

HUNTINGDON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Administrative Offices



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Message from the Superintendent

July 24, 2020

Dear Parents, children and staff

Reopening and our recommendation for our Health and Safety plan

We recognize and understand the challenges we all have as we plan for the consideration of ANY reopening plan. There are so many unknowns. At this point in time, we feel the best recommendation, based on current guidance, input from the multiple committees (steering and health & safety, our two main committees; plus transportation, food service, building level smaller committee (still work to do), as well as, the position of Superintendent and the administrative team, is a "gradual" reopening of schools, starting on August 27 with 50% as outlined in the letter [School Reopening Message from Superintendent 20200717](#).

Our goal with this update, is to try to further explain **why we are recommending a 50%** return on August 27, 2020 and then gradual return to 100%.

1. We prefer to know exactly how many of our children and staff will support wearing a mask during the school day. We will not know this, until they are physically on site and can practice safety measures in a smaller, more focused group.
2. Social distancing, during lunch, and not wearing a mask, cannot be accomplished at 100%, in fact, we will struggle with 50%. We are planning to consider the use of gymnasium space for lunch, that will then impact scheduling and other encore classes.
3. If you think about the first few days of school in a normal school year, scheduling, handbook review, paperwork etc. takes 2-3 days until you get into the "flow". As we prepare to return from a disruptive departure of learning and our focus on SAFETY (board mission statement and core value), Social and Emotional Learning and

Academics we strongly recommend a "gradual" return, so we can cover all the changes within the building that focus on safety first. We are NOT trying to rank them or compete to say academics come in third, but we do know that if our environment is not safe, and then the social and mental health of our children will be impacted, thus academics will suffer.

4. Safety of Staff

- Educators, paraeducators, cafeteria staff, custodial staff, secretaries, principals. A gradual return allows us all to practice safe habits and establish our procedures with our children to the maximum extent possible.

Our recommended Reopening Health and Safety plan indicates "After the initial start on Aug. 27 we will review on Sept 10 to see if we can do full return by Sept. 17."

Questions:

1. What criteria do we have to meet for school to reopen at 100%?
2. How will that be determined?

Answer

- Observational data
 - Are we getting support for face coverings?
 - Monitoring and assessing daily procedures
 - How is the daily temperature check process working? We are planning to stagger times for buses and the actual time instruction starts during the day due to temp checks, minimizing all at once enter and departure. We are planning for 15-20 more minutes at the beginning and end of the day, we feel with 50% the first few days, we can establish the procedures and educate, as well as adjust when needed for a full return.
 - Once inside the building
 - Healthy habits and all new procedures to train
 - Handwashing/hallway flow/drinking fountains/Lunch/dismissal

Resources for your Review

[Face Covering Guidance as of July 17, 2020](#)

We hope this message helps as we begin to provide information related to our district's commitment and process to ensure the safest environment to the maximum extent possible, regardless of 50% or 100%, we are committed to you, your children and our staff.

Thank you.

Fred Foster, Superintendent