



Collingswood and Oaklyn Public Schools

It's Where You Want to Learn



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BETH ANN COLEMAN
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

August 18, 2020

Dear Collingswood and Oaklyn School Families,

At the end of July, I shared with you our *Welcome Back 2020* plan – the plan to reopen our schools using a hybrid Blue/Gold model beginning September 8, 2020. Since that date, we have continued working feverishly to prepare our school campuses to welcome your children and our staff back in the healthiest and safest way possible. We have always been committed to following the science and paying close attention to what happens in schools that open during the weeks leading up to September 8.

Since that date in late July, however, the situation has changed. As schools across the nation have begun to open, we are learning of instances where positive test results are leading to those schools closing down again with hundreds of students and staff members sent home to quarantine. In addition, the New Jersey Department of Education has updated its guidelines to now allow school districts to begin the year remotely to ensure that they meet the Governor's minimum expectations, released late last week. In an effort to ensure that we meet and exceed those minimum standards for opening schools and to allow us time to guarantee that we have sufficient staff in our schools to implement our plans, the Collingswood and Oaklyn School Districts will seek approval from the Department of Education to begin our school year 100% remotely for the majority of our students. Our plan is to move toward full implementation of the previously described hybrid plan by mid-October if data and staffing permit. Some of our students who require specialized programming and services that can be difficult to replicate virtually will be invited back to campus sooner than mid-October. The Collingswood and Oaklyn staff members (e.g., Child Study Teams) working with these students will contact families to arrange scheduling.

Since last spring, everyone in our schools has worked to prepare for our reopening in September. We've developed hybrid and remote schedules, planned extensive training, prepared technology devices for distribution to students, implemented health and safety precautions across our schools, and conducted required maintenance on our HVAC systems, including upgrading filters.

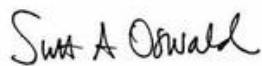
The purpose of this letter is to share this latest update with you. Over the course of the next several days, we will revisit our plans and design a remote instructional strategy that is effective, engaging, and easy for families to understand and follow. Most importantly, we will plan instruction that meets our students where they are and provides the necessary support to help them grow as learners. This plan will be released to you in a follow-up communication as soon as it is finalized.

Finally, because we value the importance of relationships over anything else, we will build opportunities for students to meet their teachers during the first two weeks in September. I have asked our

administrators to develop schedules that allow for this important opportunity to build bridges between our students and families and our teachers.

As we continue to plan for the start of the school year and the reopening of our schools, please understand that everyone across both the Collingswood and Oaklyn Schools wants our students back in school where they belong. We all want to return to “normal,” but we must do so in a manner that prioritizes the safety of our students and staff. Working together, we can emerge from this pandemic better, stronger, and kinder than when we entered.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott A. Oswald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Scott A. Oswald, Ed.D.
Superintendent