



SULLIVAN WEST CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Stephen A. Walker
Superintendent of Schools

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August 20, 2021

Dear Bulldog Staff Members, Students and Families:

With the arrival of all staff members back into our Schools on September 1, and all students on September 8, the anticipation and excitement for the start of the 2021-2022 school year continues to build! In follow up to my prior communications, I ask that you please read the information below carefully, as it outlines what to expect with regard to COVID-19 health protocols for the start of the school year, as well as other important information.

Decision-making with regard to these health protocols was based on some basic principles, including that our decisions should be focused on what will enable all of our students and staff members to teach and learn in-person in our schools every day, and that our decisions are aligned with the recommendations of the applicable medical guidance, including the Centers for Disease Control, American Academy of Pediatrics, the Sullivan County Department of Public Health, and the New York State Education Department. The information below was informed through discussions and guidance from many organizations and individuals, and I thank every member of our School District community who shared their thoughts with me.

Here are some important expectations for all members of our School District community to know and plan for as we begin the school year:

- **Schools are planned to be open every day for all students, Pre-K through Grade 12**
- **Schools will observe their regular start and end times for the school day (Elementary School Student Schedule: 8:45 a.m. – 3:27 p.m.; Middle/High School Student Schedule: 7:35 a.m. – 2:22 p.m.)**
- **All courses, extracurricular activities and athletics will take place**
- **Social distancing (at least 3 feet), will take place when possible**
- **Masks will be required for all students, staff and visitors when indoors, and while riding on the school bus. Mask breaks will be provided throughout the school day, and masks will not be required when outdoors, or when eating or drinking. All school districts in Sullivan County will be implementing a similar requirement, and Lieutenant Governor Hochul has made statements which indicate that, upon her swearing in as Governor next week, she intends to move forward with a similar requirement for all public schools in New York State.**
 - **It is important to note that, in a change from prior Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance, students will not have to quarantine if exposed to a COVID-positive student within 3 – 6 feet, as long as the students involved were correctly wearing masks. This is a potentially significant change which should result in fewer students being required to quarantine if exposed to a COVID-positive student in school.**

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- **All students and staff members will be expected to attend our Schools in-person. If a student has a physician-documented, significant medical condition that might preclude them from learning in-person safely, and that student’s family would like consideration of a remote learning opportunity or other accommodations, please contact Dr. Kathleen Bressler, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, at bresslerkat@swcsd.org in order to discuss the process for that consideration.**
- **Staff members will be required to complete an online/paper health screening document prior to reporting to work each day. Students will not be subject to temperature checks upon arriving to school this year, but we continue to ask our families to check each child’s condition before sending them to school each morning.**
- **The District will also be implementing other recommended health strategies, including clear protocols for students or staff members who display symptoms of COVID-19, encouraging outdoor learning and meetings when possible, and continued education for our students regarding hand washing and symptom identification.**

While recognizing that not all of the above expectations will be appreciated by all members of our School District community, we are very pleased to envision daily, full-day, in-person teaching and learning for our students, with access to all of the outstanding extracurricular and athletic activities that continue to make Sullivan West such a dynamic and wonderful place for the children of our communities.

Updates from our School Principals for both staff members and parents will be forthcoming next week. If you have any questions about the information above, please feel free to contact me or your School’s Principal.

Thank you for your wonderful and ongoing support of our Schools, staff and students.

Sincerely,

Steve

Stephen A. Walker
Superintendent of Schools

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