



Hamilton Township School District

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August 25, 2020

Dear Families,

Last night the Board of Education affirmed my recommendation to move to all virtual instruction for the beginning of the 20-21 school year starting September 14th. This determination was based on the following rationale:

- 1) Recent guidance from the NJ Health Department explaining, “wearing a mask is no substitute for social distancing” appears to limit the District’s ability to safely provide busing as defined by our “Road Back” plan which allowed for up to 27 students on a bus as per previous guidance from the Department of Education. This new clear delineation from the Department of Health makes our current “AABB” cohort model not feasible as it limits the number of students we can safely allow on a bus at one time. We have reached out to the DOE for additional guidance in the hopes that a determination regarding the two diverging expectations can be reconciled without the need to switch Hybrid Models. We will notify you as to the determination as soon as possible.
- 2) The Governor’s most recent executive order outlining the need for a “Ventilation Plan” for reopening schools has placed the burden of indoor air quality squarely on the District. In an effort to meet the provisions of Executive order 175, a Certified Industrial Hygienist, Dr. Richard Lynch, will evaluate our current HVAC system district wide to ensure the “Ventilation Plan” meets standards that are COVID ready.
- 3) At this juncture, we are unable to fully staff the physical building to protect the health and safety of all students and staff. We will be evaluating our staffing options to ascertain the best course of action to ensure that we are fully staffed.
- 4) Finally, although we have made considerable purchases to PPE and related safety equipment, many of our critical orders remain unfilled.

Our efforts throughout the summer and leading up to opening school have not been diminished. I expect to provide a full briefing, as well as a plan of action, for the Board of Education at our next regularly scheduled meeting on September 28th. In person instruction needs to be our goal which is why the Board set a new date for student re-entry for October 12th. It is our intent to address the concerns outlined in this correspondence and make our



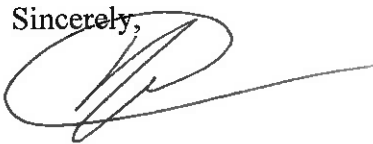
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reopening plan a reality only after all measures for staff and student safety are reviewed and fully implemented.

You should expect additional correspondence from your child's school sometime next week regarding homeroom assignments and scheduling with regular updates as to our progress as we begin the school year utilizing the full virtual model.

Please feel free to reach out to your child's Principal if you have any questions regarding our planned virtual opening for all students on September 14th. Wishing you and your family all the best for the remainder of the summer. Be well. Stay safe.

Sincerely,


Frank Vogel
Superintendent

FV/tv