

08/31/2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

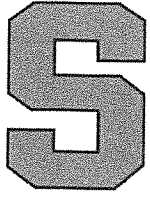
We hope that you are healthy and enjoying the end of a unique summer. Amongst all of the new safety procedures and online systems that we have been learning, the staff and administration of Saugatuck wish to be clear in our understanding that mental health will be critical for all students this year and beyond. Providing mental health supports to our students has always been our goal and the current pandemic only exacerbates that need. Thus, what follows is Saugatuck Public School's plan to address mental health in the coming school year.

Over the last few years, our district has undergone professional development on trauma and mental health and plans to continue this going forward. While we cannot foresee how the pandemic has impacted each and every student and their family, we know that it has. All decisions made in our back to school plan and about the year were made with the health and safety—both physical and mental—of every student in mind.

In light of all of the above, SPS plans to implement the following in order to best meet the mental health needs of all learners in the district:

- Universal mental health screeners done three times this school year
- A coronavirus-anxiety screener for secondary students to complete in the first days back
- A dedicated mental health crisis team in both buildings that will meet weekly
- A variety of ways for students to ask for help from mental health professionals
- A monthly community newsletter written by our school social workers that focuses on self-care, mental health, resilience, and more
- Targeted professional development for school staff focused on mental health
- An ever-updating, curated list of mental health supports to be public posted on the school website
- Ongoing collaboration with Spectrum Health and the Allegan County Sheriff's Department to provide mental health supports

Please be patient with us as we attempt to implement all of these things, along with the myriad other protective measures and new health routines that will be required. This plan will almost certainly need to be adjusted, modified, and added to once students are back. That said, we want you to know that we have spent countless hours over the past few months thinking about and developing ways to better support our students.



## Saugatuck Public Schools

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Finally, we would like to thank you, the parents and caregivers throughout the district. Without you, the last few months of remote learning for the 19/20 school year would not have been possible. We promise to do everything we can to help support your student and your family during this time.

Should you have questions about the mental health supports being provided by the district, please feel free to email Mr. Koerner at [jkoerner@saugatuckps.com](mailto:jkoerner@saugatuckps.com) or Mrs. Gibbie at [kgibbie@saugatuckps.com](mailto:kgibbie@saugatuckps.com) at any time. You can also call Central Office at (269) 857-1444 and ask to be directed to one of our voicemails. Be well and stay safe.

Warmly,

John Koerner  
Special Education Director

Katie Gibbie  
MS/HS Social Worker