July 30, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I hope this letter finds you and your family doing well. Since our closure on March 16, 2020, I am reminded daily how much our lives have changed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is very difficult to know what information is accurate and what is not. Our administration has been working diligently in an effort to develop a plan that would get our kids back to school in a safe manner. Through this development, we have worked with other school districts, our school physician, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and other local agencies to formulate this plan.

This letter is to inform you that the Chestnut Ridge School District Board of School Directors passed our Health and Safety Plan on Tuesday, July 14, 2020. Prior to the development of this plan, we reviewed the results and comments provided to us through the parent survey. When we reviewed the parent surveys, it was clear that nearly 80% of our parents were comfortable with face-to-face delivery of instruction in-school. As per our Health and Safety Plan, the District will be returning for full in-person instruction on August 20th, 2020, provided that we remain in the green phase under PDE guidelines.

Many of the parent comments centered on masks, social distancing, and getting students back to a traditional education setting. With those things in mind, we created an education plan that allows students to return to classrooms this fall with as many safety precautions as feasibly possible. The plan is available for your review on the District webpage at www.crlions.org. As part of this letter, I am including a summary of the plan to provide information related to the start of the 2020-21 school year.

Please know that this plan is designed to get our staff and students back in school to a positive and safe environment. If updates or revisions to this plan become necessary, they will be communicated to parents/guardians of our students and staff as soon as possible. We also realize that this plan cannot guarantee that we will not experience any Covid-19 cases as we move forward. However, current statistics show that less than 2% of the total cases of Covid-19 fall in the 0-20 age category. In addition, the medical information we have been provided with related to the virus, and how it affects school-aged children, indicates a very minimal risk of students in this age category contracting or spreading the virus. Resources and information related to Covid-19 can be found on the school’s website.

Chestnut Ridge School District is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability and/or possession of a GED as opposed to a high school education in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, contact the appropriate building principal or the Civil Rights Coordinator for Title IX, Chestnut Ridge School District, 814-839-4195. For information regarding services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by disabled persons, contact the Director of Special Education, Chestnut Ridge School District, 814-839-4195.
Plan Summary

- Masks/face coverings will be required while students are on buses, entering and leaving the buildings, changing classes (hallways), moving about in common areas, waiting in cafeteria lines and where social distancing is not possible. If a student or staff member is unable to wear a mask, they must provide medical documentation to the school district prior to attending school. If no medical documentation is received, the student will be provided a mask to wear. If a student refuses to comply, that will result in the student being sent home from school and a parent conference will be held.

- Where possible, desks will be spaced apart to provide social distancing. We are also purchasing dividers to be placed on the science lab tables to provide distancing.

- Face coverings may be removed when student is engaged in any activity at least 6 feet apart (e.g., face covering breaks, classrooms where distancing is made possible, recess, etc.).

- Students and staff will be reminded about the importance of proper hygiene and hand washing on a routine basis through signage and teacher direction.

- Buses will be disinfected at least daily. Siblings will be seated together on the bus.

- Visitors and assemblies will be limited based upon the most current guidance.

- PIAA sponsored activities will follow guidelines released by the State; all other extracurricular activities will follow the most current guidelines issued by the PDE, DOH or the Governor.

- Cafeterias will utilize modifications and social distancing to reduce contact.

- Physical education classes will be conducted outside when possible and equipment will be disinfected after use.

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Parents/Guardians will be asked to self-screen their children prior to coming to school on a daily basis.

All staff members will be required to self-screen prior to coming to work.

Students and staff exhibiting signs of illness will be required to be screened by the school nurse. A quarantine area will be available in the nurse’s offices to be utilized by students with a fever while they await a family member to pick them up.

Any person returning to campus after experiencing a confirmed case of COVID-19 must have a doctor’s excuse saying that returning to school is safe for both the individual who recovered and others in the building.

Employees and students who are well, but have a sick family member at home with COVID-19 should notify their supervisor/principal and follow the guidance of local health officials and health providers.

All buildings will have hand sanitizer available in classrooms and hallways.

All buildings, classrooms and high contact areas will be deep cleaned and sanitized at least daily.

Recess will be limited to one grade level at a time and playground equipment will be disinfected after use.

If after reviewing the reopening plan you feel that your child(ren) is unable to return to school, you will be provided alternative learning options on a case-by-case basis. Please contact your building principal by August 10th to discuss educational options in such event.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mark J Kudlawiec

Dr. Mark J Kudlawiec, Superintendent