



Update from the Superintendent

To: Parents and Guardians
From: Mark McQueen, Superintendent
Date: April 5th, 2024

As we approach Monday's partial solar eclipse here in Bay County, I hope you're all gearing up for what promises to be a memorable event. While we're all excited about this celestial phenomenon, I want to draw your attention to an important matter concerning your child's safety during this event.

Acknowledging the risks associated with viewing the eclipse, particularly regarding eye safety, is crucial. Unfortunately, not all eclipse glasses provide adequate protection, and some have even been recalled in the past. Even legitimate glasses can be rendered ineffective if they are wrinkled, scratched, or bent. Moreover, the retina lacks pain receptors, meaning damage can occur without immediate symptoms. Children are especially vulnerable to solar retinopathy.

In light of these risks, I have made the difficult decision to keep all students indoors on Monday during the window of time we expect the eclipse to be visible in our area. We will utilize our "inclement weather" procedures for PE, recess and class change and will use the same procedures as the end of the day for school dismissal. This decision was made with your child's safety as the top priority.

It's worth noting that no parental permission slip can absolve the district of its responsibility for student safety. As educators, we are committed to providing a safe and supervised learning environment for all students, and we simply cannot compromise on this principle.

Instead, we will ensure that teachers have access to the NASA live stream of the eclipse so that students can still experience and learn from this extraordinary event safely. I encourage you to discuss the eclipse with your child and use online educational resources to enhance their understanding.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation as we prioritize the safety and well-being of our students. If you have any concerns or questions, please don't hesitate to let us know.