Parents/Guardians,

The opening of school is approaching very quickly. I am sure that everyone’s anxiety about what the beginning of school will look like is rising. I would like to attempt to help soothe some of that anxiety by sharing information, based on today’s current COVID conditions. Please know that the safety, health, and welfare for our students, staff, and community are our highest priority. We also believe that being in school, face-to-face with our students, is paramount to a successful education.

We have taken great measures to ensure that we are doing everything possible to prevent the spread of the virus. Please be patient and understand that we are attempting to think of every possible scenario for an ever-changing situation. Please allow me to discuss some of the “knowns” that we are addressing and the expectations we will put forth to our students and families.

First, I will address the issue around face masks. Per the Governor’s order and that of the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), all students and staff will be required to wear face masks when the possibility to be within 6 feet of any individual is possible. That being said, student desks in the Elementary School have been placed 6 feet apart in every classroom. Students will be taught to keep the social distance of 6 feet between them and the next person and to wear a mask if they need to get closer than that. Students will be permitted to take off their masks when given breaks and separated from their classmates.

We are going to ask you to screen your children at home every day. Ask them if they are feeling well. Check temperatures, if possible. Any symptoms of fever, cough, vomiting and/or diarrhea, pink-eye, achiness, should excuse students to be absent from school. If a student presents with any symptoms while in school, they will be immediately quarantined, monitored, and sent home. Please understand that we will be vigilant in screening as well.
We will be instituting protocols for monitoring temperatures, social distancing, and reducing foot traffic throughout the building. Frequent hand washing will be taught and encouraged. Times will be provided throughout the day when students will be able to use the restroom and maintain social distancing guidelines. Lunches will be held in the cafeteria as well as classrooms to maximize social distancing.

Bus transportation will continue to be provided. However, if you choose to bring your child to school and pick your child up after, please communicate that to the office early in the day. We are attempting to limit the number of students on buses and keep them far enough apart to meet social distancing guidelines. We encourage you to bring your child to school if possible. We are also going to limit visitors and volunteers. As much as we would like to be welcoming and inclusive of the entire community, we must keep people socially distanced.

Our website, www.millsd.us has a School Reopening Quicklink to view our District’s Phased Reopening Health and Safety Plan. Please view this document, as it details the plan our school board has adopted for the reopening of school. Do not hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

Alicia N. Differ
High School Principal.
Temperature screenings will be conducted prior to entering the building. Students will be admitted into the building at 7:40 a.m. Parents will drop their students off in front of the school, near the High School Office. We will be using three entrances to admit students into the building. Drivers and parent drop-offs will enter at the gym entrance (door number 1). Walkers will enter at the band entrance (door number 20/21). Bussers will be divided amongst the gym entrance and guidance entrance (door numbers 1 and 23).

Socially distanced dots will be painted on the sidewalks to give students a visual to follow and maintain 6’ distances.

Students receiving breakfast will receive a grab and go breakfast to take to their classrooms. All students are to be in their classrooms by 7:55 AM or they will be counted as tardy.

**Afternoon Dismissal:** Parents and family members will be required to wear a mask when on school property and not inside of a vehicle.

At 2:10, bussers only will be dismissed. They can exit from the gym or guidance exits.

Teachers will be asked to hold walkers and drivers in their classrooms until 2:15. At 2:15, drivers and walkers will be able to utilize the closest available exit.
Parents/Guardians,

With the given circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, there are some changes to the school day that I would like to make you and your student aware of. Below, I have compiled a “list” for you and your student to reference to better understand some of the changes for this upcoming school year.

1. Please see the attached letter regarding transportation. The way that students enter and exit the building will be different this year in order to maximize social distancing.
2. Activity Period is now at the beginning of the school day. During this time, students will go through COVID screening (temperature check and questionnaire).
3. The bell schedule is also different this year. The new bell schedule will be posted on the school webpage. Class times have been condensed and students will now dismiss at 2:10.
4. Student lockers will not be used. Students with athletic equipment will be permitted to keep their belongings stored in room 103.
5. Gym locker rooms will not be available. Please dress accordingly on days you have Physical Education.
6. Students will NOT be permitted to have food delivered from food service establishments. Deliveries from outside establishments will be turned away.
7. The cafeteria, as well as classrooms will be utilized for lunches. Based on staffing, as many students as possible will be removed from the cafeteria setting to eat lunch.
8. All water fountains will be fitted with water bottle fillers. This will allow students to fill their water bottles. Keep in mind, the traditional mouthpiece to drink from will not be available.
9. Hallways will be marked with social distancing signage to help students and staff maintain the maximum social distancing possible.
10. Each student will be given a clear desk guard that will serve as a protective barrier.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation with these changes. The Administrative Team has been working diligently to find every way possible to keep students and faculty safe. Again, thank you.

All the best,

Alicia N. Differ, High School Principal