

FHPS Video Transcript, Forest Hills Forecast, July 10, 2020

Hello Forest Hills families and staff members and welcome to the seventh edition of the Forest Hills Forecast, and welcome to the month of July. First, I'd like to say thank you for your responses to the survey through the Kent Intermediate School District and your overwhelming desire is to see children return to school in the fall but to do so in a safe way, and that's exactly what we are working on for face-to-face learning in a safe manner this fall. This is what we all want and we all need to continue to work together to make this a reality.

So today, I want to discuss with you the governor's safe return to school roadmap that was released on June 30th by the State of Michigan, and I want to discuss a few of the details in this roadmap. But also understand, that this is a 63-page document and we have it linked to today's message where this Forecast has been sent out to you. The plan provides both required and strongly recommended components to it and Forest Hills Public Schools is required to adapt our own plan by the middle of August. And we will certainly do so as we digest all these elements. The elements shift from required to strongly recommended as we go through different phases of Michigan's reopening plan. So we all need to become familiar with this new nomenclature in the different phases that we have.

So just briefly, Phase 1 is where we do not want to be, we're well beyond that. We're currently in Phase 4 right now as I record this video. Phase 1 would be uncontrolled growth of the virus. We're trying to get to Phase 6, which is post pandemic. So we've made it through Phase 1, Phase 2, Phase 3, and we're currently in Phase 4. We do not want to slide backwards to Phase 3. So we all have to do our part and the different regions of the State are categorized in these different phases. So as you may know, way up North and in the U.P., they're already in Phase 5 and that's the goal where we're trying to get to in our region of the State. So currently, we're in Phase 4.

In Phases 1 through 3, face-to-face learning cannot happen. It has to be remote learning. In phases 4, 5 and 6, we can have face-to-face learning. So right now, in Phase 4 that's good news for us, but it does require certain things in Phase 4 that are more stringent than they would be in Phase 5. So for an example, in Phase 4 of the return to school roadmap, there can be no group that gathers in the same common area inside a school that's more than 50 students. So think about that in common areas where people may gather, so we wouldn't have

assemblies for instance where we'd have more than 50 students gathered in an area. It requires that everyone wear a facemask on a school bus. Think of a school bus similar to an airplane in that regard requires that we clean the school buses not every day, but more frequent than that in between every single run that we take on. So these are requirements.

As we go to Phase 5, these become strong recommendations the two examples that I've just given. So again, we are trying to move from Phase 4 to Phase 5 and eventually to Phase 6. And the State will continue to talk about the different regions of the State of Michigan in this nomenclature. So it's important we understand where we're all going. Again, we're currently in Phase 4. We do not want to slide back to Phase 3 because that would be remote learning. We want to move from Phase 4 and eventually to Phase 5 and likely when a vaccine or other treatments come out move to post pandemic, which is Phase 6.

Forest Hills will have protocols and requirements as part of our plan for each of these different phases, and we're working on that now, now that we have this detail and a set of requirements from the State of Michigan. You can expect to see that as we move throughout the month of July and prior to board approval in the middle of August.

One thing that we know for sure is that we have to continue to be vigilant and we're going to have to continue to be nimble as we respond to this. And some of these things are going to be out of our control, and there's some things that are in our control. We cannot control as a local school district or even as individuals our entire region. Our entire region is several different counties here in West Michigan and there might be an outbreak of the virus in one of those areas that affects our area here even when we're doing everything right.

And that leads me to my final segment today, our candid conversation. It's important again that we understand that this Phasing System that the State has is for a larger region at this point in time. We expect that as we move toward the fall and as we see schools reopen, the State has indicated they'll get more precise and more localized. So we may see a situation in the fall where a local community has a brief outbreak or maybe even a school is affected by some positive cases. The State is looking to have local Health Department's work with school districts to perhaps, in that case, close that school temporarily, so people can quarantine and monitor rather than closing down an entire district or closing down an entire region. We will

have more details about these type of elements as we move forward. But again, some things are going to be in our control and some things are out of our control.

A good example is commencement. Back in early June, we had plans for a socially-distance commencement at a very large venue Fifth Third Ballpark. Hoping, working with the health department, that we'd be in Phase 5 by the point of later July when we head commencement scheduled. And now, we see we're going to remain in Phase 4. So we have to come up with alternate plans on that as well. So what's in our control is to continue to do the things that keeps this virus away from all of us, to wear face coverings when we're inside and with large groups, to continue all those mitigation strategies, staying home if we're sick, not congregating with large groups of people who aren't part of our own family. These efforts are scientifically proven to make a difference and we want to keep those things up. So again, we can preserve that face-to-face learning in Phases 4, 5 and 6 for all of our students this fall. Thanks for tuning in today. I look forward, in the weeks to come, to provide for you a variety of specific details related to how each aspect of the school day will operate.

If you want to learn more about the State's plan, please click on the link that's attached to this message where you can look at all 63 pages of this plan. Thanks again for all your support and stay safe.