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July 17, 2020

As you all are aware, Governor Lamont has announced all public schools in Connecticut will re-open in the fall. I know that this has caused many a lot of concern and it has raised a lot of questions. Re-opening schools in person can be successfully achieved based upon current health data. Connecticut has determined it is appropriate to plan a consistent approach to the operating schedule, but we will be prepared to modify plans as necessary. Maximizing in-person instructional time after the current period of disruption is critical to the academic and emotional well-being of our students. It is important to mention that schools will not be as we once knew them for a period of time but the education and well-being of our students has not changed. BPS needs all families to fill out the re-open survey to better guide our planning. This information is critical to opening our schools safely.

The BPS is committed to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff as we plan our return to school buildings. We will take strong mitigation strategies to re-open our schools in a safe and responsible way. We examined our school facilities and made all necessary changes in order to meet all of the established health and safety guidelines. We will implement every necessary measure to protect our students, staff, and families as we begin to return to school.

I understand everyone's anxiety surrounding the safe re-opening of schools in the fall. Even though it may seem like a daunting task at this time, I am confident that BPS will be prepared to welcome our students, families, and staff back to a safe and positive learning environment. Schools will certainly be different than they were prior to March 12, 2020 when we closed for the remainder of the school year. We have convened a Fall Re-Opening Task Force to develop a plan that will provide all students with a meaningful instructional and social emotional program. The Fall Re-Opening Task Force has been working tirelessly to develop a plan that meets the State of Connecticut's health and safety guidelines. The Fall Re-Open Task Force has been very thoughtful and deliberate in their planning, knowing that we have an enormous responsibility to ensure the health and safety of over 24,000 students and staff. I am confident that we achieved our goal with our "Welcome Back Bridgeport" plan. The Plan will be submitted to the State by the July 24th deadline. Once it is approved, it will be posted on the Bridgeport Public Schools website for public viewing.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Testani
Superintendent of Schools