Announcing the School Reopening Plan for 2020-21

July 31, 2020

Dear Hastings Community,

With a tremendous sense of relief, the School Reopening Plan has been completed and is now available on our website. I would like to express my gratitude to the Hastings School Reopening Committee who spent many hours carefully working through the details required to develop the plan. The stakeholders who served on the committee are listed here. Through our Community Forum, building level discussions with school leaders, and community and district staff surveys, information was shared and feedback enlisted to obtain as much information as possible to inform our decisions.

Now that the plan has been completed, teachers will be working with Melissa Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, and the building leadership teams to develop a set of practices for live streaming and instruction to ensure that all students are engaged in substantive daily interaction as outlined in the NYSED Reopening Guidance document. This follows the model used with the twenty-one member K-12 educator focus group who met over the summer to develop signature (best) practices for Google Classroom and Calendar. If issues arise from the reopening that impacts the faculty, the administration will certainly entertain discussions with the HTA on how to address these issues.

In preparation for the year, we are proposing a revised start date for school to be September 8th, pending Board of Education approval at their August 10th meeting. Making this change will allow teachers and staff the training and professional learning needed for the many changes we face.

As you know, our Governor will make his decision next week about when and in what operational model schools will reopen. After his announcements, it is likely that there will be more questions about our School Reopening Plan. We hope that we can answer your questions at these upcoming community events:

- Community Forum on School Reopening, Tuesday, August 11, 4:30pm-6:30 pm
- Superintendent & PTSA/SEPTA Chat, Wednesday, August 12, 3:30pm-4:30pm
- Special Education Reopening Forum, Thursday, August 20, 4:30pm-5:30pm
- Hillside Elementary School Reopening Forum, Friday, August 21, 10:00am-11:30am
- Hastings High School Reopening Forum, Friday, August 21, 12:00pm-1:30pm
- Farragut Middle School Reopening Forum, Friday, August 21, 2:00pm-3:30pm
We will use Zoom webinar or GoTo webinar so that there is greater capacity for many more participants to join the meetings. We will share this information with the community next week. In addition to the chat and forums, we will continue to update our School Reopening FAQ document on our website.

We appreciate your investment in ensuring that we do everything possible to reopen schools safely and offer alternatives to families. If you have any questions about the Reopening Plan, please feel free to contact a building administrator; Melissa Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Maureen Caraballo, Business Official; Joseph Martorana, Director of Facilities, or me.

Sincerely,

Valerie Henning-Piedmonte