

September 25, 2020

Dear K-6 Parents and Caregivers,

We hope you and your families are well. As you know, we are planning to return to in-person learning for our K-6 students on Monday, October 5th. If you recall, we outlined the plan for a full return to school over the summer and developed a comprehensive Re-Entry Plan that was approved by the Board and shared with all parents and staff in the Newtown community. Our decision to move to the Hybrid Model was purposeful and accomplished several things: 1) Easing back into school slowly and safely, 2) Planning for the interface between instruction and technology essential for remote learning, and 3) Implementing the myriad of health safety measures and mitigation strategies effectively. As a result, we have been able to open school with greater confidence and a higher degree of success.

As promised, we have been reviewing health indicators and feel prepared to bring K-6 students back to the classrooms as planned. The Newtown Re-Entry Plan identified the protocols and practices that would be in place, in alignment with State guidelines, so that all students and staff could return, including but not limited to:

- Minimum of 3-6 feet social distancing in classrooms
- Social distancing in buildings
- Minimizing visitors to the schools
- Mandatory use of masks or face coverings
- Use of desk shields for every learner
- Home health screening (for temperature and signs of illness) by parents/caregivers
- Ongoing cleaning and sanitization of bathrooms and touchpoints throughout each building
- Assigned seating on the bus with bus monitors (2 weeks) to ensure students are following protocols (sitting in assigned seats, wearing masks, sitting with family members)
- Coordination with the local health department for contact tracing

Please understand that our ability to return to school at any time is based on health data indicators and number of cases. We receive weekly reports that provide us with State, Town, and County COVID-19 data, and we are in ongoing consultation with our local health director.

As parents, you will have the opportunity to return students to school in-person or keep your students home on remote learning. There will no longer be a Hybrid option for K-6, unless health indicators warrant us to move back to this mode at some point in the future. We are currently working on a plan to return 7-12 students back to school on November 2.

At last night's meeting, the Board of Education approved the proposal for a 2-hr. early release schedule on Wednesdays for all K-6 students following the return to school on October 5th. This time will support teacher preparation as they work to provide instruction for both in-person and distance learning students. Deep cleaning and sanitization of buildings will also occur on Wednesdays.

We ask that you **complete the brief survey below no later than Monday, September 28th**. The survey will help us determine in-person enrollment and the number of students who will be learning remotely. The survey can be found at the following link:

<https://forms.gle/3qTMVCn8scX1QodU9>

Stay well.

Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue, Superintendent

Newtown Public Schools

Newtown, CT

203-426-7621