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Public Health District

Letter of Advisement

Date: July 20, 2020

To: The Montgomery County Area Public School Superintendents

From: Charles Sims, MD
Montgomery County Public Health Authority

Robert Dickson, MD
Montgomery County Hospital District
EMS Medical Director

Regarding: Guidance Focused on Keeping Students and Staff Safe While Also Focusing on the Ever-present Need to Open Schools

After careful discussion between all area school superintendents and the Montgomery County Public Health District, we advise to postpone opening school for in-class instruction until no earlier than September 8th, 2020.

- This decision should give schools the best opportunity to open safely and while potentially reducing the risk of a forced closure later in the year.
- This advisement is based on the continuing growth in COVID—19 cases in Montgomery County, the near capacity caseload of patients in all our area hospitals, and concern for the spikes in cases that have been noted 10-14 days after holiday weekends earlier this summer. Each school may need additional time to plan for another potential spike in cases that follow the Labor Day weekend.
- Date and plans should be re-evaluated the week of August 24th, 2020 to determine if September 8th, 2020 is indeed a viable option for reopening in class instruction.

During the postponement of in-class instruction, you should consider having your staff work on campus.

- This allows staff to practice their personal safety protocols and become comfortable with the proper use of PPE.
- Staff members can have time on campus to begin practicing and planning their personal safety protocols and procedures. They can better plan to limit large group meetings, reassess safely moving students in high traffic areas such as hallways, cafeterias, and in other high density areas. They can promote safe distancing, proper hygiene, and safely cleaning the environment. Indeed, the cleaning regimen can be practiced and improved upon prior to full reopening.



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- Schools and staff should practice student protocols and procedures so that potential problems may be identified prior to students returning to campus.

The Public Health District does recommend that small student groups be allowed onto campus intermittently prior to September 8th, 2020 as Superintendents see fit.

- This allows for necessary academic preparations.
- This allows campuses to practice safety protocols with small groups.
- The cleaning regimen can be practiced and improved upon prior to full reopening.

The Public Health District also recommends that extra-curricular activities that are currently on campus continue on campus as they have this summer.

- All UIL and TEA safety protocols must be followed.
- This will allow students and staff to practice proper protocols.
- The cleaning regimen can be practiced and improved upon prior to full opening.

Thank you for your consideration and adherence to this letter of advisement. Together we can keep our students and staff safer, while opening our schools in a responsible way. I look forward to your continued input on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

Randy Johnson, CEO
Montgomery County Public Health District
In consultation with:
Charles Sims, MD
Montgomery County Public
Health Authority

Robert Dickson, MD
Montgomery County Hospital District
EMS Medical