

Clearfield Area School District

Administrative Offices
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Friday, August 14, 2020

Greetings Clearfield Area School Families,

While we did issue an update last week on our plans to start school, we have had two new items shared by PDE and the PA DOH this week that will change what we have had planned. To get to where we already were there was a tremendous amount of time and energy by so many people to try to plan for the student and staff return to school. The comprehensive plan focused on so many areas, none of which was lesser in importance than another. The outcome was a recommended plan to the Board at the end of July that tried to find ways to keep everyone safe and healthy to the maximum extent possible, while also trying to address our students' needs not only academically, but socially and emotionally as well, while carving out a path that would allow our teachers to be as effective as possible in the classroom and/or online.

As you know from last week's update, we were planning at the start of school to operate on a split group approach with students being in Groups A or B based upon their last name. This was determined to be needed as we worked through our new routines and procedures to make sure what we thought would work, worked as intended, and allow us to implement other changes or needs with smaller groups of students. Our initial goal was to have everyone back to school as a whole group after Labor Day. We knew that there were concerns about everyone being back together and had established criteria that would have to be met, allowing that to happen.

This week we have received two new directions from PDE intended to help provide directions for the schools. The first one we received on Monday outlined that counties would be designated as "Low", "Moderate", or "Substantial" based on the new number of cases per 100,000 people each week. To be in the "Low" category, Clearfield County would need to see on average less than one new case per day. Currently Clearfield County is identified as "Moderate". This requires the school to operate in a format that reduces the school population, which is what our Group A and Group B start does. So at this point we will be running the Group A / Group B for a period of time longer than expected. This can change in two ways, the spread of COVID 19 in Clearfield County drops and allows us to return all students to school, or we move towards a different format for our educational delivery, most likely some form of our previously discussed Yellow phase, but that also needs revised to meet the requirements of "Moderate".

Last evening, we received the guidelines from PDE and the DOH as to expected actions when cases are identified related to the school population. If either school had multiple identified cases, the school could be closed for potentially 5-7 days. If as little as one case in each building would occur at the same time, unrelated to the other, both schools could be closed for potentially 5-7 days. (As per the guidelines received last evening.) While our hopes and prayers would be that none of our staff and students would

become infected and sick, the reality is that with a school population that nears 2500 people between students and staff, at some point our school community will be impacted.

All of that previous information to basically share this:

1. We will be operating on a Group A/B basis for what now appears to be a longer period of time than expected.
2. Our Yellow phase plans will be revised over the upcoming days.
3. Please be patient and flexible. We fully appreciate and understand the frustrations and challenges.
4. We need everyone's ongoing help in Clearfield County to take the steps needed to help slow the spread of COVID 19.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terry W. Struble". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Terry" and last name "Struble" clearly distinguishable.

Terry W. Struble, Superintendent

tstruble@clearfield.org