



Mountainside School District

1497 Woodacres Drive Mountainside, NJ 07092

908-232-3232

www.mountainsideschools.org

Janet Walling - Superintendent of Schools

Mountainside Parents/Guardians,

September 13, 2021

Good morning and I hope that you and your children had a smooth start to the school year and a nice weekend! It was wonderful to welcome all of our students back to full time instruction last week, to see them in their new classes, to see their smiles (even behind their masks) as they reconnected with friends and others, and to see them enjoying lunch and recess! While we still need to have restrictions and adjustments in place for everyone's health and safety, last week definitely felt much more like a "normal" reopening.

I am aware, however, that there have been some issues and concerns with our timing and transportation processes as they relate to arrival and dismissal. These types of situations are common at the beginning of any school year, but they can be annoying and stressful nonetheless. Please know that all of us would like nothing better than to fully return to the normal timing and procedures that were in place prior to COVID, but unfortunately we are not there yet. We are, however, continually working to adjust schedules and protocols wherever feasible in order to make each day smoother than the last while remaining steadfast in our commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all. Specifically, please note the following:

- We have already implemented changes to our dismissal procedures at Beechwood which significantly reduced wait time for parents in the afternoon.
- We are working to adjust our timing for opening the doors to Beechwood in the morning as we know that every minute counts for both students and parents.
- We are communicating with our transportation company and Governor Livingston High School in order to address a delay that appears to be impacting the timing of our afternoon buses.

We will continue to examine and implement additional improvements as feasible and I appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to address these areas.

On a separate note, this year, we will replace the letters that were previously sent home after each verified COVID case with a newly developed COVID Dashboard that is located under the "Important Links" section of the District website. The Dashboard will be updated whenever a positive case is reported and verified. The school nurses, the health department, or District administrators will continue to notify specific individuals if there is a concern for close contact exposure. You can view the Dashboard from the following link: [COVID Dashboard](#). We hope this new method to communicate active COVID cases will be helpful for you.

Back to School Night is scheduled to take place on the dates/times outlined below. The principals will be sending out information this week to outline specific timing and attendance protocols.

- Beechwood School Back to School Night - Wednesday, September 22nd
- Deerfield School Back to School Night - Thursday, September 23rd

I would like to end with a thank you for the work you have put into preparing your children for this new school year. They returned to school ready to learn, ready to follow the protocols that need to be in place, and ready to embrace the opportunities this new year will bring. I am confident that while this "Road Forward" will surely have some unexpected turns, we will have an extremely successful year by continuing to work together and strengthening our partnerships.

Regards,

Janet Walling