

WEST DEPTFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT

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October 26, 2020

Dear West Deptford Families,

As we near the end of our second full month of school, I wanted to send some updates including some preparation for our November 9 hybrid opening, Halloween, our latest school calendar, and some guidelines for holiday travel.

I would like to take this opportunity to say how very impressed and appreciative I am of our West Deptford students, staff, and community as we have pulled together to help each other during this time; though, I cannot say I am surprised at this level of dedication from our District. As we anticipate our Hybrid opening on November 9, we are continuing to work hard to ensure that the safety and education of our students remain our highest priorities. I know the school Principals have been keeping you updated on the full hybrid opening plan starting November 9. We are looking forward to this necessary step and we are very committed to ensuring that students and staff experience the safest educational setting possible. We are aware that there are many concerns - we have been trying to learn from other Districts and work through similar issues. This has been a challenging undertaking, but we are confident that we have the best plan possible in place. Our goal is to return to full in-person instruction this year as soon as we possibly can. We are limited by many variables and unfortunately, the virus seems to currently be on the uptick.

At this time, I would ask that all parents continue the conversations about how students can keep themselves and others safe when they return to school. We are committed to social distancing, hand washing, and wearing face coverings. We need cooperation and will help remind students. The work with students will be much easier if students are prepared by parents starting now. Please have the conversations early that students should keep six feet away from others, wash their hands/use provided hand sanitizer, and properly wear face coverings at all times in the building and on the playground.

I need to remind everyone that some students and staff have medical reasons why they are unable to wear face coverings. As per the Americans with Disabilities Acts, these students and staff cannot be treated differently and cannot be the subject of any negativity. We are dedicated to helping those with disabilities and highly value those members of our community. This is a conversation that is valuable to have with children. You may hear of students or staff at school who are not wearing face coverings. Face coverings are one of many pieces of our safety plan. We will also focus on social distancing and hand washing to continue to create and sustain a safe educational environment.

As we move closer to October 31, some residents may have questions regarding Halloween and trick-or-treating activities in West Deptford Township during the current health crisis. At the time of this message, trick-or-treating in our Township is still scheduled to take place on October 31, barring any future Executive Orders from the Governor's Office. Residents who do not wish to participate at their homes are advised to turn off their porch lights and leave a sign/message on their door. West Deptford Township has created a potential door tag that is

PRIDE, PASSION, AND A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

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available for residents to print (click [here](#) to view), or if you do not have access to a color printer, you may pick up a copy of the sign in the Riverwinds Lobby. The green side is hung if your home is participating in Halloween this year and the red sign is hung if you are not participating in giving out candy. The paper can simply be folded in half, cut on the line, cut out around the circle and hung.

As we are approaching some days off in our [calendar](#), as well as the holiday season, it is my sincere hope that you are able to take this time to relax, visit with friends and family, and recharge. Please know that there may still be changes coming. Each change will be submitted for approval and communicated to the community. I know this is also traditionally a time for travel and vacations. I kindly ask that if you are traveling to please continue to utilize the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recommended safety guidelines such as wearing a mask, frequent handwashing, social distancing, etc. If you are traveling to an area on [New Jersey's Travel Advisory List](#), I urge you to consider the State of New Jersey's recommendation to quarantine your family for 14 calendar days upon your return. Should you choose to utilize this measure to help us protect our staff and students, your children are most welcome to avail themselves of our remote instruction during that time. If students are present remotely, this time will not be counted as an absence. We would sincerely appreciate your consideration in following these guidelines. Please see the link, [Self-Quarantine for Travelers Frequently Asked Questions](#), for further information. If you are traveling abroad, please see these [Travel Advisories](#) from the U.S. Department of State – Bureau of Consular Affairs. If you have any questions about quarantining, please contact your Principal.

Please know that all of us at the West Deptford School District are very appreciative of the community that we serve. Our students are amazing examples of resilience through this shutdown. Our parents continue to demonstrate support and flexibility, even as this situation has impacted the education of their children. I am always impressed by how the staff steps up to ensure the students are receiving the best education possible. We have put extremely high demands on our staff, and they have exceeded our expectations.

As always, West Deptford continues to set the standard of excellence. I am very proud to be part of this school District and thankful to be able to work with such amazing students, staff, and community.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,
Greg Cappello