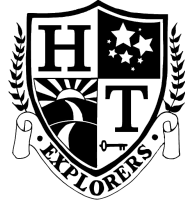


HARRISON TWP SCHOOL DISTRICT



Good afternoon parents:

I hope you are Most likely, you are aware by now that the Governor's office released NJ State's *Restart & Recovery Plan: The Road Back* on Friday June 26, 2020 with guidelines for consideration in the reopening of school in September 2020. These guidelines can be found here.

<https://www.nj.gov/education/reopening/NJDOETheRoadBack.pdf>. As we navigate through this task of planning for our students, staff and community for the fall, we also must keep the direction from the CDC in mind

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html> . Similarly, a number of other professional organizations have weighed in with important information to be considered in this decision making process. An example of some extensive considerations were released by the American Academy of Pediatrics

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/>

While all of these documents provide strong suggestions and guidelines for reopening, many parts of the specific plans and decisions have been left up to individual school districts. As we all know, major decisions within any organization often ignite a tremendous amount of passion from stakeholders. In any school organization, that passion is rightfully magnified because we are serving children. Our stakeholders, our parents, want assurance that their children are getting the best possible services in a safe environment. We also recognize the responsibility to focus on the fact that the 2020-2021 school year, like any school year, cannot be repeated. We only have one opportunity to teach these exact students in this exact school year. Like every year and regardless of the unique challenges that it brings, this academic year is necessary in shaping the futures of every child that we are charged with educating in this district. Unlike in many situations, however, there are not only two sides to this issue. There are endless potential outcomes of planning for September. Therefore, we must ALL prepare that we will most likely not implement a plan that is the total "first choice" of the majority of us. What we should also prepare for, though, is a plan for September that includes input from experts in the medical field, staff representatives from every department and

parents who know their children's needs best. Because of this, we will have a plan that keeps the needs of our students and staff at the forefront of every meeting and discussion that leads up to its implementation. It is the goal of the Harrison Township School District, as an elementary school district servicing young learners, to have the students in classrooms with their teachers for in person instruction for as much time as is possible under the guidelines that have been released. Public School is the backbone of our success as a society. It is often referred to as the great equalizer for children, regardless of their individual situations. In order for our children to get the education that they are entitled to, we can agree that they need their teachers, their classmates and their classrooms for as much normalcy and time as is possible and safe.

The Harrison Township School District has developed our Covid Task Force for Reopening. To inform that committee, we are asking that all parents provide us feedback on your needs and priorities. Please complete BY JULY 9, 2020 at 12:00 pm. The survey can be found here <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8N29ZDR>

Also as part of this larger committee, a number of subcommittees are also being developed and will meet within the coming week. If you are interested in serving on a committee and participating in these difficult but important discussions, please email the chair listed BY THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2020 at 12:00 pm. I apologize for the short turnaround time for response, but this plan must be developed and shared as soon as possible so that our families and staff can begin preparing for the fall.

General Health Committee (screening process, contact tracing):
perettim@harrisontwp.k12.nj.us

Social Distancing Protocols: flexonc@harrisontwp.k12.nj.us

Curriculum: hynesl@harrisontwp.k12.nj.us

Social Emotional Learning - fellonac@harrisontwp.k12.nj.us

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of the Harrison Township School District, especially through these unprecedented times. We are looking forward to welcoming you all back in September for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Thank you,

Dr. Missy Quinn Peretti, Superintendent