



West Orange Public Schools
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Superintendent of Schools

J. Scott Cascone, Ed. D.

Dear West Orange Families and Students,

I hope this finds you all well and enjoying some degree of rest and relaxation with your friends and loved ones during the summer recess.

In advance of our virtual Town hall panel discussion scheduled for Wednesday, August 5, I thought it were important to provide you with updates regarding both the objectives for the Town hall, as well as the planning timeline moving forward.

Over the course of the last four weeks since the New Jersey Department of Education released The Road Back guidance document, the Board of Education, district administrative team, staff, and stakeholders have been working around the clock to develop a plan which is feasible and ensures not only the physical health and safety of our children and staff; but as importantly their social emotional well-being.

At the July 20 public Board of Education meeting, the administration and I presented a preliminary draft of the instructional model. We appreciated the attendance of several hundred members of our parent and staff communities and the extensive feedback we received. In the weeks following that meeting, we have continued to receive additional questions, suggestions, and concerns. We have thoughtfully considered this feedback and incorporated it to the greatest extent possible. Further, over the course of the last two weeks, all building principals have been in the process of forming and convening School Pandemic Response Teams with a broad representation of stakeholders including parents in the development of their site-based plans.

At the August 5 Town hall, the administration will be presenting its updated plans taking into consideration several options which will enable the district to adjust to the evolving public health crisis, as well as any changes in directives from the state level authorities. The panel participants will also share insights into the planning to date, as well as critical questions on which we continue to work.

The final draft plan will be disseminated shortly thereafter and is scheduled for approval by the Board of Education at the August 17 meeting. This meeting was rescheduled from August 10 in order to provide the district an opportunity to conduct a final “feedback loop” with our stakeholders.

Further, this week, a virtual opt out form will be distributed to all families in order to obtain an exact count of students who we will be servicing in a virtual only format in the upcoming school year.

Please know, that as Superintendent of Schools, I fully recognize that after weeks of planning, we have arrived at a critical pivot-point of definitive communication and plan actualization. I thank you for both your ongoing confidence and patience. My goal from the onset of this process has always been to present you with a final plan that can be executed, not a theoretical model which might ultimately be rendered infeasible due to any number of circumstances and need to be “walked back”, reversed, or changed.

In the interim, should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me and or your building principals. We remain on the ready to address your questions and concerns. I thank you in advance for your time and attention and wish you a safe and restful remainder of the summer recess.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Scott Cascone". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

J. Scott Cascone, Ed. D.
Superintendent