



PINE GROVE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Promoting Growth, Achievement, Success, and Direction for ALL Children!



*Heath W. Renninger
Superintendent*

July 31, 2020

Happy Friday Cardinals,

At a special meeting of the Pine Grove Area School District Board of Directors on Thursday, July 30, 2020, district administrators presented the district's health and safety plan for reopening the 2020-2021 school year. The Board of Directors formally approved the health and safety plan and a blended learning format for re-opening school.

The blended learning format reduces capacity in our buildings and maximizes social distancing while meshing in-person learning with virtual learning. Students will be designated as a red or grey team member. Students on each designated team will be on-site for in person learning for two specified days and in a virtual asynchronous environment for two days. Each Friday, in person instruction will alternate between each team. One week, the grey team will be on-site on a Friday and the following week, the red team will be on-site. When students are not on-site, they will participate in asynchronous learning, which will allow for students to complete assignments that day, but not at a specified time.

In an effort to maximize instructional time when students are physically in the classroom, teachers will prioritize content and instruction most suitable for an in-person learning environment. During in-person days, students will be led by teachers in new learning experiences and instruction and begin to prepare for meaningful, independent learning assignments and activities which will take place during students' scheduled at-home days.

For those families who may not feel comfortable sending students back to the classroom, and want to spend more time transitioning using remote instruction. This option is available for all grade levels, as Pine Grove Area has its own cyber academy. Our Cardinal Virtual Campus (CVC), offers students and their families an opportunity to opt out of any of these above formats and to enroll in our own full-time online platform. Cardinal Virtual Campus (CVC) is open to all district students in Kindergarten through 12th grade. We encourage all students entering this program to commit to the program for a minimum of one semester (90 days). Due to the extreme costs associated with the district needing to reimburse cyber charter programs outside of Pine Grove Area and the financial burden that enrollment of our children in such programs has on our district and the community, we ask that parents who are currently considering outside charter school options please take time to learn more about our in-house CVC program. Every dollar we send to cyber charter programs outside of the district are dollars taken away from Pine Grove Area programs and services. If you are interested in learning more about the Cardinal Virtual Campus for the upcoming school year, please contact Mr. Vince Hoover at 570-345-2731, ext 358 or cvc@pgasd.com.

The Pine Grove Area School District Board of Directors also approved a revised 2020-2021 school year calendar which allows for one additional staff professional development day before the year begins. The official first day of school will now be Thursday, August 27th for the Grey team and Friday, August 28th for the Red team. Principals will provide specific details in the near future.



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Our school board recognizes that this decision is difficult for our families. However, any reopening decision would have created unique challenges when it comes to the individual concerns and needs of our families. Ultimately, we believe a hybrid model of reopening best adheres to the guidance we have received from local, state, and national health agencies while attempting to reopen our schools safely and successfully for the long term.

We also must recognize the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is impossible to predict what, if anything, will change in our community and region from late-July to late-August. Therefore, this reopening decision may need to be adjusted in the weeks leading up to the first day of school or beyond.

Thank you for your patience as we work through these weeks of preparation for the start of a new school year. We will continue to inform you of updated procedures and changes as we move forward.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Renninger', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Heath W. Renninger, Superintendent