



Olga Hugelmeyer
Superintendent of Schools

Dear Elizabeth Public Schools Parents and Guardians,

As has been the case since we first began working on our Reopening Plan during the summer months, our pledge has been to reopen schools responsibly while exceeding minimum expectations to put health and safety first for our learning community, providing high-quality instruction to our students, ensuring flexibility in our instructional models, and delivering timely and accurate communications to our community throughout the school year.

Our goal of a phased return to in-person instruction was proposed at our October 1, 2020 Board of Education meeting. While maintaining our commitment to a safe return, in consultation with health professionals and within the guidelines of the CDC, NJ Department of Health, and the NJ Department of Education, we are very excited to have been able to take a large step forward today to Phase I of in-person instruction by welcoming back our Autism Program.

While this is a first step we have been eager to take in our mission to return to in-person learning, we also understand that returning to “normal” will be a very gradual and measured process. We are working on returning additional Special Education programs by December 7th as part of our Phase II in-person instruction. We remain cautiously optimistic with our plan and hope to provide all students with in-person learning as part of Phase III by February 5, 2021. We will continue to monitor all of the metrics that apply and will keep you informed as we proceed through the second marking period.

Safety and the wellbeing of our learning community, first and foremost, will guide our way back to our schools and back to in-person teaching and learning. Heading further into the fall months, we continue to see the case incidence rate in our area increasing. Ultimately, advancing to Phase III will introduce significantly larger numbers of students and staff into our school buildings and classroom environments. Moving too quickly to Phase III, while case levels are still rising, will undoubtedly represent a safety risk. As we continue to consult with health officials, review protocols from federal and state health agencies, and receive guidance from the NJDOE, I will provide continuous updates on our planning and progress.

Thank you for all you are doing to help Elizabeth Public School students and our learning community succeed throughout this very challenging time. I also appreciate your support, patience, and flexibility during these difficult and unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

Olga Hugelmeyer

Office of the Superintendent of Schools