

Superintendent Meloche, President Saidel,
Vice-President Neary, and
Members of the Cherry Hill Board of Education

Cherry Hill Public Schools
Malberg Administration Building
45 Ranoldo Terrace
Cherry Hill, NJ, 08034

We are writing to share our concerns regarding the return to school. While we recognize and appreciate the work the Return to School committees and school custodial staff have done since March, we feel strongly that we as a district are not yet ready to return as planned. Our school community has not been given adequate resources, guidance, and time to prepare, which will impact students' academic achievement, social-emotional well being, and safety. In order to make learning successful for the entire school community during this time, we believe the following are critical:

Move all inservice days so they occur before students begin the school year.

These inservice days must be utilized to prepare the building and staff to implement the new safety and instructional procedures and protocols. Our first two days back at school as a staff consist in large part of mandatory training that, while important, prevents us from being able to plan for this new model of instruction. Having extra days to plan with grade level partners, practice live streaming as a building, and reviewing new protocols ensures that Cherry Hill's first-rate staff can deliver the instruction that Cherry Hill families have come to expect.

Provide adequate PPE to all staff.

Physical safety and emotional well being of the staff and the students they come in contact with on a daily basis is tied directly to PPE being adequate and accessible to all. Teachers are expected to instruct students from a distance, making one-on-one support next to impossible. Just as therapists are being provided with plexiglass dividers, we believe that classroom teachers must have access to the same equipment. The ability to confer with students, up close, is critical to differentiation. We believe this cannot adequately occur without the ability to have physical proximity.

Communicate clear and consistent guidelines for quarantine protocols.

We are unaware of district guidelines for contact tracing and quarantine. What happens when a staff member becomes ill with or is exposed to someone with Covid-19? Will we be required to use our sick days? What is the protocol for quarantine within a classroom cohort? What if siblings who attend other schools have been exposed to someone within a cohort that must quarantine? With no clear information communicated, staff is left uncertain and anxious about their own health and safety, the health and safety of their families, and that of their students.

WE are making these requests as concerned, highly-dedicated professionals, in an effort to provide students with the safest and best possible academic experience. With the start of the school year fast approaching, we feel these areas must be addressed. We look forward to your prompt reply.

CHEA Members of Bret Harte Elementary School