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SLSD Parents and Guardians,

In just a few days, the Southern Lehigh School District will welcome back our students for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. While this year will begin in a way that none of us are used to, we are excited to begin the school year.

As a reminder, the physical return to school will require a partnership amongst all Spartans. Please read the following information carefully - we will all need to work together to keep our students and staff safe and keep school operating effectively during this pandemic.

- **Face Coverings** – All Southern Lehigh School District students are required to wear a face covering at **ALL** times while at school, even when six feet of social distance can be achieved, unless a student with disabilities whose IEP or 504 teams have granted an exception.
- **Daily Health Screener** – Prior to leaving home all SLSD students and staff are required to complete a Daily Health Screener that includes a temperature check. Any staff or students experiencing COVID-19 symptoms **MUST** follow the guidance present on the screener and should **NOT** report to school/work.
- **Transportation** - All students using District transportation **MUST** adhere to the following criteria: 6 feet social distancing at **ALL** bus stops; students must wear face coverings at **ALL** times; buses will be loaded from **BACK** to **FRONT** with a maximum of two students seated in each seat.
- **Exclusion From and Return to School Guidelines** - This document provides information about the guidelines that the District will use in determining which scenarios will require an exclusion from school and the criteria that will need to be met in order for a student or staff member to return to school following a period of quarantine.
- **Student Technology Assistance** - Our Technology Department will continue to utilize a digital helpdesk system open to all students. Students can login with their SpartanDocs account to create tech tickets remotely if they are having issues with their District issued devices.
- **Reopening of Schools Resources** - The District will continue to update the information on the Reopening of Schools Resource pages to ensure that families have access to the most up to date information.

We recognize that many of our parents, guardians, students and staff are concerned about what will happen when a person is diagnosed with COVID-19. The Southern Lehigh School District will notify parents/guardians with children in a school and staff if there is a presumed positive or a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 involving a student or staff member at that school.



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As a reminder, for confidentiality purposes, the District will not identify the person who is a presumed positive or confirmed positive case of COVID-19. Students and staff members who may have come into close contact with the individual will be directly contacted by staff from the Pennsylvania Department of Health with instructions to self-quarantine. The PA DOH defines a close contact as an individual who has been within 6 feet of a positive case for 15 minutes or more. Close contacts of a positive case are required by the PA Department of Health to quarantine for 14 days.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our community for their ongoing patience and cooperation. As the circumstances surrounding COVID-19 continue to change, please know that we will continue to monitor all guidance and recommendations from the CDC, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), and the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) to maintain a safe start to the 2020-2021 school year. We ask that our entire community remain flexible and allow our staff time to establish routines during the opening weeks of school.

There have been many challenges to starting the school year and there are many things about this situation that are less than ideal. We recognize that our staff, families and students are anxious about the school year ahead and disappointed in things they have lost as a result of this global pandemic.

As we continue to navigate these unprecedented situations, we have an opportunity to turn these challenges into a learning experience. We can all model for our students how to deal with challenges, be flexible, and adjust to new situations. We look forward to partnering with families to provide support to all students, and to show them how powerful it can be when a community pulls together and demonstrates grace, understanding and compassion to others in difficult situations.

Adjusting to the new normal of operating a school district, building, or classroom during a global pandemic may be difficult for all of us and certainly not what we would wish for the start of our school year. However, rest assured that our dedicated staff will continue to support our students socially, emotionally, and academically throughout this time.

I wish health, happiness, and success for all our students and families as we begin the school year!

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