



# Jefferson Township Local Schools

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Dear JTLSD Families,

August 14, 2020

I'd like to share with you today our district's final decision regarding how we will start back to school on Tuesday, September 8.

Our top priority is to protect the health and safety of our students and their families and all of our staff and the community as a whole. Providing a safe learning environment for our students and staff is always a tremendous responsibility. During this very serious COVID-19 pandemic, that responsibility has life and death ramifications.

JTLSD's aged and non-air-conditioned buildings make compliance with the CDC guidelines extremely challenging and pose a high level of risk for our students, staff, and community. Therefore, the recommendation of the Superintendent is for our students to receive 100% instruction from home by Jefferson Twp. Local School's designated teachers with newly adopted curriculum resources aligned with ODE Student Learning Standards.

**Therefore, Jefferson Twp Local Schools will begin the 2020-2021 school year fully remote – all virtual learning -- for grades K through 12. We will operate in a completely virtual learning environment through at least the first semester -- which will begin on Tuesday, September 8.**

It is important to understand that the **virtual learning for the first semester will be completely different than the distance learning of March and April** when school buildings were closed by Governor DeWine's emergency order. Prior to September 8, our teachers and staff will participate in training for this new curriculum. Teachers will conduct "live" instruction as scheduled and will be in contact with their students on a frequent and regular basis. I will make more information available soon.

The District will continue to engage with families and staff and seek feedback throughout the first semester of the year to make any necessary adjustments to learning environments. We'll also provide information in the coming days regarding how to access additional services for educational, social and emotional support, breakfast and lunch, technology, and other family needs.

I understand that this news of starting back in the fall with a fully virtual learning model will not please everyone. However, ultimately, safety and health concerns led to a final decision that would keep all of us safe as we work collectively to lower the rate of COVID-19 infections. With the mission to protect the health and safety of students, families, staff, and the community at the forefront of all decisions, JTLSD will continue to monitor public health conditions within its boundaries before determining when it is safe and practical to begin in-person learning experiences.

Finally, it is imperative that all of us work together to make the first semester the best educational experience possible for all of our students. I believe all our teachers and staff, along with our community partners, are committed to achieving positive outcomes for all our children. I ask that every family make the commitment to working closely with JTLSD for the best experience possible until we can all return to the classroom safely.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Gates, Ph. D  
Superintendent Jefferson Twp Local Schools

***“Focused on Teaching and Learning”***