

## **CPS Weekly Reopening Update 7-14-2020**

In order to successfully reopen the Clinton Public Schools, we will need to work together as a school community to ensure that we have a plan that students, staff, administration, and parents will have confidence in and will work collectively to implement. That plan is now in development, and in an effort to keep parents informed about the ongoing work and components of the plan, I will be sharing a **Weekly Reopening Update on Tuesdays** until school resumes. The intent of this Weekly Reopening Update is not to provide you with every detail of planning, but to highlight the areas of focus, build some early understanding of key elements, and create assurances that the plan we develop will be based on appropriate public health requirements and educational guidance and best practices.

The administrative team is currently working on our reopening plans based on the CT State Department of Education's *Adapt, Advance, Achieve* document which includes the Governor's mandate that all school districts should plan to open schools for all students for in-person education, yet also develop and submit plans to include a hybrid model of a blend of remote and in-person learning, and a fully remote option.

### **Full In-Person Planning Information**

Much of our initial focus has been in developing a unique plan for reopening with all of our students returning to our schools and classrooms. There are many priorities and requirements as outlined in the *Adapt, Advance, Achieve* state plan document that must be in place in this model that will alter our normal in-person learning school experience.

Some of the specific areas of focus include:

### **Cohorting**

Each school is examining the idea of cohorting students which is a priority measure outlined in the *Adapt, Advance, Achieve* state plan document and is strongly encouraged for grades K-8. The idea of cohorts is described as emphasizing grouping of students by the same class/group of students and teacher so each team functions independently as much as possible. At Joel and Eliot, this means that students would be grouped together with the same students in their grade level in classroom cohorts. The students and teacher would remain together as an individual classroom cohort throughout the day, including the possibility of related arts classes being taught in classrooms or other alternatives that will mitigate student transitions.

The state plan encourages the idea of cohorting where feasible for grades 9-12. At Morgan, we are exploring the idea of cohorting by Academy (9-10 and 11-12) and examining the logistics and constraints of course selection, student course levels and sequences, and class groupings. In addition, in order to implement this model effectively, we are currently evaluating if there may be some need to alter elective offerings to students.

### **Facial Coverings- Requirements of All Students & Staff**

According to the *Adapt, Advance, Achieve* state plan requirements, all students and staff must wear face masks while in the building. We know that this will be an adjustment for all of us and will require some getting used to, but it is a non-negotiable requirement in order for schools to reopen safely. Students and staff will be asked to wear a facial covering. Those who arrive at the bus stop or school without one will have one provided to them. In some cases, it will be

necessary for teachers to be outfitted with additional personal protective equipment such as specialized face masks, face shields, or gowns, and these will be provided to teachers. We will be identifying opportunities for students and staff to be provided with mask breaks outside during the day at appropriate times identified in the daily schedule.

### **Classroom Spaces and Social Distancing**

In each building, we are reimagining classroom spaces in order to maximize social distancing within the classroom. We are following the guidance of the American Academy of Pediatrics which indicates at minimum, a 3 foot distance between student desks up to a maximum of 6 feet as outlined in the CDC Guidance for Reopening Schools. In addition, we are attempting to minimize surfaces within a classroom that would be frequently touched or difficult to clean such as carpets and extra furniture.

### **Initial Parent Survey**

On Friday, July 10, 2020, a survey was sent to all families to determine initial thinking related to the return of students to school. As a requirement of the state's plan, districts have been asked to collect information from families to confirm their intent to have their children return to in-person schooling. While we hope that all of our students will be able to return, we also must plan for parents who choose to temporarily engage in learning from home for a variety of reasons. This is an initial survey and is not intended to represent a final commitment at this time. We will be reaching out to families again once we have fully developed our school reopening plans, and at that time will ask for families to inform us of their decision regarding return.

If you have not already done so, we are asking each family to take a few minutes to fill out this survey by Thursday, July 16, 2020.

PLEASE FILL OUT 1 SURVEY FOR EACH OF YOUR CHILDREN.

Thank you for taking the time to assist us in our planning and required data collection.

[Click here to access the Survey](#)

**School Messenger - Expanding options for Text Messages** We have been exploring the option to add text messaging to our School Messenger system and are ready to provide this to all of our families. On Thursday morning, parents who have a cell phone on file in our student information system (PowerSchool) should receive a text message from School Messenger providing you the option to opt-in to receive text messages in addition to emails from our system. Upon receipt of the initial message, if you do not want to receive text messages, users can type "no" or do nothing to opt out. See the attached flyer for additional information.

If you do not receive the message, we will provide directions in next Tuesday's Parent Reopening Update (7-21-20) to address any issue or to add your cell number to the system in order to receive text messages.