report today that some Florida school districts need 100 bus drivers. Fortunately, our district is not that far off but there is a need for drivers. Because of that need some of Ruckel's students get on their bus 45 minutes after school is released. If you can apply to be a bus driver.

Ruckel has a history of having great volunteers and mentors. At this point we are allowed to have both on campus. If you can, sign up to be a volunteer or mentor. We need front office help with attendance, clerk type work and some of the jobs listed above could be done voluntarily. There is no greater gift than serving the needs of children. We will have some bumps during this school year but I know and believe that it is going to be a great year. We are going to need to work together to make it work but if we keep children in the classrooms and away from online learning it will be worth the effort. One thing that will help is if your child is symptomatic or running a fever please keep them home until they are symptom free. This will keep cut down on the amount of contact tracing and keep more students in the classroom.

Again, I am looking forward to this school year and all that your child is going to accomplish.

Sincerely,

Paul Whiddon  
Principal Ruckel Middle School