



LITTLE SILVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Little Silver Families,

I hope everyone is doing well and finding ways to enjoy the warmer days and spring weather that is very welcome at this time of the year. After a difficult winter, I can only hope that the warmer days are here to stay and that Mother Nature will provide us with beautiful conditions for the various events that will take place later this spring. Aside from my commentary on the weather, the purpose of this letter is to provide everyone with an update on the reopening status of our district.

As I stated during the March Board meeting, moving our schools to phase 4 (five full days) would likely include students eating in classrooms to mitigate the risk of having large indoor gatherings in the schools. In order for that to occur, the district needed more adult supervision for lunch and recess time, so multiple postings were created to recruit community members for this purpose. The response to those postings has been greatly appreciated and will enable the district to reach our goal! Thanks to the creative and diligent efforts of Dr. Albert and Mr. Platt, modifications have been made to the schedules in both schools to allow for students to eat lunch in their homeroom for an appropriate amount of time while also remaining below the threshold regarding the criteria of being a close contact. ***As a result of these factors, I am happy to report that both schools will transition to phase 4 (five full days) starting Monday, May 10th.***

In order to make this upcoming transition possible, a combination of factors needed to be in place. For the first time since last fall, the transmission rate in our immediate area and around the county is now back in the yellow or “moderate” level and the large majority of our staff now have been fully vaccinated, which gives us an important level of protection in our schools. Additionally, the willingness of so many community members who have agreed to serve as lunchtime aides will provide the additional supervision that was needed. Without the help of those individuals, the transition to phase 4 would not be possible at this time. Finally, the collaborative efforts of our administration and the flexibility of our staff have made taking each new step in our reopening process possible. Their collective level of dedication to the students in our district has truly been remarkable.

For those that may question the timing of this decision, it is important to note that our goal all year has been to reach phase 4 and reopen our schools on their full-day schedules. Now that we have the ability to do so, I do not believe in postponing that transition until September. Additionally, the staff and administration will utilize the final five weeks of the school year to observe and assess the procedures related to lunch and recess to determine what types of adjustments need to be made during the summer as we prepare for the start of the new school year.

I truly appreciate the continued patience and support that has been demonstrated by the entire community throughout this year.

Respectfully,

Michael E. Ettore
Superintendent of Schools