

UPPER DEERFIELD TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

856-455-2267

WWW.UDTS.ORG

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

1385 HIGHWAY 77, SEABROOK, NEW JERSEY 08302

Dr. Peter Koza
Superintendent of Schools

P: 856-455-2267 x3201 F: 856-453-7077

kozap@udts.org

Mrs. Cherie Bratty

Assistant Superintendent for Business/Board Secretary

P: 856-455-2267 x2202 F: 856-455-0419

brattvc@udts.org

August 6, 2020

Dear Upper Deerfield Students and Families:

In these uncertain times we continue to receive information regarding safety measures and protocols to keep everyone as safe as possible. We weathered the first part of this storm together with our closure in March through the end of the school year and now face another difficult time with school opening for students on September 8th. The recent survey results indicated approximately 70 percent of our parents want some type of in-person instruction with either daily or a mix of daily and virtual while the remaining 30 percent would prefer full virtual. As a district, we are in support of you and your decision at this time as our survey also indicated that approximately 70 percent were also extremely concerned about returning to school.

These past few months have presented things that we have never had to face and the many unknowns that continue to surface make decisions all the more difficult. During this period of closure our students lost their place to go every day, time with their friends, social activities, educational activities, sports participation, trips, and many other things that are associated with being at school each day. While these missed opportunities are not able to be replaced, our students, families, staff, and community made the best of these circumstances to complete the school year.

As we get set to embark on the 2020-2021 school year, there are still many questions that remain while we are tasked with providing in-person instruction while providing the option for parents to elect to remain in the virtual environment under the governor's orders. Our district is adhering to the CDC and County Health Department Guidelines to provide on-site instruction for those who will elect to be on-site and will do what is necessary to promote safety to the fullest extent possible. Mask wearing has been mandated by our governor for **all** students and staff in the in-person setting and this may factor into decisions. Prior to Covid we had cleaning protocols in place that met the guidelines and we will continue with these protocols. There will be challenges no matter what option is chosen by parents for their children, but as we did in the spring, we will continue to move forward and face these challenges with the fervor necessary to overcome them. The word resiliency comes to mind and it is because of the resilient efforts of our entire school community that has me believing we will get through this and provide the best possible experience for our students in either setting provided.

Please know that all of us in the district are here to support our students and parents whether we are able to see you at school or via the virtual format. If there is anything that you need, now or in the future please do not hesitate to contact us. Our schools are an extended family to all of our school and community members and we are here to support everyone. If you need to talk, have questions, or have something to share about the current situation, let us know. We will do our best to assist in any way we can to meet your needs or answer questions and **an update of our plan will be coming soon.**

This is a time that needs our attention in order to make the best decisions with the information at our disposal. Working together and supporting each other as we have done will get us to a point where we are able to return to some semblance of our prior routines. I wish all of you peace and blessings during this time and remind you to continue to be safe, follow all guidelines, and continue to take care of yourselves and each other.

Sincerely,

Peter L. Koza Ed. D.

Peter L. Koza, Ed. D., Superintendent