

**RSU #16 School Board
Administrative Report
Shawn Vincent
Principal, Bruce M. Whittier Middle School
September 27, 2021**

Staff

- We have a big need for substitute teachers. It has been extremely helpful to have a full-time substitute in the building, but we are hoping to add some substitutes to the “as needed” roster.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

- This is the newsletter message we shared with families regarding times when students are required to quarantine:

It is extremely unfortunate that quarantining has become part of the school experience over the past couple of years. As a school, we put tremendous emphasis on daily attendance and participation. Requiring students to stay home is disheartening, and every phone call we make to quarantine students is hard. However, ultimately, we are following the protocol provided to us to protect the health and safety of our school and community. We care about our kids, our staff, and their families.

When students have to be out, they should check Google Classroom for each of their classes each day. Now that they have laptops, much of their work is posted online. If they have questions about any work, they should email the teacher for help. Teachers are asked to respond to email within 24 hours (excluding the weekend).

All students are assigned to BARR Case Managers. For the most part, this is the teacher that your child sees for their academic support class. It may feel overwhelming for a student to coordinate with six different teachers, and the BARR Case Manager can be a central point of contact if communication breaks down with other teachers. You and your child are encouraged to use the BARR Case Manager as a resource to stay connected with school.

When you have questions or you are not hearing back, please reach out. Dean of Students Sam Chatto and I will help in any way that we can. We want to make sure that your child is part of Whittier Middle School even when they can't be in the building.

- After one positive pool during our first round of pooled testing, we have had two consecutive rounds of all negative pools. We have a group of about ten staff pitching in to expedite the testing. It is done in 5-8 minutes on Tuesday mornings during homeroom.

Events

- Whittier students celebrated International Peace Day last week. The annual occasion, named by the United Nations twenty years ago, occurs every September 21. This year, 8th grade GaTE students led the efforts to bring attention to the theme by asking all students to respond in writing or art to the prompt, “I believe peace is possible IF. . .”
- Participation in school sports may be at an all-time high, especially amongst our grade 7 soccer players. It has been great to see so many involved and active.

Facilities:

- We continue to be very grateful for the opportunity to work and go to school in a well-kept building with beautiful grounds.