



To: All Parkland School District Employees

**From: Richard T. Sniscak
Superintendent of Schools**

Date: August 14, 2020

2020-2021 Welcome Back Letter!

I begin this letter to welcome you back for 2020-2021 school year by immediately recognizing the fact that we are navigating unprecedented times, understanding that many of us may be challenged with our own health concerns or concerns regarding children and parents. This pandemic has been an extremely difficult time for everyone associated with educating our youth.

As we prepare to begin school on Monday, August 31, 2020, a cadre of Parkland staff, our medical providers and health department officials worked to assemble a plan that prioritizes health and safety practices to reduce the transmission of the virus while recognizing that social interaction and in-person instruction is essential to our children's emotional well-being and their educational growth and advancement. Our Health and Safety Plan was developed in consultation with and reviewed by our medical providers, and infectious disease doctors from St. Luke's University Health Network and Lehigh Valley Health Network with the safety of staff and students as our priority.

In review of the parent survey results for selecting a choice of instruction, 71% of students will return for face-to-face instruction and 29% of students opted for 100% online instruction across the District. This data regarding 100% online instruction coupled with the decision to employ a K-12 hybrid instructional model will reduce density in all buildings, further enhancing social distancing measures. Employing a continuum of strategies inclusive of social distancing, face coverings and hand hygiene measures will serve to enhance our effort to mitigate the spread of the virus and allow for the continuation of in-person learning and student activities.

As we have all learned, conditions and guidance for responding to this pandemic change regularly. As the 2019-20 school year ended, we were preparing to open all our schools in a traditional manner for the 2020-21 school term. As July arrived, we needed to pivot to the current plan of a hybrid model at the secondary level. Once again, this week we needed to pivot to a hybrid model at the elementary level. Should community transmission of the virus dictate that we close schools and pivot to 100% online instruction for all students, we are prepared to pivot again. Conversely, should the transmission rate improve, we will take a deliberate and measured approach to a full in-person model. We will continue to work closely with our medical providers and health officials to monitor current conditions in our community throughout the school year.

To kick-off the school year in Parkland, we will meet virtually with **all district employees invited to our opening day program on Tuesday, August 25, at 8:30 a.m.** (viewing information will be sent to all staff prior to the opening day program).

Once again, we will maintain the current Parkland School District theme as we move forward as a unified district, "*Academics, Arts & Athletics.... Educating the Whole Child.*" We believe that this theme has become our "Brand" and describes best those values that our school board and community desire in educating our youth.

Educating the Whole Child



We are excited to welcome students back (in-person or online) and equally excited to have our staff back at our buildings. Our administrative, professional and support staff are incredibly dedicated people, and this commitment has never been more evident than in the work enacted from March 2020 to the present. Working collaboratively, I trust we will continue to provide a safe and healthy environment for students and staff. Thank you for the excellent work you do daily on behalf of Parkland's students. It is greatly appreciated. I look forward to speaking with you all on August 25!

This year's calendar includes three days of professional development: August 25, August 26, and August 27. The details of the schedule are listed on the following pages.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS – AUGUST 25, 26 & 27, 2020

Welcome to the 2020-2021 School Year!

“Academics, Arts, Athletics.... Educating the Whole Child”

Tuesday, August 25, 2020

8:25 a.m. Follow viewing instructions	Opening Program **
8:30 a.m. Greeting	Dr. Rodney R. Troutman Assistant Superintendent
8:35 a.m. Welcome	Mrs. Lisa A. Roth President, Parkland School Board
8:40 a.m. Remarks	Mr. Richard T. Sniscak Superintendent of Schools
9:10 a.m. Greeting	Mrs. Sandi Gackenbach, President, PEA Mrs. Elizabeth Moyer, President, PESPA
9:20 a.m. Closing	Dr. Rodney R. Troutman

9:30 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. Break

10:00-12:00 Virtual Meetings

Links to meet virtually will be provided by the Department Chairperson

- Secondary/Elementary Art Teachers
- Secondary/Elementary ESL Teachers
- Secondary/Elementary Library/Media Specialists
- Secondary/Elementary Music Teachers
- Secondary/Elementary Physical Education Teachers
- Secondary Family & Consumer Science Teachers

All other personnel should report to their buildings or assignments.

Noon to 1:00 p.m.

12:00-1:00 p.m. District Lunch** – All School Cafeterias (Courtesy of Lehigh Valley Educators Credit Union, Service Electric and Kades-Margolis)

****ALL EMPLOYEES ARE INVITED TO ATTEND**

1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

1:00-3:30 p.m. Professional staff members will be involved in various team and building meetings as directed by building principals.

Wednesday, August 26, 2020

Professional Staff Report Directly to School Buildings

Professional Development
Building-based Activities will be led by Principals

Lunch - One Hour (on your own)

Thursday, August 27, 2020

Professional Staff Report Directly to School Buildings

Professional Development
Building-based Activities will be led by Principals

Lunch - One Hour (on your own)

Talk with you all on August 25th!

