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March 17, 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians, School District Representatives, and School Personnel:

Thursday March 18<sup>th</sup> marks the one year anniversary of the Governor's orders that made all schools virtual last year. It has been a long road for all of us and we recognize the unprecedented and historical level of stress on everyone. As you are aware, our approved reopening plan calls for a reassessment every marking period. The start of that assessment is surveying the parents and staff. The data from these surveys will be collected from parents, personnel and board members. The school administration will review the results of the survey and also individual requests that might concern reasonable accommodations and special situations. The school administration will meet with the School Reopening Committee, which will report the findings and make recommendations to the School Board. Reopening plans are considered by the County Superintendent and must be consistent with the Governor's Executive orders and the State's Department of Education guidance for our school and the State's Health Department's mandates which relate to Matheny's Special Hospital status.

The federal government has prioritized the Reopening of Schools and has dedicated significant funds to states to accomplish that goal. New Jersey will be deciding on how the money will be distributed to help with the structural and Personal Protection Equipment needs to help with Safety Concerns

Vaccines are an important component of helping reduce the risk of severe disease and death of both staff and students. Vaccines were not designed to prevent infection with the Coronavirus and vaccinated individuals can still become infected and may still pass the infection on to others. At this point, the vaccine is not mandatory and individuals may opt not to take the vaccine or not consent to have their family members vaccinated. Currently, the Pfizer vaccine is being trialed in children above the age of 12 years and the Moderna started to test trial their vaccine in children as young as 6 months, starting this week. Once these clinical trials are completed, if it is determined to be safe and effective, it is likely that approval will take place for those children in those age groups. We do not have a time frame for this process at this time. We will move into Phase 2 and subsequent phases of the Reopening Plan as soon as we can with an approval process that takes into account the safety of our staff and students.

Both the parental and personnel surveys shall be sent via email. Thank you all for your participation and willingness to share. It remains collectively our goal to provide the optimum of IEP related services as safely as possible. After the survey, results will be shared both by correspondence and through our weekly zoom meetings.

On Behalf of the School Community

Dr. Kendell Sprott,  
President/CEO/Executive Director

Sean Murphy  
Vice President of Education/Principal/Director

