

March 19, 2021

### An Open Letter of Thanks

The Superintendents from the Copper Country area schools meet monthly to discuss educational issues and work together to provide the best education possible for students. The last twelve months have been very difficult for local schools. A united goal for the Superintendents has been to do everything possible to provide face to face instruction and as many normal opportunities as feasible for students. During the March meeting, the group decided to thank all who have supported the education of Copper Country students during this challenging time.

The first thank you goes to the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department. During this past year, the WUPHD has worked with schools to help navigate the COVID-19 crisis. Many WUPHD officials have been available for area administrators to contact, including weekends. Even though state directives needed to be followed, the needs of area children were prioritized and they did their best to help keep schools open. When vaccines were made available to educators, the WUPHD did a great job coordinating with the CCISD and all area schools to ensure that all K-12 school staff who wanted the vaccine received it. This was an impressive logistical feat.

The next thank you goes to U.P. Health System Portage Hospital, Aspirus-Keweenaw Hospital, Baraga County Memorial Hospital and Upper Great Lakes Family Health Center. These organizations, along with WUPHD took time to meet with local superintendents once a week to help administrators understand the local COVID trends. This meeting facilitated informed decision making on how best to stay open.

The Copper Country Superintendents would like to thank all of the teachers for their dedication to students. Teachers have had to implement on-line tools and teach students virtually and face to face; in many cases, at the same time. Teachers have had to deal with disruptions to the school year including: varying instructional delivery, changes to how they take attendance and flexibility with grading student work. Over this past year, we have witnessed teachers working hard to build and maintain connections to their students. Students depend on their teachers; this region's educators take their responsibility very seriously.

We would also like thank support staff, including bus drivers, paraprofessionals, maintenance staff, office staff and kitchen staff. Everyone has had to step up and do something extra over the past year. When the pandemic first hit, it was imperative to feed students. Kitchen staff reported to work and kept making breakfasts and lunches and many schools became food distribution sites. Paraprofessionals and bus drivers helped deliver food and/or learning packets to families. Office staff continued reporting to work when buildings were closed. Maintenance staff have had to implement many enhanced cleaning protocols. Staff members have had to take on different roles to get everything done and have risen to meet the needs.

This last year has been a great challenge for many families. They have had to adjust their schedules and learn new modes for educating their child. The schools cannot be effective without the support of families. For that, we thank you.

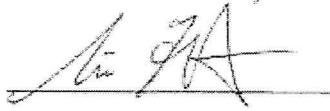
This year has by far been the hardest on students. Students have lost out on many opportunities, such as last year's senior trips and fun activities leading up to graduation. Last year, winter sports lost their opportunity to finish playoffs and spring sports never happened. Concerts, plays and many other events were cancelled and students were not able to say their goodbyes at the end of last year. This year, students have had many stops and starts. Students have had to switch between face to face and remote instruction and many typical activities have been held virtually or cancelled altogether. Sports seasons have been interrupted and shortened. We want to thank our students for doing their best to adapt and weather the unique challenges schools have faced through COVID-19.

This last year has truly been a tough one and we have been through a lot, but we have much to be thankful for. There are many dedicated individuals working together to help educate Copper Country students. We are proud that our schools opened for face to face instruction on day one, and though there were interruptions, we have persevered. We can see that COVID-19 trends are improving and we expect this to continue. Although this year has been difficult, we are so proud that our community has stepped up to do what is in the best interest of our students.

So, thank you to all of those who have worked hard over this past year. We appreciate all that you have done to help navigate the pandemic. We are committed to the future and staying positive as we move forward.

Sincerely,

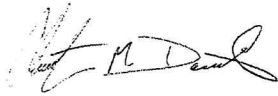
Local District Superintendents of Copper Country ISD  
(see signatures on next page)



Superintendent

  
Superintendent

Adams Township School District  
District



Baraga Area Schools

District

Keweenaw

  
Superintendent

Public Schools of Calumet, Laurium &

District

  
Superintendent

Chassell Township School District

District

  
Superintendent

Copper Country Intermediate School District

District



City Area K-12 School  
Superintendent

District

Dollar Bay-Tamarack

*Doreen L. Kramer*

Hancock Public Schools  
Superintendent

*Brad Colton*

Portage Township School District  
Superintendent

District

Houghton-

Lake Linden-Hubbell School District

Superintendent

District

L'Anse Area Schools  
District

Stanton Township School District

District