



Stanhope Public School District
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
24 Valley Road
Stanhope, NJ 07874

973-347-0008
www.stanhopeschools.org

Alicia Finklea-DiCataldo
Principal

Steven T. Hagemann
Superintendent

Dr. Steven E. McHugh, Sr.
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

July 14, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope this letter finds you and your family healthy and safe while enjoying the summer weather. I know that there are many lingering questions surrounding our community and beyond regarding plans to reopen schools in September, so I am reaching out to provide some transparency and information related to our initial plan in Stanhope. Please understand that a complete plan has not yet been developed and approved and won't likely be until the end of this month. Preliminary information is being provided to maximize the amount of time parents have to plan for the fall. It is also important to note that a strong possibility remains that the District's plan can change based on local and national trends, updated guidance from the CDC, Department of Health, and/or the NJ Department of Education (NJDOE).

Earlier this month, the NJDOE released a document titled, "The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education." This 104 page guidance document outlines requirements and best practices for school districts as they plan re-opening strategies for September. It is important to note that all New Jersey school districts are **required** to provide **on-campus learning** in the fall. Before receiving this guidance, a "Reopening Committee" was established and had already met to identify obstacles, concerns, and questions related to the return of in-person instruction. This committee is comprised of District Administration, Building Administration, Board of Education Members, SEA Members, Middle School Teaching Staff, Elementary Teaching Staff, Health Office Staff, the Technology Coordinator, Guidance Counselor, Curriculum Coordinator, and Parents. Since receiving this guidance document, the committee has reviewed and discussed our District's options and are in the initial stages of developing our own reopening plan, which we anticipate releasing to our staff and community in late July. This plan will outline the conditions for learning, leadership and planning elements, policy and funding information, and will address continuity of learning.

Based on the guidance provided by the NJDOE, the committee feels that it is in the best interest of our students and staff to initially develop a **HYBRID** learning plan for September. Our Reopening Committee feels strongly that our staff and community should be kept apprised of decisions that the committee has made and plans that are being developed to provide the greatest amount of time to prepare for the upcoming school year. With this in mind, I've included many of the important points related to the reopening plan below:

- The school will open with half of the student population, at most, attending each day. The modified schedule will designate students into an 'A' group and 'B' group where students will attend on-campus learning on designated days. A schedule will be developed soon and parents will be notified of their child(ren)'s designated group. Siblings and family members will be grouped together.

- Each school day will follow an early dismissal schedule. This will allow for additional cleaning and disinfection of each classroom and common areas in the afternoon and evening. This will also allow for teachers and staff to develop and implement virtual learning for students not scheduled or able to attend classes in-person. During an early dismissal schedule, lunch will not be served in school, but options for “grab and go” lunches will be provided for students to take home.
- When attending in person, the “core academic” classes, such as Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies will be given priority. Other classes, such as Music, Art, Physical Education, Spanish, and STEM will likely be provided virtually for students to engage during times that they are not assigned to be on campus physically.
- Students whose parents are not comfortable having their children return to on-campus learning, regardless of the reason, will be provided with a virtual option. Details on how this instruction will be delivered are being developed and will be forthcoming.
- Special consideration will be given to our most disabled students, who are already placed in classes with a reduced population, to attend school physically each day.
- Preschool will only offer half-day programs on campus every day.
- Each day, students and staff will need to engage in a health screening process before being permitted access to the building.
- All staff will be required to wear a mask at all times. Students will be required to wear a mask when entering and exiting the building and during any time that they are not seated at an assigned classroom desk. Student desks will be placed at least 6 feet from any other desk and will face the same direction. Anytime a student exits their seat, a mask will need to be worn.

In addition, the District is currently developing plans to provide child care options for parents needing to attend work and unable to find their own child care. It is expected that AlphaBest will provide a before and after school care option, and the school hopes to offer a program during the school day. More information will follow soon, but parents should only consider these options after all other possibilities of personal child care have been exhausted.

The Stanhope School District is taking the reopening of our school seriously and will take every measure possible to ensure the health and safety of students and staff, while providing the best possible instruction for our students. To help the District best plan for the reopening of school, I am asking that each family designate one parent/guardian to complete the online survey found within this link ([Survey](#)) no later than Sunday, July 19. As always, and never more so than now, I appreciate your support!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hagemann', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Steve Hagemann
Superintendent