

Dr. Terry Ward
Superintendent of Schools

Mrs. Brenda Semeraro
School Business Administrator

Ms. Elizabeth Kupiec
Director of Pupil Personnel/CSE Chairperson

August 5, 2021

Dear C-M Community:

I hope this letter finds you and your entire family well. This letter is an update on the status of our reopening planning and process. As we prepare for the coming school year, we are continuously monitoring ever-changing guidance from the CDC, the New York State Department of Health and the Cayuga County Health Department. The health and safety of our school community will always be our primary focus. We would like to provide all parents, staff and students a clear picture of what the upcoming school year will look like here at Cato-Meridian CSD, however it is just too early to make any of these very important decisions.

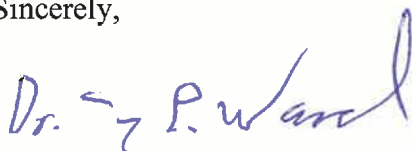
While this letter leaves many questions unanswered in terms of masks, testing, social distancing, and other COVID-19 protocols, we are taking steps as a school district to come up with the best reopening plan possible. **Unlike last school year, it is highly unlikely guidance and/or law will come from the New York State Department of Health or the Governor's office.** I met with Cayuga County Health Department and have other meetings set up next week. While we understand and respect the many viewpoints surrounding COVID-19, we will comply with any law and the rules and regulations set forth by the New York State Department of Education.

Also, please be aware we have formed a Reopening Advisory Committee made up of our school physician, representatives from the Cayuga County Health Department, our school nurses, various administrators, school board members and parents. This committee will be meeting on August 17th to discuss our reopening plan contents. Speaking from experience, things are likely to change several times over the next two weeks, therefore we will not be releasing our reopening plan until at least Friday, August 20th. Of course, if laws and executive orders are established by state or local governments before then, we will let you know as soon as possible.

We had several celebrations to reflect on last school year. We could not have been a leading school district in our region without everyone working together. Also, we had some lessons learned as an organization. Please know our main goal is to keep your kids safe and healthy. In order to accomplish both, I believe kids need the opportunity to be in school every day. We will do everything in our power to make that a reality in the 2021-2022 school year.

Thank you C-M community for all of your continued support.

Sincerely,



Dr. Terry L. Ward
Superintendent of Schools