



**COTTER**  
SCHOOLS

WHERE STANDARDS, VALUES, *and you* MATTER

1115 WEST BROADWAY  
WINONA, MN 55987 USA  
PHONE: 507.453.5000  
WEB: COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG

August 19, 2020

Dear Cotter High School Students and Parents,

We are excited to welcome you to the 2020-21 school year! We are just a few days away from the start of the year, and while we hope you enjoy your last days of vacation, we have some important information to share with you.

Our teachers have missed you and are excited for your return to campus! We are thrilled to welcome three new high school teachers to our faculty. Ms. Kara Eken will join our Science Department as a Biology and Astronomy teacher. Dr. Mandy Straub will join our Science Department as well as the AP Physics instructor. Ms. Amber Atkinson will join our World Language Department as a Spanish instructor. We are grateful for their presence and willingness to share their knowledge and experience with our students.

Thank you for coming to school today to get your school picture taken and to pick up a number of items. Please sign and return the following forms on the first day of school to your first period teacher:

1. Acknowledgement of Receipt and Understanding of the Cotter Handbook - The updated Student Handbook for 2020-2021 will be available tomorrow on the student and parent portals. A COVID section outlining some required safety changes can be found at the beginning of the document.
2. The District 861 Forms for textbooks, health and counseling services - Cotter Schools can only receive state funds for these services if you complete the forms and check "I do request" where indicated.

Cotter Schools follows the guidelines of the School Immunization Law in Minnesota. Therefore, it is important that your child is up to date on his/her vaccinations. Please have this taken care of and up to date before school begins.

The webpage describing the School Immunization Law is:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/immunize/basics/kids.html>.

For the first two weeks of school, **Monday, August 24 - Friday, Sept. 4**, all high school students will come to school for five, alternating days.

Student Last Names beginning with A - K will come 8/24, 8/26, 8/28, 9/1, 9/3

Student Last Names beginning with L-Z will come 8/25, 8/27, 8/31, 9/2, 9/4

The school day begins at 8:45 am and ends at 2:55 pm. Students will follow a [seven-period day schedule](#) and attend all of their classes. Students may arrive at school between 8:15 am - 8:45 am. Students will be divided alphabetically between three doors to create a safe entry and exit process. The attached map indicates these locations.

Last names A-C and L-O will enter/exit the doors on Vila Street.

Last names D-G and P-S will enter/exit the doors on Cummings Street.

Last names H-K and T-Z will enter/exit the doors on 7th St.

Students entering the building after 8:45 am will need to enter through the Vila Street entrance / Door A.

We ask students to adhere to the following protocol when entering the building:

1. Students should approach their assigned entrance wearing a mask and follow social distancing protocols. Safety cones and floor markers will guide students through the entry.
2. Staff will greet students, ask the Health Assessment questions and take their temperature to confirm the student is feeling healthy.



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3. Students will be asked to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer as they enter the building.
4. Students will proceed directly to their classrooms and will not be permitted to gather in the hallways.

High school students will not be assigned lockers at this time. Students should bring their backpack and supplies with them to each class. The locker rooms in the basement of the St. Teresa building will be available for athletes who need to store athletic bags for after school activities.

There is no before or after school care at this time. Students must arrange transportation. If this is a concern for you, please contact Mr. Dave Forney directly at [dforney@cotterschools.org](mailto:dforney@cotterschools.org).

Students must bring a cold lunch with them to school. This will be in their backpack for the day, so plan accordingly. Students are recommended to bring a filled water bottle as well. Drinking fountains are only available to fill water bottles; the spout feature for individual drinking is not permitted at this time.

Students must also bring a laptop or chromebook with them to school each day for these two weeks. If students are in need of a chromebook for these two weeks of in-person instruction, please contact Mrs. DeMarais at [ademarais@cotterschools.org](mailto:ademarais@cotterschools.org). The students will be responsible for checking the chromebook in and out each day of the in-person learning period. It is imperative that students have a device, so please contact Mrs. DeMarais this week.

After two weeks of in-person instruction, high school students will begin Distance Learning on Tuesday, September 8. The daily schedule for distance learning can be found [here](#). Since the first week of Distance Learning is only four days long, A-Days will be on Tuesday, Sept. 8 and Thursday, Sept. 10, and B-Days will be on Wednesday, Sept. 9 and Friday, Sept. 12. There will be no in-person Wednesday classes during the week of Labor Day. Beginning the week September 14, A-Days will be on Mondays and Thursday, B-Days will be on Tuesdays and Fridays, and Wednesday will be reserved for alternating in-person classes. More specific information of in-person Wednesday classes will be coming soon.

We know there are a lot of changes this year, and we are asking each and every student and staff member to adjust to new protocols. This will take practice and reminders, but the health and safety of our community is our highest priority. Thank you for doing your part!

We are thrilled to be able to meet in person to begin the school year! We look forward to partnering with you to provide a great educational experience for our Cotter students and their families. Please let us know if we can be of any service to you. We are handling a high number of questions and requests at this time, and we will make every effort to get information out to all in a timely manner.

Sincerely,

Mary Eileen Fitch and Dave Forney  
Vice-Principals, Cotter Schools  
507-453-5017/[mefitch@cotterschools.org](mailto:mefitch@cotterschools.org)  
507-453-5106/[dforney@cotterschools.org](mailto:dforney@cotterschools.org)