

MAYWOOD

452 Maywood Avenue
Maywood, New Jersey 07607-1996

Michael Jordan
Superintendent

Telephone
201-845-9114

District Update - July 7

Good evening, I hope all is well. I reach out tonight with an update as to our Summer and Re-Opening plans as of today.

District admin and staff have been meeting, dialoguing and brainstorming for quite some time and I have been meeting with our county colleagues from various school districts as well as taking part in Department of Health and County leadership meetings. We will begin the process of returning to school in August with regulated in person Kindergarten Screening and CST testing as we anticipate a reopening for September. As noted, the plan provided by the State outlines a tremendous amount of information that leads to one requirement, and that is that all school districts in NJ MUST re-open for in person instruction in September in some format. The mandate notes that a district cannot operate fully in a remote setting in September. Of course that is all dependent upon whether there is a change in the health data that precipitates a closure whether by a district or the county.

We are pleased with the response from the Family Feedback Survey and will use the data that has been received from that in our subcommittee meetings. We have a number of parent and staff volunteers who will begin meeting next week to analyze five key areas of focus, they being PPE, Physical Plant, Scheduling, Curriculum/Hybrid Learning and Social/Emotional. The District is tasked with sending a mandated reopening plan to the County for review by July 23rd. The District is also mandated to have that plan in place for September communicated to families one month prior to the start of school. Maywood's goal is to get that plan to you prior to August 10th so as to allow you to plan accordingly.

The feedback from the survey indicates what we anticipated and that is families and staff are in favor of returning to school under safe conditions as much as possible while also being in favor of hybrid schooling which is part in person and part remote. The survey also found that we all have the same worries and concerns regarding the health and safety and emotional well being of our district community. The one issue that still remains is the key to all of this and that is clear requirements from State and County leadership as to what to do when a staff member, student or someone connected with them tests positive. In a meeting with the Bergen County Executive and the County Board of Health Director yesterday, I was assured that by

this coming Monday we would have something to work from regarding this critical question.

As noted above, we are required to set up committees consisting of a cross section of our district community. The response I spoke of in terms of volunteers satisfies this requirement and these committees will be greatly beneficial to our reopening plans. The committee members will be tasked with looking at specific items as each relates to the overall goal of reopening schools. Therefore, the committees and all of us must be guided by an overall framework. Hence, the framework that we all have to be prepared for, whether committee members or not, is that the return to school in September will most likely be a phased in approach that calls for the return of in person schooling in combination with distance learning at so as to comply with the social distancing guidelines in our classrooms and schools. Whether that looks like half days, full days on certain days of the week, or another variation, we should all prepare for that type of a September focus when we are thinking over the next two months. This is the sentiment of many, if not all of Bergen County.

Maywood would like to hope and plan for a three-phase approach that allows us to ease back into school while maintaining quality educational services in this health emergency climate. Preliminarily we should be looking at phase 1 to be September through October 15th, Phase 2 to be from October 15th to Thanksgiving and Phase 3 being from Thanksgiving on. Each step of the way within each phase will allow for data collection internally and with our school and county partners to review best practices and areas of need each step of the way. Therefore, although plans are still very fickle, as is the rate of infection and spread in New Jersey, we should be all planning for a phase in approach and therefore be aware of our child care needs and family obligations and planning. Would it be great to reach back out to you and note in late August that the requirements of social distancing and reduced class sizes to meet standards has been lessened so that we can bring 100% of students and staff back in person? YES. Although we of course hope for better news and a return to normalcy quicker than anticipated, we feel it is always better to plan for the worst then to set expectations that are not feasible.

Therefore, we will continue to work, plan and revise plans in the coming days and weeks. We will continue to solicit input in the form of follow-up questions and surveys and we will monitor changing information that may come from the County and the State. We will be in touch on a consistent basis and communicate any items of importance to you as they become available. On behalf of the Maywood Board of Education I again thank everyone for their continued support of our schools and most importantly the kids.

Take care and be well.

Michael Jordan