



Hillside Elementary School

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Dear Families,

Hillside is committed to bringing all elementary students back into our school building this fall. As you know, our School Re-Entry Committee proposed an AM/PM model and a K-6 All In model this summer. Both of these models were rejected based on obstacles. The AM/PM model's obstacles included cleaning protocols and two bus runs. The K-6 model's obstacle was equity, as it would have impacted the ability to bring our students in Grades 7-12 to school. Consequently, the 2-Day Consecutive model with the gold and green groups is the model that the District has selected.

On Friday, September 11th, the Superintendent and Board of Education asked each building leader to meet with their staff and present their thoughts on an all-in model. Our teachers felt strongly that based on the NYS Department of Health guidance, bringing all students in at the same time was not possible due to limitations in social distancing and instructional challenges with the barriers. However, our teachers strongly advocated for the AM/PM model, the model that was initially proposed this summer.

The AM/PM model allows all students to return to school with greater frequency than the 2-Day Consecutive model. It provides routine for our youngest learners, as well as the opportunity to interact with teachers and peers more frequently. In addition, class sizes would be smaller, allowing teachers to differentiate instruction and move through the curriculum at a quicker pace. During the remote portion of the day, students would have a special area lesson and independent assignments from the classroom teacher.

In the AM/PM model, half of the students would be assigned the AM time slot and half of the students the PM time slot, both of which would be determined based on contractual obligations. Our high needs students would have the opportunity to attend for both the AM and PM sessions. Our Building and Grounds team now has products that can clean the school in a shorter amount of time, eliminating that obstacle. However, transportation continues to be a challenge for this model.

Consistent with State-issued public transit guidance, the District must develop protocols and procedures, which include that individuals must wear acceptable face coverings at all times on school buses (e.g., entering, exiting, and seated), and that individuals should maintain

appropriate social distancing to the degree possible unless they are members of the same household.

Therefore, it will be necessary to reduce the number of Hillside Elementary School riders by 50%. If we fail to reduce our elementary ridership by 50%, we would not be able to move forward with consideration for the AM/PM model and students would attend in the 2-Day Consecutive model, engaging in remote learning with live streaming on the days they are not in a school building.

We are offering parents the opportunity to opt-out of transportation for the 2020-2021 school year only. Please understand that no decisions for a change in model have been made at this time. This survey is a first step only. To complete the survey, please [click here](#).

This survey will close on Wednesday, September 16th at 12 PM. This short turnaround time is necessary to be able to plan forward. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Warm regards,

Amy Cazes and John DeKams