

November 25, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians, Students and Staff,

Tomorrow, we celebrate Thanksgiving - a time to give thanks for all of the blessings we have in our lives, especially the people we love. This is certainly going to be a very different Thanksgiving experience as this pandemic is not giving up any time soon. While the news is very promising for upcoming vaccines, it could be several months until they are made available to the general public. I am strongly encouraging everyone to review the most recent CDC guidelines (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>) and to follow them to the best of your ability. Most of all, PLEASE wear a mask!

On Monday, November 30, we will begin our new “Three Tiered Approach Learning Model” which provides time for direct instruction while offering increased interventions and small group meeting times for targeted instruction, and tutoring for specific students (based upon data from the first marking period) who need extra support.

In the meantime, we are also planning for the third marking period which we hope will feature the return of **all** student populations to in-person instruction (NOTE: Parents/guardians will have an option to continue with virtual instruction). As we plan for this next phase, our teaching staff will return to their respective school buildings the week of December 14 to begin preparing their learning environments, to acclimate to teaching remotely from their classrooms, and to ensure understanding and adoption of our COVID-19/building protocols.

Beginning December 7, our principals will host virtual meetings with their school families to:

- Explain the new hybrid learning model and the school’s respective schedule;
- Provide explanations regarding the classroom environment and the student learning experience; and
- Listen and respond to families about the instructional schedule and the hybrid learning model.

Ultimately, it is our goal to have our staff return on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 (after the MLK Holiday) and our students on Monday, January 25, 2021 - pending COVID case numbers. For more information on this go-forward plan, I invite you to view the presentation that I gave to our Board of Education on November 18, 2020:

<https://www.teaneckschools.org/Downloads/Revised%20plan%20for%20Re-entry%20.pdf>

Additionally, I want to provide some important news about our commitment to our families during this pandemic. First, we will be offering once a week COVID-19 Nasal Swab testing starting Wednesday, December 2 at Benjamin Franklin Middle School (see the flyer attached for more details). This is a unique service that we are providing for our students, staff and all TPS families. Second, we are aware that many are struggling with mental health issues during this challenging time. I am pleased to announce that we are once again offering mental health services for our elementary and middle school students and their families. For more information,

be sure to contact your school counseling office. (NOTE: High School students receive this service via The FORUM). Finally, we will continue to provide meals for all of our Teaneck families, every week - even during the holidays. For more information, which includes the schedule if you are having any Chromebook issues, please see the attached flyer.

In closing, I want to wish all of you a blessed and happy Thanksgiving. I am extremely grateful to serve as this school district's Superintendent of Schools; and I am proud of how we continue to improve our educational plans with critical feedback from our students, parents, teachers, administrators, and our Board of Education. This is new for all of us and our commitment to our children is unwavering.

Please continue to stay safe during this special holiday; and give virtual hugs to all of your loved ones. I also ask that you keep in mind all who are currently sick, and those who have lost a loved one. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher Irving, Superintendent of Schools