



NEW HOPE-SOLEBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT
*Engaging, Enriching, and Empowering All Students
through a World-Class Education*

July 17, 2020

Dear New Hope-Solebury Community,

We hope this finds you enjoying your summer vacation. We are including in this edition significant information with regards to our school opening plans.

PANDEMIC RESOURCES FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS

As a result of the COVID 19 Pandemic, many adults have been dealing with heightened anxiety and stress related to the impact of the pandemic on our daily lives. Our students are also grappling with many of these concerns. We are acutely focused on this as we develop our Health and Safety Plan and we have added an additional section and integrated into the plan interventions and strategies to support our students when they return to school. We wanted to also provide parents with resources to support calming students and helping them with their adjustment to the return to school. We have begun building resources on our website to support you to assist your students which have been provided by our district counselors. These resources can be found [here](#).

PLANS FOR THE RETURN TO SCHOOL

The school district has been assembling three separate plans referenced below for the start of the school year to ensure continuity of learning for our students and to help to ensure the health and safety of our students in their return to school. Considerable effort has gone into the development of these three plans based upon the guidance received from the [Pennsylvania Department of Education](#), Pennsylvania Department of Health, [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), the [Center for Disease Control](#) and [Bucks County Department of Health guidance](#). In some cases, the guidance provided by these organizations and agencies conflicts and we have selected the guidance which we feel ensures the health and safety of our students while also feasibly allowing us to open our schools. We have sought to integrate into our plans the best of all of this guidance while striking a delicate balance between what guidance is untenable to opening schools and what guidance allows us to protect the health and safety of our students.

The plans that we have developed are the current version, but need to be perceived as working documents because as we learn more information, as the pandemic evolves and as situations warrant, we may need to adapt and modify the plans. The zone in which we are in at any given time will also drive the way in which the plan is implemented as restrictions and components of the plans will be more restrictive as the pandemic situation in our community, region or state becomes more significant.

ATHLETIC SAFETY PLAN

The first plan the school district has developed is the [Athletic Safety Plan](#). This plan outlines the guidelines and safety measures which the school district will be putting in place to ensure that our athletes and extra-curricular programming is able to return safely. The plan outlines the health and safety measures the school district will require its coaches and athletes to take in the implementation of

our athletic program. This plan was developed by Mr. Erik Pedersen and Mr. Kris Foulke and was Board approved at our June meeting of our Board of School Directors.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN

The second plan the school district has established is the Health and Safety Plan. This plan has integrated guidance from various health organizations and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This plan outlines the guidance which will be utilized by district and building administrators and teachers in returning to school. This plan outlines specific guidance and procedures which will be put into place to maximize our ability to ensure the health and safety of our students. This plan was developed by Dr. Lentz, Ms. Alyssa Marton and the school district Pandemic Task Force which included representative stakeholders from across the school district.

We are in the process of finalizing our Health and Safety Plan for the school district. This plan will be shared with the community in a virtual town hall meeting scheduled for July 21, 2020 at 5 P.M. and at the July 29, 2020, meeting of the Board of School Directors.

ACADEMIC PLAN

The third plan outlines the academic plan for the school year which includes two options for instruction; in person instruction with social distancing and online instruction through our virtual academy. This plan establishes the various procedures for attendance, work completion, instructional protocols, learning platforms and other components related to the changes to our instructional programming as a result of the pandemic. Dr. Charles Malone and Dr. Amanda Benolken spearheaded the academic team which developed this plan for the school district.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) DOCUMENT

We have included [here](#) a FAQ document designed to answer many questions we have received with regards to our reopening plans and the processes and procedures which we intend to implement when we reopen schools in the fall. We designed this document to be very comprehensive and will continue to add to the document as more plans are developed. There may be modifications as our plans change with updated guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education or Department of Health.

SURVEYS

We are in the process of developing a second survey which we are going to ask our community to complete. This survey will ask parents and families to examine both instructional models that the school district is proposing in the fall and to commit to instruction in person with social distancing or online. This information will help us to plan for the opening of school in the fall and determine how many students are expected in each school district program. We will also be seeking information about your plans for transportation and your plans for food service for the 2020-2021 school year. These surveys will be distributed after the presentation of the opening of school plans at the July meeting of the Board of School Directors. After each family has decided for their placement for the fall, we are expecting them to remain in that placement until the end of the first marking period when a change of placement could happen. This will help us to regulate our program and ensure we have adequate staffing to meet the needs of both programs.

“WALKING WHILE BLACK” PRESENTATION

We have coordinated an event in collaboration with Solebury Township and New Hope Borough for August 3, 2020 at 6 PM. This event will feature the movie, “Walking While Black” which examines national headlines of African Americans being victims of racial profiling and violence. The topics addressed in the movie are for mature audiences but would be appropriate for high school students with parent guidance. The program will be coordinated through the Peace Center and will be followed by discussion groups facilitated by the Peace Center.

The purpose of this program is to begin to engage our community in a dialogue about race and racism. This is expected to be the beginning of a series of similar programs and opportunities to engage our community in a discussion on difficult topics. A link to the event can be found [here](#) and if you are interested in attending, please sign up in advance so we can make sure you are on the list of attendees for the link to the zoom conference. This program is made possible through an agreement with the District Attorney’s Office and the film producer.

Please continue to check our COVID-19 website over the summer as we will be continuing to update that site with additional resources and materials as they are developed. We hope you and your family continue to have a wonderful weekend and we will continue to keep you updated as our plans continue to develop, and more information becomes available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles W. Lentz".

Charles W. Lentz, Ed.D.
