



Southbridge Public Schools

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September 11, 2020

Dear Families,

As we head into the 2020 - 2021 school year I want to share several updates. But first, I'd like to thank the staff of Southbridge Public Schools for their efforts during the past 14 days of professional development. Together, we have built a strong foundation for the new school year that reflects the two simple **guiding principles** we used in developing routines at each school. The systems we have put in place 1) provide safety for our students and for all staff members and 2) deliver the highest quality educational experience for students possible.

The district began distribution of Chromebooks on Thursday with a priority of distributing Chromebooks to remote learners and hybrid model learners at the middle-high school in the white cohort. As I have mentioned in previous letters, our full supply of Chromebooks has been arriving in the district slowly, due to an increase in demand across the country and manufacturing difficulties. While we have received some Chromebooks, the district is still waiting for a large number of Chromebooks to arrive. For that reason, we ask that if remote learning families have their own computers that they consider using their home computers until the rest of the Chromebooks arrive.

We had to structure the upcoming school year in adherence to numerous new guidelines related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes the hiring of new employees such as certified nursing assistants and bus monitors to support the new guidelines for buses. We have advertised the bus monitor openings widely, and have offered incentives to fill these positions. Additionally, we have offered overtime opportunities to existing employees hoping they might fill these roles. Despite these efforts, I want to disclose that it is possible that we will not be fully staffed with bus monitors at the start of school. Families might consider this as they determine their plans for student transportation for the first few weeks of school.

As a reminder, students in the white cohort at the middle school and high school will have their first day of school on Monday even though they don't go to school in person until Thursday. All students who are learning remotely at any grade level will be expected to be in attendance on Monday in the virtual environment. Attendance will be taken for the day and for each class daily. If you have questions about your student's schedule or other aspects of the school day, please contact your student's school. You can also find information on our website and official social media accounts that may answer some of your questions.

Communication During the School Year

We remain committed to providing you with updated information about the school year, just as we have over the summer. You will find announcements on our website, on our official social media accounts, and through other communication channels such as email and phone calls. If you would like to update your contact information or confirm that we have the correct email address and phone number for your family, you can write to

help@southbridgepublic.org or ayuda@southbridgepublic.org. You can also call or text (774) 601-0082 with updates to your contact information. For questions about your student's schedule, please contact the school directly.

We remain committed to providing students in Southbridge with rich opportunities for learning under any circumstance. Thank you for your patience and hard work during this unusual time and your collaboration in creating our reopening plan. Together, we have built a strong foundation for safety and learning in the new school year.

Regards,

Jeffrey A. Villar, Ph.D.
Receiver/Superintendent
Southbridge Public Schools