

KEYSTONE SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Office
451 Huston Avenue
Knox, PA 16232

Phone: 814-797-5921
Fax: 814-797-2382



May 15, 2020

RE: Keystone Operational Update

Dear Parents/Guardians, Students & Staff:

First, I'd like to thank you once again for your patience and understanding as we continue working to provide operational updates when *new* and *relevant* information is available to be shared. In truth, the flow of information from nearly every agency we work with has been slow and inconclusive. Given the current circumstances, that should come as no surprise. Everyone is looking for the right answers and hoping to make the right decisions. Generally speaking, there is no one-size-fits-all approach that makes sense for every person or county within the Commonwealth. Everyone has their own lens through which they view the mitigation efforts and the process to re-open Pennsylvania. Finding common ground can be a difficult proposition nowadays.

Much has been made in recent days about various announcements coming from the PA Secretary of Education and other school officials from across the Commonwealth concerning the re-opening of K-12 public schools in the fall of 2020. Headlines have captured only bits and pieces of conversations from officials who are speculating on things that *may* or *may not* happen several months from now. Speculation, without proper context, can be counterproductive. We try to read between the lines, which oftentimes leads to false assumptions. In many cases, the context simply doesn't exist yet.

All public school districts in the Commonwealth have been asked to think about the re-opening of schools in a variety of ways. We are considering a wide variety of topics that include facilities, logistics, planned instruction, technology, transportation, special education, health/safety (including social and emotional wellness), equity, communication, and mobilization of various resources. This list is not all-inclusive. We are brainstorming and planning for a variety of circumstances in an effort to build a solution that can be tailored to our specific situation.

As of today, we remain hopeful and encouraged that schools will re-open in the fall of 2020. While we understand that obvious changes will need to occur, we will follow the data and the guidelines that are most appropriate for Keystone SD. Our primary focus has always been to preserve the health, safety and welfare of our school community. As such, we will continue monitoring the available guidance from all stakeholders and continue making informed decisions about district operations. We desperately want to return to some sense of "normal" operations as quickly and responsibly as possible. Over the next few weeks, we know the Commonwealth will release additional recommendations pertaining to the process for reopening schools. Subsequently, we will convey our local plans as soon as practicably possible to all of our school families. We know many of you are anxious about plans for the summer and for next school year. We've all grown restless looking for definitive answers. Please be patient. We will move as quickly as possible.

Crises and tragedies tend to do one of two things... they pull people *together* or they pull people *apart*. We certainly don't have all the answers and we can't forecast the future. With that said, we need to remain united as we work to do our very best for all of the students, families, and staff of the Keystone School District. Stay well. Stay Keystone strong. More to follow...

Sincerely,

Shawn Algoe, Superintendent