

## "GETTING TO GREATER!"

August 20, 2021

To the Hempstead Staff:

It is hard to believe we are embarking on a new school year. When reflecting on the 2020 - 2021, I truly feel we need to take time to commend ourselves for ensuring teaching and learning went forth in these uncertain times. The district was able to successfully bring most of our students back to in-person learning with very few closures. My sincere gratitude to all!

First, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our teaching staff for an outstanding job teaching students in a hybrid/remote setting, adjusting to the new technological platforms, and implementing protocols that maintained healthy and safe schools. I must thank our custodial staff for their diligence in making certain our buildings remained clean and sanitized to reduce the spread of the virus. A special appreciation to our nurses and COVID-19 coordinators for their tireless efforts and urgency in addressing all positive cases. Due to the collective efforts of our staff, members of all five (5) collective bargaining units and central office, we were able to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our schools and departments. Last year truly exemplified how working together achieves more and better results.

In preparation for the 2021 – 2022 school year, the district utilized its Reopening Task Team, guidance from Center of Disease Control, American Pediatric Association, NYSED Health and Safety Guide, and other health professionals to inform the steps we must take to re-open schools this Fall. The district has made the necessary adjustments to our Re-Opening Plan that will promote a safe return of our students to full in-person learning this Fall. Through focused efforts, collaboration, and cooperation we will continue to educate our students in schools that are healthy and conducive to learning, while making certain guidelines are in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The district will again, have an abundance of required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as hand sanitizer, masks, shields, disinfectants, etc. for staff and student use. We also have plans for mask wearing, testing, monitoring students, social distancing, cleaning, disinfecting, addressing sickness within our schools, and implementing contact tracing. Even though the district will make every effort to implement precautions for in-person learning, we cannot guarantee staff or students will not contract COVID-19 or its variants. We must accept this unfortunate reality as we reopen our schools, as we continue to be diligent in mitigating the risks of the spread of the virus.

Just as a reminder, the first day back for staff is **Thursday, September 2, 2021**. Staff should report directly to their assigned school/building at their regular contractual time. We will not have the normal convocation this year, but all staff will participate in a welcome back message virtually at their worksite. Your principals/supervisors will provide you with an overview of the happenings for the two scheduled Superintendent Conference days, September 2 – 3, 2021.

As we move forward to the 2021-22 school year, I want to remind all staff that the health, safety, and success of our students and staff remain the district's top priority. This is the reason I encourage all that are eligible and are willing to get vaccinated. Together, we can try to stop the spread and save lives!

Respectfully,



Superintendents of Schools  
#Tigerpride!



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