August 31, 2021

Dear Families, Caregivers and Staff,

As we approach the first day of school for in-person teaching and learning, I wanted to share some logistical details. If you have not reviewed the Town Hall and Safe Return to Schools Plan, please take a moment to see how the district is moving forward. Below are further updates:

**Ventilation**
We are implementing the strategies put forth in the NJDOE Road Forward to increase air flow, such as, opening windows and doors, installing purifiers that have HEPA filters and used in medical facilities, and upgrading our mechanical ventilation. We are opening our buildings as instructed by the NJ Department of Education. We are continuously working on our facilities including work throughout the summer on ventilation and structural repairs. I am proud to announce that we are using federal funding to implement our Phase 1 plan to enhance the mechanical ventilation in the district. Additionally, we are excited about our commitment to improving facilities with the passing of the resolution to seek $60 million in funding as we work in collaboration with the Board of School Estimate.

**Vaccinations**
The district will be complying with Governor Murphy’s Executive Order No. 253 whereby vaccines are mandated for school employees and those without vaccines will be tested on a weekly basis. District administration is working with the MEA on details.

**Pooled Testing**
The district will be implementing pooled COVID-19 testing on a weekly basis for students, teachers and staff for PreK-12, beginning at the end of September. Tests will be administered to students and staff in all grades on a volunteer basis. We will be updating the website with further details. Please see this short video for how pooled testing works.

We are instituting multiple measures of mitigation, such as, masking, increasing air flow, and house maintenance strategies suggested in the Road Forward to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our return to in-person instruction. I look forward to writing to you again at the end of the week to formally welcome you to school year 2021-22.

Sincerely,
Dr. Jonathan Ponds
Superintendent