



# GREATER Johnstown SCHOOL DISTRICT

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August 13, 2020

RE: Delayed start for students-- 09/08/2020

Delayed start for faculty and staff--08/28/2020

Greetings Trojan Families,

The administration, school leaders, teachers, maintenance staff and our entire faculty have worked together all summer to accommodate the requests of our families as we planned our transition back to a safe school opening. We appreciate how many of you responded to our survey regarding your choice for your child's education. The majority of our families selected a traditional option for their child, while the others selected a virtual learning option. Those who have selected a full-time virtual learning option will remain unaffected by any adjustments moving forward.

Our plan, prior to this week, was to accommodate your requests. However, on Monday, all school districts received guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania outlining the circumstances as to how schools should plan their reopening. Under these guidelines the county of Cambria is listed as a moderate community transmission county for COVID-19 and schools in the moderate range are recommended to move to a half-time virtual learning model.

Our Phased Reopening Health & Safety Plan was developed and revised by a team of school leaders, school board members, teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents. We also received guidance from the Infectious Disease Department of Conemaugh Hospital. Our plan followed the guidance given to reopen under county colors of green, yellow, and red. While Cambria county remains green, the new guidelines we received places Cambria county in the "moderate community transmission" category and recommends we open under our yellow phase guidelines.

After careful consideration the GJSD School Board of Directors have determined that a delayed start to our school year is the very best option as we continue to monitor the dashboard and plan our reopening. The 2020-21 school year will now begin for our students on Tuesday, September 8, 2020.

Please review the important information below:

## VIRTUAL LEARNERS

Families who have selected a full-time virtual option have been or will be contacted very soon in order to discuss your options further. We want to support you by providing information and answering your questions, so you can make the best decision for your child.

## TECHNOLOGY

We are asking any families that have devices available to use them. We have ordered additional Chromebooks, however they are currently on back order. At this point, we have the ability to provide our families who are choosing virtual learning with a computer. We have provided a distribution schedule to parent emails provided in our GJSD Return to School Survey. The district is working to increase our WiFi hotspot connections through various community partners so you can access virtual learning in a variety of ways.

## TRANSPORTATION

Driving your child in your own vehicle to and from school is highly recommended as the best option to decrease our number of bus riders. As we continue to develop our bus rosters, based on the number of students returning to our schools for face to face instruction, we are committed to providing the safest situation. We have been able to add additional bus runs to assist with our commitment in lowering the number of students riding each bus. In order to ensure we can contact trace in the event of a positive COVID-19 case, it is essential that students ONLY ride the bus and bus run to which they are assigned. Students will be assigned seats and expected to sit in their seats. Your student must follow these very simple and important rules in order to keep everybody safe.

Students will have three bus rules : Wear your mask, sit in your seat, ride your bus.

## FACE COVERINGS

We are following the Governor's mandate regarding wearing face coverings. Please know this can be a mask, a clear face shield, or a neck gaiter. Please have your child practice wearing their chosen covering before school starts, so they get used to wearing it. Also, it is recommended that they practice taking it off to remain on their chin or neck so it's not placed on any surface. Wearing a face covering keeps us all safe and will be expected in our schools.

## PREPARING FOR THE DAY AT SCHOOL

It is very important that you talk with your child each morning to ask how they are feeling and take their temperature. If your child is running a higher than normal temperature or is feeling sick they should stay home.

## PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

We are continuing to register students for Kindergarten and Preschool. The applications are available on the district's website. If you know of any family that has recently moved into the district please encourage them to start the registration process. This will support the finalization of our enrollment.

## UPDATE ADDRESS , PHONE NUMBER & EMAIL

Important every year! Please call any of our schools in order to provide an update with documented proof and we will change in our student information management system PowerSchool.

We understand the uncertainty of the times causes frustration, as we continue to work to develop the safest and most equitable return to school. We will continue to communicate with you and provide updated information to our reopening plans as soon as possible.

Stay safe and stay informed and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, concerns or additional needs.

Amy Arcurio  
Superintendent

Cc: Michael Dadey/ Pandemic Coordinator

