

Monthly Superintendent's Report
Status of
Hampton Elementary School District
Reported by:
Dr. Frank Olah
July 22, 2020
Written 7/15/20

General Comments and Reflections:

The month of July has been one of gaining clarity and yet there are more unanswered questions concerning the reopening of HES. Your administrators have had to read and digest the latest from the CDC, the NEDDH, CSDE and my fellow superintendents in URSA. We have also met twice with the HES Reopening discussion Group and had parents complete an opinion survey about how the parents are feeling about sending their children back to school in late August. Faculty and staff have been contacted either via emails and phone calls. The faculty was poled and their direct questions were placed on what is known as a "Parking Lot" where their questions and our answers can be shared.

There have been a number of documents developed and shared, the major document is HES's Reopening Plan that was filled out and will be in front of you at your 7/22/20 for your review and comments. If all is well, then we are asking for your vote to approve. If revisions are required, then we will implement those revisions in time for the submission deadline of 7/24/20 to the CSDE.

The administrators involved are your three administrators, Sally Lehoux, and Beverly Danielson, RN. Beverly has been invaluable to doing research on the medical aspects to our plan and Sally has gathered all of the financial records for grant purposes. Both have been researching what we will need on site when we open our doors for students, faculty and staff.

Based on recommendations from our faculty, we have on the agenda a request to modify our 2020-2021 proposed calendar so that we will offer three days for PD and work time to fully prepare our faculty. This added time will allow them to prepare their classrooms after the major renovations that we are also proposing that you review and approve of removing two classroom walls to allow for the required social distancing in classrooms.

In addition, we will be removing much of the classroom materials and equipment to unused classrooms for easy access storage for each team so that the classroom floor will be used to allow social distancing.

We have also created team and specials schedules that address some to the COVID related issues that we foresee as being required. For example, all specials teachers will have a time built into their schedules to sanitize the equipment they will be using on a

daily basis. We will also have each team choose when they wish to schedule face mask removal times during the day and when they will have their recess times since not all students will be having recess at the same time after lunch.

We have also determined that paraprofessionals will be assigned to bus duty for about 2 weeks so that students will know how to enter and exit the bus, where to sit, and how to behave (no yelling). EastConn has said that all three buses will be wiped down between runs.

The complex nature of this time and its impact on schools has made our work very difficult and complex as we try to address all of the various issues and still remain flexible.

We have just begun to address the entire distance learning issue. This is, in itself, an issue with some guidance being supplied by both parents and their concerns about their children attending school as well as the lack of a clearly defined process from the CSDE as to who and how will any closing of school might take place and what will be the requirements for that closing. The one issue that we do know is that we will need to assist parents in how best to help their children if we need to go into full distance learning once again.

Finally, there was a very clear "take-away" from the HES Reopening Discussion Group and that was - COMMUNICATION. With all of the changes and the lack of any real stability from day to day in the correct course of actions to be taken, parents need to be constantly informed of the changes almost in real time. In light of that recommendation for clear communication, we have on your agenda an action item to allow for the mailing home a reopening plan as soon after the first week in August. The plan should be printed and mailed to every household in town, not just the parents.

Special Education:

The students and parents are being contacted by Dr. Benson-Clark during the month of July in order to determine how we can best service these students and their IEP's as we plan for the reopening of HES. She will have a full written report for your review in the very near future when she has completed contacting parents.

Other Academic:

We have placed co-teaching time into each of our specials teachers' schedules. They are assigned to work within a specific team at specific times and will be assigned to work with students by the team's lead teacher. Special Education paraprofessionals will be assigned to the students in a team and will remain in that team as part of the team's cohort. The first weeks of school will focus on two critical areas. The first will be focused on assessing our students' current academic standings in the critical areas of math, reading, and writing skills. The second area will be their social and emotional skills and how they are coping with their return to school. Mrs. Sorel, our guidance counselor will be working full-time for the first few months of school to assist teachers and any individual students who are in need of support.