



Livingston PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Matthew J. Block
Superintendent of Schools

11 Foxcroft Drive
Livingston, New Jersey 07039
Telephone: (973) 535-8000 ext. 8011
E-mail: mblock@livingston.org
Website: www.livingston.org

August 24, 2020

Dear Livingston Public Schools Families:

As indicated in my letter to the community this past week, the Livingston Public Schools will open the 2020-2021 school year with all students learning remotely. On August 12th, when the Governor issued an executive order granting permission for New Jersey school districts to open remotely, it was specified that districts must take steps to begin bringing students and staff back to school facilities, when possible. We plan to do this in a phased approach based on our ability to provide in-person supervision of students and ensure the health and safety needs of our students and staff.

I wanted to share the following information with our families:

- First Week of School, September 8 - 11, 2020: All students will be at home, learning remotely.
- [The Remote Learning Guide](#) and its schedules are in place for those grade levels that are fully remote. Students in grade levels that are fully remote will remain on a full remote schedule until such time we are able to provide an opportunity for certain grade levels to return to school facilities. Any grade level that has the opportunity to return to school facilities for in-person learning will transition to the hybrid schedule.
- Self Contained Special Education Programs and PRIDE Students - While there are still some details pending, we are currently planning to bring the students in our self-contained special education program and the students in our PRIDE program back into our school facilities, with their teachers and instructional aides, on a hybrid schedule, since these programs allow for cohorting in smaller groups on a more frequent basis. When we are able to have these groups of students return to school facilities, students will report five days per week. Parents of these students will be notified about their child's programming from our Directors of Special Education and/or their Child Study Team member. As soon as we are able to make a final determination as to the feasibility of opening our facilities, we will be in contact with our families.
- Kindergarten-2nd Grade Students - While there are still some details pending, we are currently planning to be able to bring our K-2 students back into our school facilities, with their teachers and instructional aides, on a hybrid schedule. When we are able to have these groups of students return to school facilities, they will report on an A/B hybrid schedule as outlined in the hybrid reopening plan document circulated to families on August 5th. As soon as we are able to make a final determination as to the feasibility of opening our facilities, we will be in contact with our families.
- Elementary school (Pre-K-5) and self-contained special education program families will receive a selection form tomorrow asking whether they will choose to have their child(ren) participate in the "in person" elements of the hybrid model when grade levels have the opportunity to return to in-person learning. Families can use the [hybrid model overview document](#) and the [FAQ document](#)

Livingston Public Schools: Empowering all to learn, create, contribute, and grow.

related to hybrid learning that followed in order to make their decisions. Links to these documents will be provided on the selection form.

This form will need to be completed by August 27, 2020. If you do not complete the form by that date, it will be assumed that the student will be participating in the in-person elements of the hybrid model. Families will be able to withdraw from the in-person elements of the hybrid model at any time.

- Based on our current staffing situation, it is highly unlikely that we will be able to have secondary students (6-12) return to our facilities prior to November. We will continually assess our situation, and work to formulate a plan forward as the Department of Education has required. We will update families as our plans develop.

School-based information will be sent to families from their school principal tomorrow, August 25. This will allow families to have more detailed information about the opening of the 2020-2021 school year that is school-specific. We continue to work with the YMCA to provide additional options for child care. We hope to send you information on their programming shortly.

Across the country, this will be a school year like no other. We are ready to make it the best school year possible. Our educators have risen to the occasion under challenging circumstances before, and I am confident they will do so again. Unfortunately, this pandemic has left us with no perfect option for reopening schools. We are determined to create effective learning experiences, deliver impactful social and emotional support, and provide opportunities for socialization and connection that are meaningful and enjoyable. Under extremely challenging circumstances, our team is focused on our students and helping them grow. With more than 130 New Jersey school districts beginning the school year with remote learning, we are not alone. We will continually adjust our practice, and strive to implement what works best for children.

As so many people are suffering during this time, it is important to consider what lessons we want our children to learn when it comes to how to treat one another and preserve community during a crisis. Hopefully, the example we set is not one of divisiveness, disrespect, misguided comments on social media about teachers, anonymous rants, and conspiracy theories. These actions have the greatest potential to do long term harm to our community, and teach the wrong lessons to our kids. Instead, let us work to keep moving forward together. This is a time when we need to rely on one another and provide support. Constructive comments and suggestions are always welcome, but we need to model for our children how to disagree and advocate with civility. If they learn how to build community through respectful discourse during this difficult time, it will be a lesson that might change the world for the better.

I look forward to our continued partnership.

Sincerely,



Matthew J. Block
Superintendent of Schools