



Hamburg Central School District

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

Administration Building

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July 2, 2020

Dear Hamburg Central School District Families,

I hope everyone remains safe and well. The purpose of this letter is to give you another update regarding our planning process for restarting school in September. This task presents all public school districts with a high degree of complexity, for which there is no simple, or single, answer. The objective of our planning is to not only allow us to be ready for September, but to also prepare us to adapt quickly during the school year according to any unexpected change in circumstances.

We have designed a multi-layered approach to planning that emphasizes collaboration, and includes more than 100 people from across the district working in teams to make sure that our plans are comprehensive and minimize health risks to students, staff and families. Each of these teams, which includes the Board of Education, a large stakeholder committee (including a physician), three specially designed working groups, our Administrative Council, and our Shared Decision Making teams in each building, will meet on-site and will contribute to the mosaic of thought that is essential to effective planning for September.

Each of our three specially designed Working Groups comprises 15 – 20 members, including clerical, maintenance, teachers, administrators, transportation, mental health professionals, food service, teacher aides, nurses and parents. Each group will plan for restarting school under three possible configurations; fully remote, hybrid/density-reduced, and fully on-campus. The groups have already been formed and half-day meetings for each group begin next week. The three Working groups are:

- **Instructional Services** – curriculum/instruction, class schedules, optimizing student learning, grading/assessment, professional learning
- **Social Emotional Learning** – taking a “whole person” approach to meeting the mental/physical/emotional health needs of our students and staff, professional learning and instructional implications, family/community engagement
- **District Operations** – transportation, food service, facilities/maintenance, and finance

We made the decision to begin our planning process in advance of the issuance of health and safety guidance from the Governor’s Office and the New York State Department of Health, and also before we’ve received the educational guidance that we anticipate from the New York State Education Department. We felt that it was important to get a head start so that we can hit the ground running once all of that information is available to us.

It is perfectly natural for the uncertainty associated with restarting school in September to provoke anxiety in all of us. Dianna and I feel it in our house, too. Despite the uncertainty about how we will restart school, you can be certain that our planning will rely on the best available science and data, reflect our best effort to minimize health risk to students, staff and families, and will be informed by the lessons learned from the experience of the last four months. None of this will be easy, but we will rise to this challenge the way we always do in Hamburg . . . together.

I will update all of you regarding our progress throughout the summer.

Stay safe and be well.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Cornell
Superintendent of Schools