



Evesham Township School District

Meland Administration Building, 25 South Maple Avenue, Marlton, NJ 08053

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Dr. Justin Smith, Superintendent
Mr. John Recchinti, School Business Administrator

Ms. Danielle T. Magulick, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Richard G. Dantine, Jr., Director of Personnel

Oct. 2, 2020

Dear ETSD Families,

This update highlights: the 2020 Census, COVID, the draft ETSD 2020-21 calendar with Cohort days for the full year, and our budgetary challenge (the biggest challenge for ETSD). A mention of something beautiful, since we need it more than ever: While on the phone with a principal this week, I heard sounds of happy children at outdoor recess in the background, the sounds of running, calling, laughing. Sounds of a full day. Sounds of wholeness. Sounds made possible by everyone--district, families, town--working together.

Completing the 2020 Census

Please consider completing the census if you haven't yet. Your response helps direct billions of dollars in federal funds to local communities (like Evesham) for schools, roads, and public services. The 2020 Census count impacts funding for school programs and services that are critical for students and younger children such as: special education, Head Start, and after-school programs; classroom technology; food assistance, including free and reduced-price school lunches; and maternal and child health programs. Completing the census just takes a few minutes and is just one click away here... <https://my2020census.gov/>

COVID

Yesterday our district had its first confirmed positive COVID case, an individual at MMS. The school principal and nurse notified all staff and parents. Our district is coordinating with public health officials and following CDC, state, and local health department guidance to assure the health and safety of our community. Contact tracing is underway. Anyone identified as a close contact (within 6 feet for 10 minutes or more) receives an additional notification. No further action is required if you do not receive an additional notification. As a resource, my [Sept. 18 Update for ETSD Families](#) reviews procedures for a confirmed case.

We are monitoring the situation closely. Cleaning and disinfecting of all exposed areas was completed. All our schools take precautions to prevent the introduction and spread of viruses and other germs by thorough, daily cleaning of all spaces and frequently touched surfaces. We encourage parents and students to continue following the CDC safeguards below. As always, we appreciate your support and cooperation.

- Staying home when you are sick;
- Washing hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds;
- Covering coughs and sneezes and properly disposing of tissues;
- Limiting close contact with people who are sick and not sharing food, drinks and utensils;
- Practicing social distancing (staying at least 6 feet apart);
- Wearing a face covering while in school; and
- Continuing to monitor your health for symptoms.



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DRAFT 2020-21 ETSD Calendar

This [Draft 2020-21 ETSD Calendar](#) showing Cohort days for the full year will be recommended for approval at our October Board meeting. Our current [2020-21 ETSD Calendar](#) only shows Cohort days through January 1, 2021. This draft is intended as a resource for family plans. Our goal as always is to return for full in-person instruction this year. Achieving that goal depends on how the NJ Dept. of Education guidelines shift, such as the 6 foot spacing between desks. We will continue to monitor for any guidance changes that would enable bringing more students into each room.

Budgetary Challenge

Building on my prior communication about our budgetary situation (e.g. [ETSD Superintendent Testimony to NJ Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee Re: the District's Fiscal State](#)), I will be providing ongoing information over the weeks and months ahead. Our financial difficulties are an even greater challenge to our district than that posed by the pandemic. Every aspect of our operations must be considered. The many steps to get there are daunting now, and will become more so as the year progresses, and will have a district-wide effect.

Our district mission is to serve students in the most purposeful ways possible. We can only do this by staying financially solvent, which means by July 1 having to cut over \$5,000,000 (steadily increasing since summer), and millions more in the years to follow. Every role will be affected, as 87% of our \$77,000,000 budget is spent on staffing. This decision is made more difficult as staff who may be affected have given their time and care to our students over many years.

One step: our district is not in a position to be able to pay for work that is not needed, even if this was done in the past. One example of how this looks: Evesham Township Education Association (ETEA) leadership and district administration crafted Remote Learning Wednesdays (RLWs) to support teachers to support students, in short, to fulfill our mission. RLWs are based on a shortened student schedule, resulting in fewer hours of work, thus fewer paid hours, for particular roles. Savings need to come from many other steps over the time ahead, e.g. reduction, consolidation, and transfer of positions; reduction in health benefits eligibility within a role; salary breakage; and more. These steps affect people, our district family--a painful and constant fact at every moment. At the same time, without these steps--and unavoidably many others to come--we will never meet this challenge, which we must meet, thus will meet, for the sake of our children.

Thank you,

Dr. Justin Smith
Superintendent of Schools