



July 17, 2020

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SLSD Parents and Guardians,

In an effort to document the ongoing planning for the 2020-2021 school year, the Southern Lehigh School District will be using weekly communications as part of our focus on a more rigorous communication model to ensure that stakeholders are provided updates regarding ongoing planning for the return to school in the fall.

The Administration would like to thank all of the members of the Southern Lehigh School District community who attended and participated in our Return to School Community Task Force Meetings. The two sessions were attended by over 1000 participants and more than 250 questions or comments were fielded.

On Monday, July 20 the Board of School Directors will review the SLSD Health and Safety Plan at a Special Meeting via Zoom (see [www.slsd.org](http://www.slsd.org) / District Announcements for Zoom meeting information). This plan serves as the mandated reopening step set by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. District Administration will review the recommendations within the plan emphasizing the ongoing fluidity that accompanies the reopening of schools.

As a reminder, the core content within the Health and Safety Plan serves as the primary PDE recommendations for the physical reopening of schools. The primary purpose of this document is to gather information regarding critical planning steps like social distancing guidelines, cleaning and sanitizing procedures, transportation plans, food service plans, and the creation of targeted health procedures specific to COVID-19. However, due to the ongoing variability with respect to the level of community spread of the COVID-19 virus, all instructional planning is subject to change depending on state and local health and safety mandates between now and the start of the school year. The Southern Lehigh School District instructional planning **must** continue to remain flexible while ensuring the ability to transition between in-person and remote learning. Board approval of the plan will approve that range of flexible options for instruction. This vote does not establish the specific phase we will be in at the start of the school year. A final decision on the type of instruction that we begin with will be made prior to the start of the school year based on the situation and guidance at that time.

In the coming weeks, the Southern Lehigh School District will be pushing out two critical community surveys to aid our teams' understanding of individual student plans for the upcoming school year. We ask that all parents/guardians **complete both an Instructional Program Survey and a District Transportation Survey** for each student that is currently enrolled in the district.



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The Instructional Program Survey will ask families to commit, to the best of their ability, to either in-person or remote instruction for their student(s) for the coming school year. Although this information is non-binding, these results represent the pivotal next step in our planning. The Transportation Survey will ask families if they are planning to utilize SLSD school bus transportation should in-person learning resume in the fall.

As we stated in our communication last week, any physical return to school will require a partnership among all Spartans. The entire school community, from students to staff, will need to become accustomed to a new set of “norms” with respect to personal hygiene practices and social distancing. In anticipation of a physical return to school, we strongly encourage all families to start discussing and practicing the following critical components of a return to school with your child(ren). Additional information specific to these new “norms” can be found using the following links.

- [Daily Symptom Screening](#)
- [Face Covering Use](#)
- [Hand Washing/Sanitizing](#)

We recognize that each component of our Health and Safety Plan represents changes that some members of our community will find to be challenging, especially in younger age groups. As educators we believe that with practice and diligence these necessary features of our plan will help to ensure the health and safety of our entire school community.

Thank you for the ongoing support as we continue to plan for the upcoming school year. Preparing to start a school year is always stressful and doing so in the midst of a global pandemic is no easy task. We are thankful for the partnership that we continue to build with our community and for the commitment and care displayed by our staff during each planning session.

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