



Penn-Trafford School District

P.O. Box 530, Harrison City, PA 15636
Phone: 724-744-4496 or 724-744-2121; Fax: 724-744-4016
www.penntrafford.org
Effective, Efficient, Quality Education

August 18, 2020

Dear Parents:

I wanted to send out information regarding a change that we made to the Penn Trafford High School for the start of the school year reopening plan. The school board took action last night to begin the high school year with a hybrid approach due to recommendations from the Department of Health. The state released information on August 10, 2020 that Westmoreland County is considered to be in the Moderate Phase due to the positivity rate and the incident rate. Their recommendation is that schools in the moderate phase conduct instruction in the hybrid or online form. Based on the DOH recommendations we received, we had serious concerns for the high school students and staff due to the enrollment of the high school, the size of the staff, and the high school class sizes. Schools K-8 will continue as scheduled.

In addition to receiving the above information from the Department of Health, all schools in PA received the information from the Department of Education regarding [guidance to schools with positive cases \(click here\)](#) on Thursday, August 13, 2020. This is the information that the district sent out on Friday to all parents through district email. There were causes for concern with the guidelines and the class sizes of the high school and the enrollment of the school building.

The State Secretary of Education has already advised all schools in Pennsylvania to expect changes through the school year due to the health data. It is my hope and the hope of the school board that we can move to a full opening of the high school as the health data improves. We understand the parents and students want to be in school five days per week. We will continue to monitor and assess the data. Mr. Aquilio will be sending out information for the high school hybrid plan.

I do understand that this is short notice as the start of school is next week but we just received the information this past week. I would rather proceed with caution to ensure safety as we start the process of reopening the high school.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at harrism@penntrafford.org.

Dr. Matthew Harris

Matthew F. Harris, D.Ed.
Superintendent

Scott A. Inglese
Assistant Superintendent

Brett N. Lago
Director of Business Affairs/Board Secretary

Gregory N. Karazsia
Director of Student Learning Supports