

August 19, 2020

Dear Montgomery Community and Staff,

On August 12, 2020, Governor Murphy released an executive order that provided an update on the minimum safety standards that school districts must be able to meet in order to open for in-person instruction. The primary message of this new executive order was for districts to open for in-person instruction by meeting all of the minimum required safety standards. Additionally, on August 14, 2020, for the first time, the NJ Department of Health released safety guidelines for the opening of schools.

The safety of our students and staff is of primary importance over all other decisions. Our district administration and staff have been working incredibly hard to devise an exceptional instructional program for our students regardless of the instructional model (hybrid in-person or 100% virtual) chosen.

Due to the constantly changing guidance from the state, the late delivery of and back-ordered PPE/cleaning supplies, and staffing concerns, our district leadership team, which is comprised of teachers, association leaders, the Superintendent, administrators and the Board of Education Vice President, voted unanimously to start the school year in a full virtual model. This means that all students will be instructed virtually beginning on the first day of school, September 8, 2020. School principals will be sending out detailed information for each building.

We will re-evaluate our status on September 30, 2020 with the goal of beginning the in-person instruction phase-in starting on Monday, October 12, 2020.

We know the difficulties this will place on many of our families, and we do believe that nothing is a replacement for in-person instruction. However, we will not compromise the health and safety of our school community. The district is committed to ensuring the following:

- All students receive an engaging educational experience aligned with state standards and the district curriculum
- Safety guidelines are all met allowing us to create the safest environment possible for in-person learning
- Frequent communication takes place with parents, staff, and all community members

This letter serves as an announcement of our virtual start to the school year. Please anticipate further communication from our curriculum director regarding virtual learning, from building principals regarding school specific information and from the district. As always, quality instruction and the social emotional well-being of our students is our top priority.

Sincerely,

District Leadership Team