

**Boonton Township
Board of Education**

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Excellence in Education

October 20, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We've completed nearly 8 weeks of school at this point and students and staff have settled in to the cohort schedule very comfortably. It is apparent that the plan created by district Administration along with the Reopening Committee has been working. With the addition, last week, of the afternoon Learning Boost lessons, a longer school day affords students even more time with teachers for instruction and enrichment. Feedback about the Learning Boost periods has been overwhelmingly positive and I'm very proud of our teachers and students for prioritizing learning, even under these unusual circumstances.

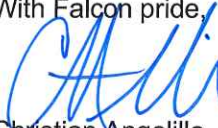
We have begun to meet with a variety of stakeholders and some very preliminary conversations have taken place regarding possible next steps in the process of normalizing school attendance. This is a complicated question and involves all of our cooperation and attention. Bringing students back to school altogether will likely be "phased in" when it happens. Students in PreK, Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd might be the first to come out of the cohort configuration. Why the youngest students? Because we know that remote learning is hardest for the youngest learners with their limited experience (comparatively) with school and self-motivation educationally. We will continue to examine and discuss strategies to insure the most efficacious plans are made as we move through the weeks and months ahead. Other areas we need to bear in mind will include staffing issues and appropriate space utilization.

Here's where we need your help: New Jersey was recently moved into the moderate risk category with rising cases of COVID-19 across the State. Several schools in Morris County including some neighboring districts have had to close for a few days and up to two weeks because of COVID-19 diagnoses within the school. When contact tracing was done, it was found that none of these cases originated within the schools—rather, the virus was contracted at other events including large and small gatherings. In the upcoming months we will celebrate Halloween, have teachers' convention days off, Thanksgiving break and the December holidays. Coupled with the fact that it's getting colder and family activities will be moving inside, the chances for passing on infections could rise. If we want to continue our healthy record of no cases at RVS, we will all need to be diligent and limit our participation in gatherings, traveling (particularly out of state) and be vigilant about mask wearing, social distancing and hand washing. I know I can count on you to make prudent decisions and consider all of the risks involved.

For now, please know that we continue to examine all of the opportunities for expanding instruction and bringing students back. We will be thorough and measured in our planning and will continue to communicate with you as decisions are implemented in the coming months.

A few important news updates: 1) The Conference Sign-Up portal (My Conference Time) has been open for a few days. See the virtual backpack for a link. Conferences take place via Zoom this Wednesday/Thursday. 2) Chromebooks for 5th and 6th graders are ready for pick up also Wednesday/Thursday. The window for pickup is 12:30 – 3 pm and you must bring your signed forms with you. 3) Elementary students (PreK-4) may dress up for Halloween this Friday or next Friday (depending on cohort).

Thanks for your continued feedback and support!

With Falcon pride,

Christian Angelillo