



PLATTSBURGH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear Hornet students, parents, faculty and staff:

I hope you are enjoying another beautiful North Country Summer, and that you are finding our collective, ongoing emergence from COVID restrictions to be enjoyable and anxiety-reducing. This correspondence will outline what we know (and, frustratingly, what we don't yet know) about the September return to school.

As you'll recall, last year's school reopening guidance from both Federal and State officials was late-arriving, inconsistent between levels of government, and often-changing. To date, very limited information about school reopening for Fall, 2021 has been released, and what has been offered has been from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). That guidance can be accessed here: [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools | CDC](#). As you'll note, the highlights of the CDC's current guidance reflect masking only for non-vaccinated individuals, and distancing of 3-feet.

Unfortunately, it would appear as though a pediatric-level vaccine will not be available (or, at least, not nearly fully-deployed) prior to the return to school. Last Spring, the proliferation of vaccinations for adults and older students was incredibly helpful in avoiding quarantines, diminishing virus-related anxiety, and increasing/enabling in-person attendance. We'll look forward to a similar experience when our younger students become eligible for such.

While the CDC information is useful and welcome, the State Executive branch has not yet released reopening guidance for schools. Local elected officials have been vocal about the importance of timely information for school districts, and we appreciate their support and their recognition of the urgency of this matter.

Our goal is to provide as 'normal' or 'traditional' of a return to school as is possible and responsible, but without State guidance, we just don't yet know how this will unfold. My goal is that our district feature all of the pre-pandemic programs and experiences, including co-curriculars, athletics, field trips, transportation, etc.. I

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remain hopeful that the State guidance, when it is released, will enable such. We will, of course, comply with whichever COVID-related safeguards are recommended as best practice, and our Reopening Planning Committee and Board of Education are surely eager to receive such information and prepare our plan for 'Reopening 2021'.

The impact of ongoing local vaccination efforts, the emergence of COVID variants, the reopening of the nearby international border, and/or evolving rules about the reopening of business and society might have on school reopening is impossible to predict, but this only reinforces the need for clear, consistent, and immediate State-level guidance. We will convey such to you as it becomes available – which we hope will be imminently. Until then, best wishes for a great Summer.

With thanks,

Jay Lebrun
Superintendent of Schools

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