



SCHOOL BOARD OF POLK COUNTY

P.O. BOX 391
BARTOW, FLORIDA 33831

(863) 534-0500

1915 SOUTH FLORAL AVENUE
BARTOW, FLORIDA 33830

August 15, 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Board Members

BOARD CHAIR
KAY FIELDS
DISTRICT 5

BILLY TOWNSEND
DISTRICT 1

LORI CUNNINGHAM
DISTRICT 2

HAZEL SELLERS
DISTRICT 3

SARA BETH REYNOLDS
DISTRICT 4

LYNN WILSON
DISTRICT 6

TIM HARRIS
DISTRICT 7

C. WESLEY BRIDGES, II
General Counsel

Administration

JACQUELINE M. BYRD
Superintendent

Polk County will experience a partial solar eclipse on Monday, August 21st. During a partial solar eclipse, the moon covers a large part of the sun. In Polk County, the eclipse will begin at 1:18 PM and end at 4:14 PM, with maximum coverage of the sun occurring at 2:50 PM.

Observing the sun can be dangerous to the eyes if proper precautions are not taken.

Looking directly at the sun during an eclipse, even for a short time, can cause permanent vision damage. For more information on the risks of viewing the eclipse, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <https://www.cdc.gov/features/solar-eclipse-safety/index.html>.

- To minimize the risk to students, Polk County Public Schools will move all outdoor activities, such as athletic practices, band rehearsals, and afterschool care programs indoors between the hours of 1:15 and 4:30 PM.
- Parents are asked to speak with their children about the eclipse and the dangers of looking directly at the sun.
- In addition, student absences will be excused on the day of the eclipse.

Also, parents are advised to use caution while driving during the time of the eclipse.

Sunglasses do not offer sufficient protection for viewing the eclipse. NASA's recommendations on protective eyewear can be accessed at: <https://www.nasa.gov/press-release/nasa-recommends-safety-tips-to-view-the-august-solor-eclipse>. Additionally, please be especially careful in the parent pickup driveway at your school to avoid distracted drivers, students, and pedestrians.

Dismissal times will not be effected. Bus drivers have been advised to caution students against looking directly at the eclipse, and schools will take necessary precautions to protect students while on campus. Further information about the eclipse can be found at: <https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov/safety> and <https://eclipse.aas.org/eclipse-america>.

If you have additional questions, please contact your child's school.

Thank you,

Jacqueline M. Byrd
Superintendent