

# Canastota Central School District

120 Roberts Street, Canastota, New York 13032 • 315.697.2025 • FAX 315.697.6368



## District Office

Christopher M. Clancy  
*Assistant Superintendent of Instruction & Special Programs*

Nicholas A. Panuccio  
*Executive Director of Finance & Operations*

Shawn D. Bissetta  
*Superintendent of Schools*

March 23, 2021

Dear Canastota Families,

I hope that you and your family are managing through this very challenging school year as well as possible. As always, we appreciate your continued support and understanding as we all make the best of a difficult situation while still offering the best possible instructional program for our students. As we head into the home stretch of the 2020-21 school year, I want to take this opportunity to update you on the next steps included in our plan to return students to a more typical schedule to the extent that state health and safety guidance allows.

As you know, we've gradually returned students to daily in person instruction when the guidance from the New York State Health Department has matched our ability to support required safety and health procedures and protocols. After starting in a hybrid model for all K-12 students (unless parents opted for a fully remote plan for their child), we returned grades K-3 (October 2020) and grades 4-6 (November 2020) gradually to daily in-person instruction. **I am pleased to inform you that we will now be bringing all current hybrid students in grades 7 and 8 back to daily in-person instruction beginning next Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>.** 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students currently on a fully remote schedule will remain on a remote schedule until further notice. Please note that all transportation, sanitizing and cleaning, and daily health screening protocols remain in effect as they have been for the entire year; we have, and will continue to comply with the NYSDOH requirements.

Again, It is important to note that absolutely no health and safety measures are being compromised as a part of this decision. In fact, the Canastota Central School District is proud of our strict adherence to all NYSDOH guidance since the very beginning of the pandemic. In consulting with our local Health Department, we have verified that the NYS guidance allows for barriers to be used in cases where 6-foot distancing is not possible. Please note that as of today, we still live under the NYSDOH guidance which calls for either 6 feet of distance **or** the use of barriers. In the media, there has been a great deal of talk about the recently adjusted guidance from the CDC that states that a three-foot distance is acceptable WITHOUT barriers as long as people are masked. It is imperative that you understand that schools in New York do not live under this CDC guidance until NYSDOH adopts it as the accepted practice in our state. Therefore, even though some districts are moving ahead using only CDC guidance, we will still be utilizing barriers along with universal masking as we bring back our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade hybrid students.

Just in the past few days, hundreds of families filled out our most recent survey asking them which model of instructional delivery they prefer for their child for the 4<sup>th</sup> marking period. We appreciate your cooperation in completing this important survey. We are currently analyzing this feedback and will use these requests as a

baseline for our plans for the next marking period that begins on April 19<sup>th</sup>. In the coming weeks, we will be providing additional communication to families to verify to what degree those requests can be accommodated. We are hopeful that we will be able to implement every request, but we can only do so if the requirements in place at that time will allow us to. Again, we will be confirming the status of each request in the coming weeks.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or any of our administrators or supervisors with questions related to our plan. As always, the health and safety of our students and staff is our top priority. With strict adherence to our high safety standards still in place, we look forward to taking this exciting step toward a more normal schedule for our students.

Sincerely,

Shawn Bissetta  
Superintendent of Schools