

July 17, 2020

Dear Mount Arlington Families:

As mentioned in my previous emails, we, along with all districts in New Jersey have been tasked with developing a reopening plan for September which includes some form of in-person instruction while also following the CDC and other guidelines contained in [The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education](#) from the New Jersey Department of Education.

In the three weeks since receiving this guidance document, we have been analyzing the guidelines, collecting parent and staff survey data, meeting with teachers, staff members, board of education members, local health officials, our school nurses, neighboring districts and others to develop a plan for our district. We have begun planning for social distancing in our classrooms and buildings, wearing of masks and other appropriate equipment, health screenings of students and staff, reducing the number of students present together at any one time (cohorting), increased cleaning protocols in buildings and on buses, increased handwashing and hand sanitizing for students and staff, and much more.

We know that whatever plan we put together has to meet the following criteria:

- It must address the safety and health needs of our students and staff and align with CDC guidelines.
- It must address the educational, social, and emotional needs of our students.
- It must provide for as much consistency as possible for students, their families and staff.
- It must also remain flexible as the public health of our community and state change during this pandemic.

Based on our work so far, we have developed a *hybrid plan* of remote and in person instruction that we feel can help us meet the criteria listed above and work for our district. In this hybrid plan:

- Students would be divided into 2 cohorts ( A or B) so that we can *reduce the capacity* of students in the buildings and on buses to around 50%.
- **All** students (both cohorts) would attend 1 day per week virtually. (This would allow for an additional day of cleaning as well as a reduction in exposure)
- Students in each cohort would attend *2 days per week of in person instruction* and would receive remote instruction on days they were not in the buildings.

Example of how this might look on a weekly basis:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
ALL students receive remote instruction	Cohort A- in person instruction  Cohort B - remote instruction	Cohort A - remote instruction  Cohort B - in person instruction	Cohort A- in person instruction  Cohort B - remote instruction	Cohort A- remote instruction  Cohort B - in person instruction

**We would like to get your opinion on two options within this plan:**

#### Scheduling Option #1

In Person Instruction days will be full days (lunch served)

##### Pros:

- More in-person instructional time for students
- Closest to a typical school day
- Provides most consistency for parents to secure child care

##### Cons:

- Longer amount of time in masks each day
- Longer amount of time in buildings for exposure
- Concerns about difficulty of maintaining social distancing during lunch and recess/PE

#### Scheduling Option #2

In Person Instruction days will be early dismissal days (no lunch would be served)

##### Pros:

- Less amount of time in buildings for exposure
- Less amount of time in masks each day
- No lunch/recess therefore increased social distancing possible
- More flexibility for staff to plan in the afternoon and have ability to meet needs of virtual students

##### Cons:

- Less in person instructional time for students
- More challenging for parents regarding childcare

We will be holding parent Google Meets next Tuesday, July 21 for parents to ask additional questions about these options. Information about how to access these Google Meets will be available on the district website.

Please share your thoughts on the two options listed above using this [form](#). The form will be available until Wednesday, July 22 at 3 PM.

Please note that once an overall schedule has been decided upon, there will be much additional work that our administration, faculty and staff will need to complete in order to address the myriad of details surrounding day to day operations and specific instructional delivery. **We will need your help with things like:**

- Reinforcing with your children the importance of handwashing, face coverings, and social distancing.
- Providing information to us about how we can make any remote instruction that happens as meaningful and effective as possible.
- Providing suggestions for how we can maintain and improve communication with families.
- Providing feedback on the specific educational, social or emotional needs of your child(ren) and how we can assist.

We will continue to communicate with parents on a regular basis for the remainder of the summer as plans are finalized. Thank you for your input and your cooperation as we partner with you to best meet the needs of Mount Arlington's students.

Warmest regards,

Monica A. Rowland  
Superintendent of Schools