

VALPARAISO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



Office of the Superintendent

Administration Building
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August 17, 2017

Dear Parents and Students,

As you are probably aware, an eclipse will occur on Monday, August 21, 2017. Obviously it is a significant event; however, it is also an event that can cause significant harm to those who observe it incorrectly.

A prominent eye doctor in Valparaiso strongly advised that we not involve our students in activities related to the observation of the eclipse. This physician noted that it is altogether possible for damage to the retina of the eye to result from observing the eclipse incorrectly.

It is for this reason that I have directed our teachers, administrators and staff to treat Monday, August 21, 2017 as though it is an "indoor recess" day and to NOT engage our students in any eclipse viewing activity.

I am sorry that this decision needs to be made. However, when I have been strongly advised by a physician, who has a long-standing practice of working with school aged children, about not engaging students in eclipse observation activities because of possible retina damage, then my decision will be to weigh in on the side of safety.

The eclipse is scheduled to occur roughly between 11:30 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. Should you, as a child's parent or legal guardian, choose to engage your child in an eclipse-related activity then we will only count your child as an excused absence if you come to school to sign out your child.

Once again, please understand that the observation of an eclipse can, according to the physician's advisement, cause retina damage.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dr. E. Ric Frataccia
Superintendent
Valparaiso Community Schools