



April 2, 2024

Dear Ridgewood families,

I hope this message finds you well-rested from Spring Break. I am writing regarding the momentous near-total solar eclipse that will occur on Monday, April 8, 2024. If the weather conditions are clear, it will likely be a memorable and awe-inspiring phenomenon.

Unfortunately, the eclipse is scheduled to occur at a challenging time reaching its peak when many of our schools will be dismissing. This presents several logistical challenges stemming from decreased visibility and the risk of eye damage from staring directly at the sun without eye protection. Additionally, the spectacle of a solar eclipse may also distract individuals who are operating motor vehicles.

Accordingly, please consider the following guidance to ensure your student is prepared for a safe experience on April 8th.

- **Educate your child regarding the dangers of looking directly at the eclipsed sun without eye protection.** Our schools will be reinforcing this information, but it will be best if it comes from both home and school. For guidance on eye protection, I recommend consulting a reliable source, such as the American Astronomical Society and its [Solar Eclipse Task Force](#).
- **Emphasize to your students the importance of situational awareness when traveling home from school on April 8.** Visibility will be lower than normal, and the eclipse will be distracting for many. Students walking, riding, or driving home should practice elevated caution, especially at intersections and when crossing streets, driveways, and parking lots.
- **Consider picking your child up from school.** If you have any reason to believe that your child will not be able to follow the above safety guidance, we recommend that you provide transportation or supervision for your child from school on April 8.

You may have heard that some local districts have announced early dismissal schedules on this day to avoid these conditions completely. However, I am of the belief that schools should operate as scheduled unless conditions are reasonably expected to pose imminent danger. Therefore, **all Ridgewood Public Schools will operate on their normal day schedule on April 8th.**

Thank you for your partnership in keeping our students safe. I wish you and your family an enjoyable experience of the 2024 eclipse.

Sincerely,

Mark Schwarz