Thursday, August 20, 2020

Dear PPS Parents,

Our educators, paraprofessionals, and school-based support and clerical staff have all returned to work to begin preparing for the opening of the 2020-2021 school year. As a reminder, the school year will begin remotely for the first nine (9) weeks (November 4, 2020). Students in pre-kindergarten and grades 1 – 12 will begin on Monday, August 31. Kindergarten students will begin on Thursday, September 3.

Now that staff has returned, families will begin to receive additional information directly from their child’s school and teacher(s). Please make sure that you visit www.pghschools.org/updateinfo to ensure the information we have on file for you and your family is accurate. Additional information is below.

**Childcare Supports and Resources**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many local organizations, including the District’s Out of School Time and Community Schools teams, have been working to coordinate supports to assist families with making and maintaining childcare and education plans for their families this fall. For the full list of resources, scroll to the bottom of this update. The webinar on this topic will be available for viewing on our website (www.pghschools.org/allin). We are working with external partners to attempt to establish supports for PPS families who will need assistance identifying a childcare provider in a full-time E-Learning or the blended in-school model beginning on November 5. We define childcare as a place where a child can go during the school day in either the blended in-school model or a full-time E-Learning model. Complete a brief survey for each of your children with whom childcare is needed online at www.pghschools.org/PPSChildcareNeedsSurvey.

**Drive-Up Back to School Event, #PittsburghForPPS! Friday, August 21 – 11 AM – 3 PM**

For the eighth consecutive year, Pittsburgh Public Schools has teamed up with some great partners for our official back to school event, #PittsburghForPPS! #PittsburghForPPS is the official back-to-school event with FREE food, book bags, hand sanitizers, cloth masks, and more! Presented by PNC, #PittsburghForPPS is open to all current Pittsburgh Public School students and will take place in the North Shore at Gold Lot 1 (W. General Robinson Street) near Heinz Field on Friday, August 21, 2020, from 11 AM - 3 PM. **This event is drive up only.** A very big thank you to this year’s partners: PNC, The Pittsburgh Pirates, The Pittsburgh Steelers, The Pittsburgh Penguins, Comcast, City of Pittsburgh, WAMO 100, The Beat 107.3, PT Services Group, 412 Food Rescue, Eat n’ Park, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, ABC Transit, Bravo! Italian Kitchen, Turner’s Tea, and Reebok! This event would not be possible without their teamwork and contributions.

**Dispelling a Rumor about E-Learning**

This week, rumors have been circulating that families that have elected to sign up for E-Learning for the first semester of school (August 31, 2020, to January 22, 2021) will be placed in the Pittsburgh Online Academy after the first nine weeks. **This rumor is not true.** Students, whose families have previously elected to have their children participate in E-Learning, will continue to receive their instruction from their child's assigned neighborhood or magnet school after the first 9-weeks.
CENSUS 2020 – #BeCounted Before it’s too Late
The deadline to complete the 2020 Census has been extended to October 31, 2020. The survey can be completed using the paper form sent in the mail, online at the Census 2020 website (https://www.2020census.gov/), or over the phone (844-330-2020). Support for completing the questionnaires in non-English languages is available over the phone and on the Census website. Please remember that citizenship status is not included in the survey. If you have not taken the 2020 Census yet for your family, please take 10 minutes to complete it. Data from the 2020 Census are used to ensure public services and funding for our school district, local hospitals, and fire departments, as well as the planning of new homes, and businesses to improve neighborhoods. The data also determines how many seats Pennsylvania is allocated in the House of Representatives.

Student & Parent Information to Engage in E-Learning
Families will receive a letter containing each of their children’s personalized credentials to participate in E-Learning. The letter will include each child’s username, password, email address, and student ID#, as well as the primary guardian’s Home Access Center (HAC) credentials. This information is needed for your child to log in to CLEVER to access Schoology and additional tools for E-Learning, and for the primary guardians to log in to the Home Access Center and your parent Schoology account. If you receive more than one letter, please contact our Support Center at 412-529-HELP or submit a Let’s Talk ticket at www.pghschools.org/letstalk.

Update Your Contact Information – Annual Update Site
This year, more than any other year, it is critical that all families ensure the information we have on file for all students and families is accurate. This includes accurate home and cell phone numbers, email addresses, emergency contact information, and immunization information. To review your information and provide updates or add new information, please visit www.pghschools.org/updateinfo. Adding a text-enabled number and email address will ensure your family is receiving important communications from your child's school and district. To access the site, primary guardians must use their Home Access Center (HAC) username and password. Per the above, all HAC information is available in the personalized mailer families will begin to receive this week and next. On the site, families will also be asked to acknowledge important health and safety measures that will be in place this school year.

Updated Computer Device Exchange and Need-Based Distribution Schedule
Please find the full schedule of grade exchange and distributions online at www.pghschools.org/devicedistribution. Locations include Carrick, Classical Academy, Oliver Citywide, Westinghouse, and Sci-Tech. If your child’s grade distribution date has already occurred, please pick up or exchange a device on the make-up days. Make-up days will be held on Wednesday, August 26, Thursday, August 27, and Friday, August 28 from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM, and on Saturday, August 29 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. CAPA and SciTech families do not need to exchange their computers as a part of the District exchange and distribution process. Both schools will communicate directly with their families. Please note that the distribution of iPads for all prekindergarten, kindergarten, and 1st-grade students will be coordinated by each school.
Virtual Webinar Series Available On Website and Facebook
Over the past several weeks, we have hosted multiple virtual webinars on a variety of topics including health and safety measures, support for our youngest learners, and supporting students with IEPs and 504 plans to name a few. On Tuesday, August 25, our Chief Academic Officer, Minika Jenkins will host a webinar on E-Learning and Schoology. To tune in to our virtual webinar series, visit our livestream website (https://livestream.com/accounts/7031315) and/or Facebook page. Each webinar will be streamed live at either 2:00 to 3:00 PM or 6:00 to 7:00 PM. If you missed a webinar or want to revisit one, tune in at your convenience on our website after each session- www.pghschools.org/ALLIN.

Transportation Survey
To plan our transportation service for this school year, we are asking each family to share how they plan to use transportation this year. Please visit www.pghschools.org/falltransportationsurvey and click on the blue bar titled School Transportation Survey for Fall 2020- PPS Families. If you are a parent/guardian with students at both a PPS school as well as a private, charter or parochial school setting, please complete the non-PPS transportation survey for the children that attend non-PPS schools. Please pay close attention to the school dropdown menu when making your school selection. A survey must be completed for each student in your household.

Upcoming Board Meetings
The schedule of upcoming Board meetings is below. To view each meeting, visit our website at www.pghschools.org.
- Monday, August 24 at 6:00 PM – Public Hearing
- Wednesday, August 26 at 4:00 PM – Legislative Meeting

Please mark your calendar for Tuesday, August 25, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM for our webinar on E-Learning and our new learning management system, Schoology. This webinar will show families and students how to log on to Schoology through Clever, review attendance procedures, grading and expectations for learning.

Yours in education,

Anthony D. Hamlet, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

Childcare Resources:
Allegheny Child Care – Grades K-7
A digital tool to search in real-time for available spots at early learning, after-school, out-of-school, summer camp, and virtual programs in Allegheny County.
www.alleghenychildcare.org
info@alleghenychildcare.org
412.421.3889

Family Care & Education Forum
Connect with other families to ask questions, network, and support each other around care and education planning.
Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) Region 5
Determine if your family is eligible for reduced out-of-pocket costs for subsidized childcare or state-funded early learning programs like Early Head Start, Head Start, and Pre-K Counts.

www.elrc5.alleghenycounty.us
elrc5@alleghenycounty.us
412.350.3577 or 1.888.340.3572