



July 29, 2020

Dear New Hope-Solebury Community,

We hope this finds you continuing to enjoy your summer vacation. Over the past few weeks we have been sharing information and updates with regards to our plans for the 2020-2021 school year. We have also been continuing to monitoring the changing guidelines and directives from that national, state and local health departments and educational organizations. We have appreciated your patience and understanding as we have worked to create our plan with consistently changing direction. Thank you as well for the questions and suggestions provided in our Townhall Meeting held on Tuesday, July 21, 2020. There are three main goals framing our work to develop a plan for the return to school:

- Proving for the health and safety of all our students and staff
- Providing families with academic options which can provide for various student and family instructional needs, including face to face and remote instruction
- Providing a flexible program which will allow us to quickly switch between the modes of instruction based on changes to current recommendations and requirements or developments in the COVID 19 pandemic

At the end of June we had asked families to provide us with their thoughts and feedback with regards to the instructional program implemented after we closed school in March and their thoughts with regards to what school should look like when we return in the fall. In order for us to implement our plans for the fall, it is now necessary to ask our families to provide feedback on the instructional model, transportation and food service options for their children. Please consider all of the information we have provided before completing this registration process. In order for us to effectively plan for the fall all survey responses are due by **August 6, 2020**.

Pennsylvania Health and Safety Plan

At the July 29, 2020, meeting of the Board of School Directors our Health and Safety Plan required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education was approved. A copy of the plan can be found [here](#) and on our website. This document provides specific guidelines the school district plans to follow to support the health and safety of our students. It should be noted that as new guidance is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and various health organizations, these plans are subject to change.

Academic Options for the Fall

As a result of the feedback provided on our June survey and a review of our available staffing resources, our school district sought to provide options for families who indicated they were comfortable and wanted to continue with our online program and for families who indicated they wanted to return to school and could not support an online program. This resulted in our school district being able to offer two options for each child attending school in New Hope-Solebury in the fall. Parents/Guardians are able to select different options for different children because we realize there may be differences in which program is the right fit for each individual student.

OPTION 1- A full return to school every day with appropriate safety protocols as outlined in our Health and Safety Plan. Classroom desks will be distanced a minimum of 3 feet but in most cases will be closer to an average 4 or 4.5 feet depending on the number of students in the class. Face coverings will be required throughout the day except during physical activity in physical education, during lunch, or during mask breaks scheduled by teachers throughout the day.

OPTION 2 – Remain at home full-time and participate in remote instruction. This will be facilitated by a New Hope-Solebury teacher and will include both synchronous (livestreaming or direct instruction) and asynchronous (self-paced instruction through materials provided by the teacher) instruction with regularly scheduled virtual office hours when students can receive assistance from a teacher.

There will be significant changes from the delivery of the remote instruction from the virtual instruction program delivered in the spring. Some of the aspects of this program for the fall will include:

1. Students engaging in virtual learning from home with instruction and support from a New Hope-Solebury teacher.
2. A significant increase in the amount of live teaching or live streaming with established time for direct engagement in a virtual class setting. This will often include livestreaming of classes from the regular classroom so students can be included with their peers in the instructional program.
3. Set office hours to receive additional support from the teacher.
4. Additional support of a cyber mentor to help facilitate questions and concerns throughout the day for students in the Virtual Academy.
5. Continuation of the use of the New Hope-Solebury curriculum to facilitate transitions between both the online and the in school programs.
6. Return to regular assessments and grading systems.
7. Requirement of attendance daily.
8. Students in both programs will have the option to be involved in our extracurricular programming including activities, clubs, and sports.
9. Provision of a school device if needed.

We will be providing sample schedules for students as part of the information distributed in the survey so you can have a sense of what a day in the life of your child will look like in these programs. Please know that whichever option you select for your children it will continue to

provide the same high quality instruction and curriculum which has been the trademark of our school district.

Changing Programs

We are requesting that by **August 6, 2020** parents and students select the program they would like to have their children enrolled in for the fall. This will assist us in developing both programs and knowing the number of students who will be in each program. This is essential so that we can effectively allocate staff and resources to the programs to the maximum extent possible. We understand the challenges and emotions involved in this process and the difficult decisions you are going to have to make, however, in order for us to be ready for the fall, we need your assistance in selecting your child's program within this timeline. If you do not select a program, we will attempt to reach you by phone and if we are unsuccessful, your child will be presumed to be returning to the in person instructional program. You will be able to change programs at the end of each marking period if you chose to do so.

Transportation

As part of our registration process, we will be seeking information on the transportation plans you are intending to use with your children in the fall. As outlined in our previous correspondence our plans are to provide transportation with no more than two students to a seat and wearing face coverings. Drivers will also be wearing protection to help in the mitigation of the spread of disease. If families opt to bring their children to school that will assist us in further enhancing the social distancing on our buses. In order to assist us in adequately assigning students to buses to ensure we are meeting the criteria outlined in our Health and Safety Plan, we need this information as soon as possible. We would ask that you commit to your decision with regards to transportation to at least the end of December.

Food Service

We are also seeking to understand the level to which our families are planning to have their students utilize the food service in our cafeterias this year. As this is a unique year, it would be helpful to have a better sense of the level to which our families and students are planning to make use of this opportunity. Students will be welcomed to buy food in our cafeteria at any time, but having a sense to which it is anticipated that they will be buying lunch will help us in being fiscally prudent in supplying our cafeterias.

Classroom Spacing

We are doing our best to maximize space between student desks in classrooms. As outlined in our Health and Safety Plan, our desks will be spaced a minimum of three feet apart. However, most classrooms will have desks spaced between four and four and a half feet, if not more depending on the enrollment in the classes. The more students who select our online option will help to facilitate additional spacing in the regular classroom.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

In an effort to provide additional information and resources for families we created an FAQ document which highlights key information from our Health and Safety Plan. The FAQ document can be found [here](#).

If you have additional questions or building specific questions, please feel free to contact your building principals or me. We will attempt to respond to your questions as promptly as possible.

We have also been posting a variety of resources on our school district reopening of school website which can be found [here](#).

Program Registration Process

We are requesting that you complete a pre-registration form for each child who will be attending New Hope-Solebury School District in the fall. [Click here to complete the form through our Family ID portal](#). Sign in to your existing account or create a new account for your family. Through FamilyID you will be asked to answer some basic questions with regards to our programs and options for the fall. We need all forms completed by August 6, 2020, so that we have enough time to begin scheduling each plan and finalizing other components of our Health and Safety Plan for the beginning of the school year.

I join the entire New Hope-Solebury School District Community in looking forward to welcoming your children back to school in the fall and providing them with an outstanding learning experience in the 2020-2021 school year.

Sincerely,

Charles W. Lentz, Ed.D.
Superintendent
