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COVID-19 & REMOTE LEARNING

I had planned to retire at the end of last year to concentrate on the election. However, I decided not to do so simply because it is important to me and, in fact, essential to stay connected to what is happening. It was a good decision on my part.

Before the E-Learning experience, I was convinced that SAFETY had to be the number 1 priority. I still believe that to be true. Every stakeholder in Anne Arundel County plays a vital role in our future and we cannot do anything to place at risk the life or the lives of Anne Arundel County citizens.

I recently watched a news report about a middle aged man, a father who was in great health and who was going about the business of raising a family and surviving in this Covid environment. Every one in his family was following the recommendations to social distance and wear their mask, everyone, except one of his teenage sons. One son decided to party and went to a party with friends but without a mask. Soon after, he started to cough and he had symptoms but they were very mild. At home, he did not wear a mask, and no one suspected that he had contracted Covid 19. Of course, he did, and he passed it to his father and all of the other members of his family, except for one sister. His father began to exhibit symptoms and it became very severe. He had to be hospitalized. In fact, he spent 45 days in the hospital at a cost of about one million dollars. He was on a ventilator for many days and he struggled not only with the illness but with the fact that he contracted the illness because of a son who wanted to have fun. He was angry, but it was his son. The anxiety was high because his wife and children did not know if they would lose him.

The great news is that he did survive and he has recovered from his battle with Covid. Unfortunately, the cost was very high. He has a hospital bill of over one million dollars and more importantly, he has to come to grips with what his son did and how he did jeopardize the safety of the family unit.

For me, this is a touching story about the POWER of relationships because he did forgive his son and they are still a family. At the end of the news report, they showed the teenage young man and his father hugging one another as he arrived home from the hospital.

In Anne Arundel County, we are also a family. We must learn from real life experiences such as this, that we must adhere to the advice given to us by the experts and we must follow that advice to the letter. Only then, will we see the light at the end of the tunnel and only then, will we be able to return to some semblance of normalcy.

SAFETY is still the number one concern. At the same time, I have learned that we MUST create a SAFE path that will lead us back face to face. Our superintendent and his staff are working on such a plan. I believe that as time goes on and as the experts provide us with accurate data about where we are, we will be able to implement the plan in the safest possible manner. There are certain priorities which must be met and they are working on those priorities.

In the meantime, I do believe that the E-Learning experience we have in place in Anne Arundel County is a great one. Students are not being left behind. We must stay the course and we must continue to evaluate those students who may be struggling.

Anne Arundel County schools have provided ALL students with the opportunity to learn and elevate themselves to a new level of greatness. We must all adopt a positive approach to the reality we are now experiencing. A positive attitude along with persistence and perseverance will result in success all around.

I ask everyone to join with me and my colleagues in Anne Arundel County Public Schools to continue to provide the very best possible E-Learning experience to our KIDS. Our goal is to get our KIDS back to class and back on the football field, the soccer field, the band and concert band venues, the volleyball match in the gym, and so on, on Friday nights. Those extra-curricular activities are so essential to the well-being of our students. Remember that we cannot risk their safety and the safety of their friends and family.

So, we will continue the E-Learning experience until the time is RIGHT and until it is SAFE, according to the real experts!

My commitment is to stay connected and to stay focused so that if I have the honor of serving on this Anne Arundel County School Board, I will be able to make the best and safest decisions for our KIDS, for all stakeholders, and for the future of our county.

God bless and stay safe!

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