

# Willows Intermediate School



## Principal's Message

Welcome to Willows Intermediate School! What an amazing year we have overcome to get to this point. We have proven that we can overcome great obstacles, we have the capacity to adjust to various circumstances and we continue to pursue excellence even in the face of such challenges.

All of these facets have come about due to the global pandemic that has greatly affected all of us in various degrees. However, the staff at Willows Intermediate School and the Willows Unified School District are eager to get back to "normal" as quickly as possible, but keeping safety as our number one priority. As we enter into the school year, there are a number of changes within our school and district. For one, I am the new principal at WIS. I am greatly appreciative for the opportunity to join this district and a team that is fully committed to our students and community. I look forward to meeting you! However, we have other new staff and new programs. All changes have been made with the goal of providing a fantastic learning environment for each and every student. Much of our changes in course offerings are focused on helping any and all students that have fallen a bit behind due to the learning loss created by COVID. As we work to make these programs fit into our system, we ask for patience as we are going to try and fine tune this operation to ensure ALL of our students are receiving the support they need.

I am grateful to be joining a district that for the most part remained (partially) open last year. Kudos to our board, administration, the amazing staff and the parents/guardians of our students. That was a tremendous feat to accomplish! For the beginning of the school year, we are planning on following CDC guidelines and having our staff and students wear masks while inside. However, masks will not be mandatory outdoors, nor are we enforcing social distancing guidelines. On the positive impact of COVID, we will continue to practice good hygiene practices as well as encouraging students to use hand sanitizer frequently. And, we will continue to encourage staff and students to remain at home if they are exhibiting any symptoms. While I recognize that this may not be the BEST news, I think we can agree that it is better news and I am hopeful that we will soon see the mandates fade away.

As was stated, safety is absolutely our top priority. Without a safe environment, we cannot accomplish the enormous task(s) of educating our students. And, educating young people is the exact reason our staff entered in to this amazing profession of education. We take great pride in providing the absolute best experience for your student in the hopes that we have done a masterful job of preparing each student to be successful in high school and beyond. The middle school years are a period of time in a student's life that may have a profound impact on their life journey. The middle school years are the junction of leaving childhood and launching into adolescence (early adulthood)! It is this exact challenge that inspires each of us to do the best job we possibly can for each and every student. In return, we ask the same of our students and their families. We literally are in this journey together and we welcome and encourage you to participate with us to benefit your child.

I look forward to meeting you and working with you this coming school year. You are more than welcome to communicate with me via email, phone or set up an appointment in person. Together, we can and will make the best experience for our students.

Thank you all for all you do!

Chris Harris, Principal