



Sharon City School District

Office of the Superintendent

August 10, 2020

Dear Sharon City School District Families,

As we near the beginning of what will undoubtedly be a unique school year, I want to share with you the plans that we currently have in place to return our students to school. Please know that it is the priority of the Board of Education and Administration to maximize the safety and well-being of our students and staff and to ensure a highly effective learning environment. This letter outlines our plan as it is today. Know that this is an ever-changing situation and we have plans in place for any contingency. All decisions and planning have been made based upon several resources including:

- Parent survey input
- Staff survey input
- CDC Considerations for School Reopening
- Pennsylvania Department of Health Guidance
- Pennsylvania Department of Education Guidance
- The American Association of Pediatrics Guidance
- Neighboring District and IU4 Plans
- Mercer County Emergency Management Agency Guidance

Return to School 2020

We have three options currently available to our families for return to school assuming Mercer County remains in the Green or Yellow phases of Governor Wolf's COVID-19 mitigation protocols. These options include:

1. In person, five (5) days per week instruction
2. Virtual home-based instruction
3. Sharon Cyber Academy

Note that if the County were to be placed in the Red phase, all schools will revert to 100% online instruction.

Parents who are opting for the virtual instruction are asked to contact your building's principal if you have not yet completed the required forms.

Health and Safety Plans

The American Association of Pediatrics strongly advocates for having students physically present in school and that school districts create plans that are flexible and able to respond to

the ever-changing information and directives we are receiving. The following protocols are currently in place for the Sharon City School District, subject to additions and changes as we continue to receive guidance:

<i>Health and Safety :Universal Precautions</i>	
<p>Cleaning and Disinfection Increased daily and weekly protocols utilizing hospital grade cleaning products</p>	<p>Staff Face Coverings Masks or shields required for staff aligned with State mandated protocols</p>
<p>Hand Washing Increased emphasis on hand washing through teaching routines and reinforcement</p>	<p>Student Face Coverings Masks required during all transition periods and when social distancing is not feasible. Families are ask to provide masks for their children. State mandates will be enforced</p>
<p>Hand Sanitizer Hand sanitizer stations have been installed in all classrooms and communal areas</p>	<p>Modified Movement Patterns Hallway patterns will be modified, large gatherings will not occur</p>
<p>Modified Entry and Exit Entry and exit protocols will be changed to permit screening of student and staff temperatures</p>	<p>Limited Shared Supplies Individual use supplies whenever possible</p>
<p>Visitors Limit non-essential visitors and volunteers</p>	<p>Isolation Spaces Isolation spaces will be used should we identify a symptomatic student or staff member</p>
<p>Back-to-School Events Events such as PTO meetings, Open House, Orientation etc., will be cancelled or held virtually until January 1, 2021</p>	<p>Protocols for Health Monitoring and Quarantine Our health and administrative staff will work with parents and staff to ensure effective monitoring/quarantining protocols under the guidance of our school physician</p>
<p>Drinking Water Students will have access to one time use cups instead of drinking water fountains</p>	<p>Systemic Communication Regular communication with families to emphasize protocols and notify of changes as they occur</p>
<p>Pre-arrival Health Screening Parents will be ask to complete a health screening at home before sending students to school daily. A screening checklist will be provided for families to use</p>	

<i>Lunch and Transportation</i>	
<p>New Lunch Room Protocols Students will be socially distanced in the cafeteria, additional spaces will be used to decrease the number of students in one space and/or students may eat in their classrooms dependent on grade level and staffing availability</p>	<p>Increased Sanitation Procedures High use surfaces will be sanitized between breakfast and the various lunch periods</p>
<p>No Self-Serve Lines Breakfast and lunches will be pre-packaged or served by staff using social-distancing protocols</p>	<p>Bus/Van Cohort Groups Special program students who use transportation services will have assigned seats and will be required to wear masks</p>
<p>Lunch Cohort Groups Students will have assigned seats within their cohort groups</p>	<p>Bus/Van Staff Staff will be required to wear masks and to clean the vehicle between each run</p>

Instructional Program

Unlike our spring 2020 protocols, which included providing review and enrichment, we will be providing our State mandated, standards based, effective instructional program for our students while considering the measures listed below. To keep our instructional program consistent and safe, students in grades K-6 will be kept in their homerooms whenever possible. Elementary special classes (i.e. art, music, PE) will be conducted in the homeroom. All teachers will start the year using a consistent virtual platform – Google Classroom for both our in person and virtual students.

All students, whether attending in person or virtually, will receive a Chromebook for daily use. Families needing internet service will be provided with a Hot Spot. Parents and Students will be asked to sign an Acceptable Use document, which outlines requirements for use of these devices.

<i>Instruction: General Protocols</i>	
<p>Student Cohorts Students in grades K-6 will be kept in homeroom cohorts whenever possible</p>	<p>Modified Schedules Schedule modifications will be made to provide time for transition and sanitation</p>
<p>Reduced Transitions Elementary specialists will travel to classrooms for instruction</p>	<p>No Field Trips and Assemblies All field trips and assemblies have been canceled until January 1, 2021</p>

<i>Instruction: General Protocols</i>	
<p>Consistent Virtual Platform All staff will maintain a consistent virtual classroom for student access when absent or participating virtually</p>	<p>Instructional Practices Classroom instruction will be conducted in socially distanced classrooms to minimize close contact to the extend feasible</p>
<p>Assessment and Evaluation Students will be assessed to determine any academic needs related to the extended school closures of spring 2020 and summer</p>	<p>Grading Students will be graded as per district policy. The District will not utilize the Pass/No Credit format for the 2020-21 school year. Students are expected to complete all assignments</p>
<p>Attendance Attendance will be maintained as per Board of Education policy whether the student attends in person or virtually</p>	<p>All Subjects Taught K-12 Math, literacy, science, social studies and electives</p>

Student Services/Special Education Support

Our Student Services/Special Education support structures will continue to focus on high quality learning for all students. We will work to ensure students that need assistance with re-entry to school will have the support that is needed. Specific attention is being given to special education services, including procedures, practices and services necessary following the spring closure.

<i>Instruction: Student Services/Special Education</i>	
<p>Equity and Access We will ensure high quality learning for all students</p>	<p>Transition We will plan to meet student needs in both in-person and virtual learning environments</p>
<p>Procedures and Practices The District will notify affected families of the process for conducting evaluations and determining the needs of all students</p>	<p>Parent Partnership Engage families in the virtual IEP process</p>

Social-Emotional Well-Being

Caring for the well-being of our students is always our top priority. We plan to enhance our approach to the social and emotional well-being of our staff and students this school year. Our existing system of support, provided by school psychologists, counselors and home-school liaisons will continue to be in place as we work to ensure all staff and students feel supported, valued and supported. We are also adding a trauma counselor to support students and staff who are in specific need of support. This position is added for the 2020-21 school year through grant funding provided by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Athletics and Activities

Athletics and activities will be scheduled following regular consultation with State and local health authorities, and within PIAA and District 10 guidelines. Parameters set by the Sharon City School District as part of our Health and Safety plan will also serve as guidance. Our primary goal is to maximize precautions and ensure our students can attend school.

Dress Apparel Policy

The District's dress apparel policy will be followed. Students in violation will be asked to change into appropriate attire if available. The nurse's office/clothes closets will not be available during the first nine weeks.

Communication and Questions

Moving forward, all information regarding the reopening of school, including Board of Education's documents, letters, announcements and slides will be available on our district website/phone app: www.sharonsd.org under the news tab. If, after reviewing the plan materials, you have questions, please direct those to your building principal.

Please note that this is a constantly changing situation and we will follow all of the guidance and requirements issued by Federal, State and Local authorities. Our plans are such that we will be able to flex them at any time to meet the needs of our students and families.

In closing, I would like to assure you that we are planning to do all that we can to ensure a safe return to school on August 25. We will continue to be responsive to the spread of COVID-19 in our planning and will keep you regularly informed.

Thank you for your partnership in ensuring that together we continue to provide our students with the best education possible during this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Calla

Michael J. Calla
Superintendent