

East Haddam Public Schools

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Good afternoon Families and Staff,

I hope this letter finds you well. As you may know, the district reopening plan was sent to the State Department of Education (CSDE) last week. At the time of this letter, the district had not received any communication about our plan from the state. We do anticipate feedback at some point.

This week CSDE sent four distinct addendums to the reopening guidelines with additional guidance for the district and building reopening plans. The guidance documents are on our website at www.easthaddamschools.org, under the Covid-19 Resource tab. The building and district teams are reviewing these documents and making the appropriate changes to our plans. We are releasing drafts of our individual school building reopening plans on Friday August 7, 2020. I need to emphasize that these are drafts as information is constantly coming in that impact our plans.

The Governor announced on Thursday July 30, 2020 that individual districts will decide how they open in the fall. Referring to the reopening plan, the district may open in a A) 100% return of students with an option for distance learning, B) a hybrid plan that supports 50% of students to attend in school at a time, and C) 100% distance learning model. The Governor indicated that if districts request to open in Option C, 100% distance learning model, that they would have to seek permission from the CSDE. I interpret this to mean that unless the COVID numbers change significantly districts are asked to choose either Option A, 100% return with individuals able to opt for distance learning, or, Option B, the 50% hybrid plan.

Thursday, August 6, 2020, at 6:00 pm, we will host another superintendent reopening conversation Zoom call with the focus on the building reopening plans for NHRMS and EHES. The respective principals will share some highlights of their building plans that will be released in draft form the following day. I want to thank you for your participation in the Zoom calls; your questions have been extremely helpful in helping us write plans in preparation for reopening. Thank You!

The CIAC (Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference) has released a document today to give districts guidance regarding fall athletics. Our district team will review the document and discern what the guidelines will mean for East Haddam.

Monday, August 10, 2020, starting at 5:00p we will be livestreaming our Class of 2020 Graduation Ceremonies. As many of you know, the plan includes holding the ceremony in two parts so that our graduates can have two guests in attendance. This plan was revised to meet the state restriction of 150 persons in outside gatherings at this time. Fortunately, the event will be livestreamed on YouTube for anyone without tickets to view.

In the end, this all leads us to the question of what status are we starting the schools in this fall? The current COVID numbers in our region support returning to Option A; 100% in attendance, this fall. Our relatively small numbers of student enrollment overall and relatively small class sizes is an advantage for us over many other districts. Along with the release of the draft building reopening plans on August 7, we will be sending you the form to complete for each student regarding your choice of building based learning or distance learning as well as a transportation question. This form will be due back to the schools by August 13, 2020. I understand that this is a tight timeframe for decisions. Please know that we are here to support you and your students in the best way possible.

There is a lot of information in this letter and I appreciate you taking the time to read it all. Please feel free to reach out to myself or your building administrators if you have any questions. I look forward to your participation next Thursday at 6pm in my weekly superintendent Zoom conversation.

Sincerely,



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