



July 29, 2020

Dear ACS Families, Students, and Staff,

I hope the last few months have allowed you to unwind from the incredible roller coaster ride we experienced between the middle of March and the end of June. As early as the day we closed school buildings for in-person learning, our Administrative team began planning for safely returning our students to face-to-face learning, we just did not think it would have to wait until September.

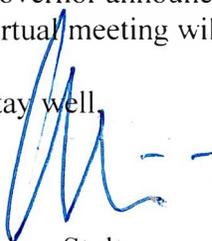
In early June, our Administrative team began focusing on the details for opening the 2020-21 school year with many uncertainties and little guidance. We worked through many scenarios and possibilities knowing that, as a community, we will need to adapt our approaches and ideas to the much-anticipated NYSED and Department of Health guidance documents that were recently released. Each conversation began and ended with discussion about the health and safety of our students, staff and community.

Even as these guidance documents continue to be amended, we are required to submit a web address and the following link to NYSED and the Department of Health with our re-opening plans in the coming days: <https://www.aldenschools.org/reopeningplan>. District plans may need to change as the guidance is updated, thus the link will not change, but the document may. Regardless, we felt strongly that the sooner we could share the different re-opening scenarios for our schools the better it would be for our families' and employees' planning purposes. While the linked plan is lengthy, it is important to note that buildings need to be able to tailor specific items to meet the developmental needs of their students. Please know that if and when implementing any "hybrid" model of instruction, which includes some students learning "face to face" while others learn remotely, we organized cohorts by household. Essentially, all the students in a home, regardless of their last name, will learn the same way on any given day. We felt that this may help families with supervision and childcare, if we are forced to implement this hybrid model of instruction at any time. Principals will share these Blue and Gold groupings or cohorts in the coming weeks and a copy of the learning calendar is included in the linked plan. The other two models we are prepared to implement include 100% student attendance while following the NYSED and Department of Health guidance and 100% remote learning. We anticipate learning more about the re-opening of schools from the Governor at the end of the first week of August.

In addition, Principals will be drafting implementation plans that are directly aligned to the District plans and address specific items as they pertain to the building. One example of this is hallway traffic. The District plan discusses travel patterns, but specifics will be more detailed in the building implementation plans. The Principals will be meeting with their Building Student Achievement Teams (BSAT) to review these building plans in the coming weeks.

Again, the health and safety of our students, staff and community as we plan for the reopening of schools has been our planning priority. In addition to the above, we are preparing several communications to share with staff and families that address efforts that will mitigate the spread of illness. Some of these resources are included in the plan, which can be found on the District's website www.aldenschools.org or by typing <https://www.aldenschools.org/reopeningplan> in your web browser. I will be hosting a virtual town hall meeting in the coming weeks, but not until after the Governor announces his intentions on the opening of schools. The topics and conversation of this virtual meeting will be dependent on what we learn from the Governor.

Stay well,



Adam Stoltman
Superintendent of Schools