

January 12, 2021

Dear Lake and Peninsula School District, LSAC Board, School Administration, and Teachers,

I am writing this letter to voice my suggestions that we never use the term “no parents allowed” in any Tanalian School policies, publications, announcements, or postings.

The origin of this suggestion comes from the Fall Semester 2020, just a few months ago. Tanalian Student Government, I believe, hosted a movie night and posted fliers announcing the movie night, necessary details, and stating that no parents were allowed due to efforts to reduce the spread of Covid-19 and that necessary chaperoning would still be in place.

Please let me profess this suggestion with the understanding and acknowledgement that I think the Tanalian school culture is one of the most “parent inclusive” school cultures I could ever find and no one in the school would intentionally exclude parents from partnering in the educational process. Beginning with Nate Davis and continuing on with every teacher in Tanalian there is strong effort and intentionality to partner with parents for the best educational experience we can offer our students. The flier was written purely out of a desire to actually have a fun event at our school this year and still be safe which is also a great part of a full and quality educational experience (a student even possibly wrote the flier who liked the idea of no parents around;). I applaud their diligent efforts and to put on a school event.

I am only concerned that in these unprecedented times with protocols and procedures changing frequently due to Covid-19 that we are careful to guard and preserve that “parent inclusive/partnering” culture in this school and in the school district. Although we all assume and hope that after Covid-19 life will return to normal, I fear that some Covid-19 related procedures will remain and become our new normal. This may be fine and even make us better, but I think we should carefully assess what extra procedures we adapt during Covid-19 as they set the precedent for what will be part of our new normal after Covid-19. Therefore, I think it wise that we never, even in the smallest, seemingly temporary, and un-impactful way set any precedence for restricting parent access and possible parent partnership in the education process and environment as parent exclusion from education will lead to a poorer educational experience for all our students.

Since we still do want to have school events for our students and continue maintaining a safe and State and District rule abiding school some possible alternatives moving forward might be if limited numbers of people are needed at an event or so an event can take place parents wanting to be involved could have the option to sign up to chaperon and restrict participation to a limited number of students (possible age group specific evens which was done in this case) and chaperons. This restricts the number of participants but still give parents the option of being involved and, most importantly, never sets the precedent for parent exclusion from a school event or the school building.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my suggestions,

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