

Shaler Area School District

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August 7, 2020

Dear Shaler Area families,

Last night, the Shaler Area School Board of Directors approved the district's Back-to-School Task Force Report and Health & Safety Plan for the 2020-2021 school year. As part of the district's reopening plan, the board approved the following for the start of next school year:

- All Shaler Area students will begin the first four weeks of school (through Friday, October 9, 2020) in a **100% virtual model** (all at-home learning).
- Additionally, the start of the school year will be delayed until **Tuesday, September 8, 2020**. The school board will approve a revised school calendar during its August 19 voting meeting. The last day of school will be Friday, June 11, 2021.

We recognize that this decision is different from the tentative reopening plan we announced last month and not the way any of us hoped to start the 2020-2021 school year; however, we feel it is the best decision for the health, safety, and well-being of the 4,200 students and 500 staff members in the district.

The 100% virtual instruction model provides the best option for staff to safely educate all 4,200 students, better assess remediation needs with all students on the same platform, and build and design a high-quality online program that can meet the needs of our students for the long-term. Delaying the start of the school year will provide our staff with additional time for professional development focusing on the virtual and hybrid learning models, 1:1 technology distribution and training for our students and families, and back-to-school orientation events for students.

We understand that our families will have many questions as we plan for the start of the 2020-21 school year in a virtual setting, and we plan to work through the answers to each of your questions.

We will host a series of virtual Town Hall meetings for families on Monday, August 10, 2020 to help answer specific questions related to the district's reopening plan. These meetings will be recorded and available on the district's YouTube channel for families who are unable to participate at the scheduled time. Please note the date and times for these Town Hall meetings:

- **Primary Schools (K-3): August 10 at 10 a.m.**
 - Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/93183023418>
 - Meeting ID: 931 8302 3418
 - Join by phone: 646-558-8656
- **Elementary School (grades 4-6): August 10 at 12 p.m.**
 - Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94685539944>
 - Meeting ID: 946 8553 9944
 - Join by phone: 646-558-8656

- Middle School (grades 7-8): **August 10 at 2 p.m.**
 - Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/95941365802>
 - Meeting ID: 959 4136 5802
 - Join by phone: 646-558-8656
- High School (grades 9-12): **August 10 at 4 p.m.**
 - Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/97116285859>
 - Meeting ID: 971 1628 5859
 - Join by phone: 646-558-8656

A copy of the Back-to-School Task Force Report and Health & Safety Plan is available on our Back-to-School site, <https://www.sasd.k12.pa.us/BacktoSchool2020.aspx>, and additional information will be provided as it is available.

We thank each of our families for the tremendous patience, support, and understanding you have shown as we prepare for the start of the 2020-21 school year and navigate the ever-changing pandemic. We look forward to the time when we can safely welcome our students and staff back into our buildings, but until then, we will focus our efforts on creating the best educational experience for our students in a virtual setting.

Sincerely,

Sean C. Aiken
Superintendent of Schools

Bryan E. O'Black, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent