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Dr. Patrick Shelton, Superintendent

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July 2, 2021

Dear District #7 Families,

It is an honor to be serving as the new Superintendent of District #7! I am excited to be joining District #7 and continuing the legacy of success while also moving forward in the implementation of our strategic plan. With the new school year right around the corner, it is an exciting time to be in District #7!

The 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years were both challenging for students, teachers, families and others in our community. Despite the many obstacles, I am proud of the collective effort of everyone in the District #7 community to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of our students. We continue to evaluate the ongoing needs which have become apparent as a result of the pandemic, and are currently focusing on the Return to Learn Plan for the 2021-2022 school year. As part of that plan, District #7 is focusing on:

- A return to the regularly scheduled full school day;
- Providing additional supports to students at each level in the areas of identified need; and,
- Providing a safe environment for students and staff.

A key question that continues to surface is whether face coverings will be required for students and/or staff. At this time, our district and others around the state are awaiting guidance from Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) that will help inform the decisions that District #7 makes. Until additional guidance is given, we will not be able to announce a decision on masks. District #7 will continue to follow the guidance and recommendations being made by health officials.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work with our local health officials and await additional guidance from ISBE and IDPH in order to finalize our Return to Learn Plan in the weeks ahead.

Finally, I would like to wish each of you a Happy Independence Day as we celebrate our nation's independence. Have a safe and happy holiday weekend!

With Tiger Pride,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Shelton".

Patrick Shelton, Ed.D.  
Superintendent