



July 2, 2020

Dear Families:

This afternoon it is expected Governor DeWine will announce guidance to reopen school districts for the 2020/21 school year. You may be aware the official guidance was originally expected by June 1, 2020 and then some additional dates in June that have now passed.

The preceding is not meant as a criticism of state leadership and I realize there are many variables that seem to change each day. Also, we appreciate the challenges as last week we dealt with our first confirmed case of COVID-19 with one of our students. Even though no state guidance has been released, we have been working as a district team to shape our overall educational plan. In fact, in June our district team of over 50 people met several times. The team includes staff, as well as, parents and two board members.

In other efforts, we are working with educators from Licking and Franklin counties and our district is represented on two statewide reopening groups. Responses to the parent survey were strong, with over 2,100 participants, and responses from staff surveys were equally strong. We will be using this data to influence our district plan. Finally, we have been working closely with area health departments and have a training scheduled next week with the Licking County Health Department to help prepare for potential health challenges with the reopening of schools.

Specific to a timeline, we originally projected our district draft plan would be complete by July 1 and a final plan no later than August 1. Obviously, with delays to the release of Ohio's plan, our draft plan was not released by July 1, but will be released as soon as possible. I realize this information does not provide an immediate answer and we are respectful that families and staff need time to make plans, including confirming a schedule so you can balance other life responsibilities. However, there are many factors that will impact our district plan. This includes important health directives regarding personal protective equipment, parameters about student bus transportation, the number or ratio of students in school designated areas, etc.

As written above, if Ohio's reopening plan is released later today as expected, we will be able to meld our draft work into the state model. Additionally, the preceding information is largely focused on procedural matters, but we have been drafting our plan to also include the implications of different models: (a.) Educational/Teaching and Learning implications, (b.) Health and Safety parameters for Students and Staff, (c.) Operational (e.g., transportation, daily/weekly schedules, etc.) and (d.) Social/Emotional well-being.

I recently received a message that ended with the usual, "stay healthy and safe," but they also added "hopeful." This served as a good reminder and I will end on the same note and reinforce there is hope for the future. Also, I wish all the best during these challenging times and to find some time to relax over the holiday break.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Wagner'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Philip Wagner, Ph.D.
Superintendent