March 4, 2020

Dear West Jefferson Middle School families:

I am writing to share information about an event that will take place in Spring 2020: the U.S. Census. The census is a count of all people living in the United States and takes place every 10 years. It is simple and confidential to complete. You will receive a unique identifying number in the mail, which will allow you to fill out the online form beginning in March 2020. It will ask questions about your household such as how many people reside in your home, date of birth, race, and sex. Here are some things you should know:

Your identity remains anonymous. Any personal information you provide on the census form is protected by law and cannot be shared with anyone or any other federal agency. Regardless of your immigration status, the information cannot be used against you or to invade the privacy of you or any members of your family.

The census is important. The census helps to decide how much federal money our schools will get over the next 10 years, and how much money our state will get for our parks, neighborhood improvements, public health, transportation, and many other programs and services. For Jeffco Public Schools, this means federal funding for school nutrition programs and supports for students with special needs, who come from poverty, who are learning English, for disadvantaged students to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards and have a well-rounded education. Since the last census, Colorado school districts have received $3.56 billion in additional federal funds to enable these vital services for students.

The census is safe. All data collected through the census is protected under Title 13 of the U.S. Code. Records are confidential for 72 years by law. All U.S. Census Bureau employees swear a lifetime oath to protect respondent information. The U.S. Census will never share respondents’ personal information with other government agencies. Data is only released in summary tables; no individual records are released. The penalty for wrongful disclosure is up to 5 years’ imprisonment and/or a fine of $250,000.

What do you need to do? Complete the short and easy form online. If you don’t have a computer at home, you can use one at a library or at a location in your community clearly identified Census Questionnaire Assistance Center.

Your kids count, so make sure to count them when you fill out the census form in Spring 2020!

Sincerely,

Kim Halingstad
Principal

Our mission: To provide a quality education that prepares all children for a successful future.