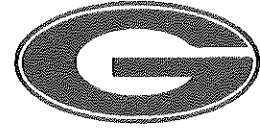


GLOVERSVILLE ENLARGED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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David Halloran
Superintendent

July 31, 2020

Dear Members of the Gloversville Enlarged School District Education Community:

The attached document has been created in accordance with New York State guidelines to ensure the health and safety of our students, our staff and our community members as we look to reopen our schools this fall. The NYS Education Department and Department of Health guidelines are very clear and our district's reopening plan is in accordance with their provisions. Over the past several weeks, the administrative team has held numerous meetings with stakeholders and generated a number of surveys to better inform our decision-making and plan development. The creation of our reopening plan has not been an easy task and I thank all who participated in this important work.

As a district, we fully understand that in-person instruction is fundamentally important to every child. Therefore, we strived to create a plan that maximizes in-person learning opportunities across all grade levels. With the exception of Pre-Kindergarten and self-contained special education students, who will report daily, our selected hybrid learning model will see students in Kindergarten through 12th grade attending school 50% of the days and learning remotely on the other days. We know this is not ideal and will cause hardships, but we found no alternative plan that worked. Student/teacher ratio and building square footage were our biggest obstacles. We certainly look forward to the day that we can welcome all students back every single day.

A rotating in-person schedule, with our classrooms at half capacity, is the only way for us to move forward while maintaining the social distancing requirements set forth by the state. Our students in grades K-12 will be split into two "teams", Dragons and Huskies. Dragons will attend school on Monday, Wednesday and every other Friday and Huskies will attend school on Tuesday, Thursday and every other Friday. This rotating schedule was selected because it provides opportunities for students to interface with their teachers on a regular basis, while also providing consistency for parents and guardians in need of childcare for their younger students. Every effort will be made to ensure students of the same families will be attending school on the same days so older siblings are home when their younger siblings are. If families desire to deviate from this rule, we will do our best to accommodate those specific requests.

The remote off-site learning days will be designed to ensure students have opportunities to interact with their teachers and classmates and work on standards and concepts that were introduced in class. Our goal is to ensure remote learning is much more interactive, structured and effective than it was in the spring when school closed. The fact remains that we could find ourselves in a full remote environment this school year if COVID-19 cases grow in our region and it is imperative that we become much better at delivering remote instruction. Daily attendance will be taken on remote learning days to track participation and accountability and we will strive to ensure the learning experiences on these days are meaningful.

Students and staff will be required to wear masks while on busses, in hallways or offices, and any time they are unable to maintain social distance. During instruction, students will be allowed to remove their masks when seated at least six feet apart. It is recommended by the NYS Department of Health that students keep masks on as much as possible, but it is not mandated during instruction if they are sufficiently socially distanced. This is a very important point as it means our students will be allowed to remove masks while seated at their desks. We fully understand there are mixed feelings regarding masks, and acknowledge the impracticality of children wearing them for long periods of time. We are confident that our plan balances the need for proper safety precautions while not making in-person learning too cumbersome for students and staff.

Parents and guardians will be asked to conduct health screenings of their children before coming to school each day, including temperature readings and self-reporting to the school. It is imperative that students exhibiting symptoms of illness are not sent to school. This requirement from the state is still being developed by our Health and Safety team and parental patience and cooperation is essential.

In conclusion, we are all in this together and collectively we have no control over the track of the virus nor the government's response to it. We can only control how we respond individually and as a school community. The plan we have created is not perfect, and changes or adaptations may occur. Frustration is running high, but it is important that we remain optimistic about the education of our children and about their future in general. These are uncertain times, but they will pass at some point. In the meanwhile, let's focus on the solutions to challenges we can control. To me, our most important collective challenge is to offer the best possible educational experience for your children in a safe, nurturing environment. More than ever, cooperation between the school and home is critical. We look forward to improving our partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Halloran", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Halloran
Superintendent of Schools