

DELRAN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

52 Hartford Rd., Delran NJ, 08075

"dedicated to nurturing a supportive, student-centered environment where all people are treated with dignity and respect"

October 1, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Maintaining communication with all stakeholders is paramount in any education climate; it's even more critical as we educate your child during a pandemic and extended public health emergency as outlined by the Governor. To that end, below is the communication schedule you can expect to receive from me and the Principals for September and October:

- Superintendent: October 20
- DHS Principal: October 8 and October 22 (every other Thursday)
- DMS, DIS and MB Principals: October 2 and October 16 and October 30 (every other Friday)

Face Coverings

Wearing a face covering has been ingrained in all of us since March as a way to decrease the transmission of COVID-19. We have opened our doors and have seen staff and students alike doing very, very well with this requirement.

However, pursuant to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance](#), effective immediately, neck gaiters are no longer a viable option for a mask. If your child wears a neck gaiter please send him or her to school with another option.

Student Health

Should your child be sick, please keep him or her home. Further, the symptoms below should be monitored closely for you or your child:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting

- Diarrhea

If your child is absent from school they are not eligible to participate in athletics or marching band that day.

Board of Education Meeting Information

The Board met in the summer months and September. A major note was the development of reopening plans. To date, those plans for a combination of in person and remote instruction have been implemented and are in the constant state of evaluation in alignment amongst all relevant stakeholders. Overall, I've been pleased with the implementation of our operational norms. Our experience has suggested that with proper execution we have been able to mitigate any instances of in-school transmission of the virus.

At the September meeting of the Board, they approved a proposal to enhance its heating, ventilation and air conditioning system with bipolar ionization units. These units will be installed shortly at each school, impacting each classroom and each common area (offices, gymnasiums, cafeterias, etc.).

These units will increase the already highly functioning units we have at each of our schools - two of which have earned *Energy Star* awards.

COVID-19 Responses

As you have been made aware Delran Township Public Schools has not been spared COVID-19 cases. Each time a case evolves the District works closely with the Burlington County Department of Health.

The District follows the K-12 Guidance set forth by the [New Jersey Department of Health](#) for **every** case. The NJDOH manages each case and offers direction to the District regarding how to proceed. As an example, through their contact tracing process, the NJDOH outlines how to proceed with a positive test, they define exactly who needs to be quarantined and for how long. Please understand that the District response is managed in deep consultation with the NJDOH, who serve as the resident experts.

The guidance I shared above is a document that I refer to daily. While all of it is extremely informational and can provide great context for you regarding the process that the schools take in managing COVID-19, I'll direct you to pages 13, 14 and 15 as that has most of the answers from the questions the District receives from parents.

As your Superintendent I manage all matters related to COVID-19. There is important information on the District website under the [COVID-19 section](#). You'll find a COVID-19 dashboard regarding cases to date, Public Health Notices sent to families regarding cases, district information and other resources that have been curated since March for your review and consideration.

Additionally, the [NJDOH has developed an app for your phone](#) in the event that you want to be notified of potential exposures to COVID-19.

Thank an Educator

As we move into October, I must take a moment to pause and reflect on the status of the reopening of the school district.

We reopened our doors to the faculty, staff and students after significant planning and preparation that spanned operations and academics while balancing the needs that all stakeholders have in the area of wellness and safety.

I'll take some time to point out four important realities:

1. Every staff member returned that had the ability to return. Every single one. They have done so and maintain the highest level of professionalism with dedication to their students at all times. Their return took courage, trust and an expression of the unswerving loyalty to serving your children.
2. Educators are essential personnel. They serve a critical function in your world and the world for your child. If nothing else, the last six months illuminated the fact that educators are essential. I see large and small contributions daily.
3. What the educators in Delran have been asked to do is likely to be the most complex work any Superintendent could ever ask: connect with and teach students that are in front of them as well as those that work virtually. They've done so with great energy and they've done so while holding themselves to very high standards to serve every single student well. Every single one.
4. In an effort to enhance classroom connectivity in a remote world the District has begun the implementation of Canvas as a learning management system. Candidly, Canvas will work but it is extremely challenging working through a hybrid model. We continue to refine our work with this platform.

Thank a Delran educator. Be reassured that every second of their work day and virtually every opportunity they have in the evenings and weekend, as they balance their own families, educators are working to connect with your children and adapt in this challenging new "normal."

As I reflect on the past five weeks, I am reminded that we've accomplished something historic: we returned to school on time under the most challenging conditions. Although there certainly was the option provided by the government to have a remote school year, we returned for the children of Delran; we returned because there really is no replacement for the in person experience with a thoughtful, skilled passionate Delran teacher. But, as we have done that, we have experienced challenges and have processes embedded to pivot, to adjust and to examine our own practices.

As we move forward through the next five weeks, we take time to celebrate the small victories, we take time to examine our work and we take time to support each other in the District in ways large and small.

You, as an important stakeholder are a critical part of that. Please thank an educator - they are doing everything we can to meet the needs of every child in our charge during a public health emergency. Every single one.

Sincerely,

Brian Brotschul, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools