

September 4, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As an incredibly challenging school year gets underway, I want to thank you, our students, and our staff for the patience that you've extended. The first few days of school always come with some bumps and adjustments, and this year those hiccups are amplified as we all find our way through virtual learning. Though the ways in which our teachers are reaching our students are different, their passion and dedication are as strong as ever. We know they'd prefer to work with students in person, rather than over a screen. During the September 3rd Board meeting Jen Saksa, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, [highlighted some of the experiences](#) of our students and staff preparing for and beginning the 2020-2021 school year.

In this communication, I want to share with you the process for examining options to move toward a hybrid model. We continue to work with the Chester County Health Department (CCHD) as well as experts from the University of Pennsylvania and CHOP as we make the determination for when we can transition students to a hybrid model.

First, a brief review of the reasoning for our current model might be useful.

On August 14, [CCHD recommended all private and public schools in Chester and Delaware counties begin the year virtually](#) through October 9 for three reasons:

1. Concern about increasing positivity rates at the end of July in Delaware County
2. Concerns over potential increases in spread due to anticipated Labor Day weekend and end-of-summer vacations
3. The ability of schools and districts to implement the recommended health guidance to safely open schools

At that time, our township was identified as one of three in the county with a high number of positive COVID cases. Since that time, the positivity rate in Delaware County has continued to decline every week for the last three weeks; and that is good! The unknown impact of Labor Day weekend upon the incidence and positivity rates is the CCHD data factor we must continue to monitor and hope to see either a stabilization or decrease in both numbers. That data can be found every Friday on the [CCHD website](#).

The CCHD and CHOP have provided metrics to help guide decisions on when to open schools.

- Weekly incidence rate approaching 10 per 100,000
- Positivity 7-day average declines below 5%
- Combination
 - The stable or declining incidence between 10 and 35 per 100,000 **AND**
 - positivity rate < 5%
- Transitioning to a more in-person instructional model can be considered when thresholds are met for three (3) consecutive weeks and evidence of a decrease in positivity at the

County Level. Consideration should be given to the incidence rates of neighboring jurisdictions.

This information was discussed during the September 3rd Board meeting. You can view that segment of the [meeting here](#). Our Board will meet on Monday, September 21, 2020. During that meeting, we will review the most recent metrics which will reflect the impact of Labor Day. Based on the improvement or setback of the data compared to the CCHD metrics and parameters, we may decide to keep watching the data with a goal to bring students back on October 12 or we may be able to decide to bring small groups of students and our youngest learners back sooner. We will continue to closely monitor data each week between now and September 18th and will be prepared to adjust accordingly.

We have created a [Re-opening Metrics](#) - Monitoring our Progress section on the website to provide the Haverford community with up-to-date information on the metrics and progress to re-open schools.

A few general updates/reminders to keep you informed:

- **Technology Support**

Our Technology Department continues to build a library of tutorial videos for our students and families. You can find these resources here on our website: [Tech Help](#) How Do I Get Tech Support?

Email: ITHelpDesk@haverfordsd.net or Call: 610-853-5951 (Leave a voicemail)

- **Resolution Revising School Tax Deadlines**

At the August 25th School Board Meeting, the board passed a resolution revising the school tax deadlines for 2020. The complete resolution can be found [here](#).

Noted below are the changes:

1. The Board hereby waives the 10% penalty on real estate taxes that are not paid within four (4) months of the date of the tax notice with respect to taxes paid in full by December 15, 2020.
2. Any taxes that have not been paid in full by December 15, 2020, shall be subject to a penalty of 10%.
3. This extension shall apply only to real property taxes levied in support of the District schools for the 2020-2021 school year and shall not apply to taxes levied in prior or succeeding years.
4. No aspect of this resolution shall apply to any taxes due to the District beyond those real property taxes levied by the Board in support of the District schools for the 2020-2021 school year, nor shall it apply to any payment deadlines, discounts, or penalties imposed pursuant to 72 P.S. §5511.5a related to interim assessments.

- **Food Services**

The District is supporting the virtual educational experience by providing meals to students eligible for free and reduced lunches. Parents/Guardians were contacted with the 2020-21 meal pickup schedule and procedures. This week the food services department provided 1360 student meals (breakfast & lunch) to Haverford families. There is still time to complete the application for the 2020-21 school -- the date for completion is October 10. You may apply for meals at any time during the school year. You can apply for Free and Reduced Meals here: [Online Application \(SchoolCafe\)](#) Please contact the Food Service Office at 610.853.5900, ext. 5523 or email: foodservices@haverfordsd.net if you need additional assistance

- **Construction**

At the September 3rd meeting, KCBA architects [presented the drawings](#) for the additional classrooms at the High School. The board approved putting the project out to bid, the timeline is as follows:

- 09/18/20 Project 1 Bid Documents Released
- 10/22/20 Project 1 Bids Received
- 11/05/20 Board to Accept Bids and Award Construction Contracts for Project 1
- 01/2021 Project 1 Construction Begins
- 09/2021 Project 1 Occupancy for School Year

I hope this weekend is a relaxing one for you and your family. Unlike other years, we do not have the hustle and bustle associated with the preparation for the first day of school. Perhaps that will allow for some family time over the holiday weekend.

Sincerely,
Maureen Reusche, Ed.D.
Superintendent



