



**Dr. George J. Rafferty • Superintendent of Schools**  
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*July 3, 2020*

**To Our Mount Laurel School Family:**

On June 26, NJ Governor Philip Murphy announced that schools will reopen in September 2020. For us, that means that certificated staff will return on Tuesday, September 1, and all students will arrive on Tuesday, September 8, according to our approved calendar for the 2020-2021 school year.

The NJDOE's guidelines entitled, "***The Road Back: The Restart and Recovery Plan for Education***", is serving as our roadmap. We have closely reviewed these guidelines, have examined supporting information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics, and numerous other resources which provide recommendations for schools to consider when reopening after COVID-19.

I have participated in a number of meetings, including with all the Burlington County Superintendents of Schools and the Lenape Council of Superintendents of our region to discuss the guidelines and coordinate our efforts.

The Mount Laurel School District Reopening Committee has been meeting since Wednesday, July 1. We have discussed our immediate action steps and strategized the work we must do to reopen our schools.

Represented on our District Reopening Committee are district leaders and community stakeholders with expertise in overseeing curriculum and instruction, finance, transportation, special education, facilities, food service, health and safety guidelines, parent representation, employee association presidents and our board of education. Our district leadership team represents our spirit for all of us to work together in the best interest of our students and families.

Our Reopening Committee will provide the oversight and review of the various subcommittees and our individual School Pandemic Response Teams.

The NJDOE guidelines recommend we inform parents of the Mount Laurel Plan at least 4 weeks before school starts. Therefore, in early August, we will report out to parents and the community the nature of our plan including the many critical areas addressed. Our plan must emphasize high expectations for teaching and learning and address all our students' needs in a way that accelerates them forward.

Our recent District Survey to gather parent feedback and input for our planning purposes was highly effective with a high rate of return. We sincerely appreciate the time taken to share input, concerns and opinions on this critical process.

Sincerely,

*George J. Rafferty, Ed.D.*  
Superintendent of Schools