



Committed to Excellence

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SUPERINTENDENT

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July 20, 2021

Dear Trumbull Families and Staff,

I hope this letter finds you all well and enjoying a well-deserved summer break. I apologize for the length of this letter but I tried my best to keep it concise. I hope the information in this letter provides you answers to some of the questions you might have regarding the upcoming school year.

### **ELITE Book Store**

The TPS is looking for book donations for the ELITE Book Store that will be coming soon. Please check out our [recent presentation](#) and consider donating books. Donation location, dates and times are below:

**Madison Middle School**  
**Monday through Wednesday**  
**9 am to Noon**  
**Through July 28**

### **Reopening Update**

*The Trumbull Public School System, in partnership with the community, strives to meet the educational needs of all students within a challenging and supportive academic environment that empowers each student to become a life-long learner and to live and participate in a democratic, diverse and global society.* As we look to return to school in the Fall, it is our intention to fully meet our Mission Statement stated above. The pandemic required that all schools make drastic changes to the way we educated our students. While the pandemic raged on, we worked together to provide greater access to in-person learning. By the end of the 2020-2021 school year, our schools began to look like they did in the past.

Although we have yet to receive any written guidance from the State Department of Public Health on our requirements for the upcoming school year, we are taking steps to ensure a successful school year for all children. Please see our [Reopening Plan](#) for more information. Some of the highlights we are excited to share are:

- **Students and Staff who are vaccinated will not need to quarantine. There is still time for students/staff age 12 and up to be vaccinated by the start of the school year. Find vaccine information here: <https://www.211ct.org/>**
- All classroom furniture is being returned from storage, cleaned, and placed back in classrooms.
- Our teachers will be able to use high-leverage instructional strategies, including group work, conferencing, and hands-on teaching.

- Our cafeterias at all schools will be used as they were pre-Covid with some distancing requirements.
- Our specials and hands-on electives will more closely resemble our pre-Covid classrooms.
- Outdoor recess will be normal again.

However, despite these positive steps, I do not know the extent that the State Department of Education, the State Department of Public Health and the Office of the Governor will impose additional legal requirements on all schools for the Fall. Masks appear to be the most significant concern for families at this time. I have received feedback from concerned community members about both the need for masks and the need for choice around masks. I believe there may be some misinformation about mask requirements so I offer my current understanding:

- The Trumbull Public Schools will follow any pertinent laws around mask wearing in the Fall. Currently we are under executive order through July 20 that masks be worn when inside school. The Governor's Executive powers have recently been extended through September 30.
- The Centers for Disease Control recently released their [guidance](#) on masks and the State Department of Education and Department of Public Health made comments in June to all Superintendents that they were awaiting that guidance before making any further recommendations.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that **“All students older than 2 years and all school staff should wear face masks at school (unless medical or developmental conditions prohibit use).”** – Click [here](#) for full guidance from the AAP.
- I understand some are claiming on Facebook sites that in order to accept Federal grants (American Rescue Plan) that TPS had to agree to requiring masks. This is not true. However, we were required to create, share for feedback, and post our [Reopening Plan](#) and revisit the plan every 6 months.

I am looking forward to receiving final guidance soon and will share that with everyone once received.

### **Enrollment Summary**

At the BOE meeting on Tuesday, July 13, I presented an [enrollment summary](#). In reviewing this presentation please remember that most of our enrollments and withdrawals occur over the summer. Therefore, these numbers are still preliminary and you should not draw too many conclusions. I will continue to update the BOE members and will make any needed adjustments that require additional budget dollars no later than the August 17 BOE meeting.

### **Equity Work and Our Goals**

The Trumbull Public Schools is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students. We believe that each student is an integral member of our learning community and we are a better organization when all students have varied opportunities to be fully engaged. It is in this spirit, that TPS is committed to reviewing our structures, practices, policies, and procedures to ensure that they are in line with our Mission Statement at the beginning of this letter. As a district, we successfully completed our stated equity [goals](#) for the 2020-2021 school year, and are currently finalizing our district goals for the coming school year which will include goals on equitable access and outcomes. Below are some of the draft goals and action steps that we intend to accomplish.

Analyze the percent of chronically absent students by school by month (include distribution of chronically absent students by race, gender, high needs students versus all students) to ensure access to high quality instruction

Review discipline data quarterly by school (# of suspensions; distribution of suspensions by race, gender, high needs versus all students)

Review all practices and procedures to develop a vision and strategic plan for Human Resources (compliance, talent acquisition and retention, legal and contractual obligations)

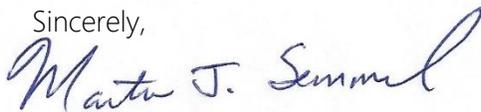
Develop a comprehensive PK-12 Vision of the Graduate

Create goals to ensure equitable practices through district and school-based teams

At the most recent BOE meeting on Tuesday, July 13, the State Education Resource Center (SERC) was invited to attend and provide an update on the work with our District Equity Leadership Team. Unfortunately, due to a disruption during this meeting it was difficult for the SERC consultants, who were virtual, to present the information. The Board made the decision to table the presentation for the time being. We look forward to our continued work on equity and will work to reschedule SERC's presentation in the near future. Please be reminded that a BOE meeting is a business meeting for the Board of Education, held in public, and after public comment ends attendees are respectfully asked to strictly observe the rest of the meeting. Any questions, suggestions, or concerns can be directed via email to phone call to the Board Chair and/or Superintendent after the meeting.

In addition, we have a well-articulated curriculum revision process that allows for public participation through attendance at meetings. As I publicly stated on Tuesday, the curriculum of TPS does not include the teaching of Critical Race Theory (CRT), but does include critical inquiry in alignment with Connecticut standards for teaching and learning as outlined in the CDSE position statement for culturally responsive education that may be found here: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Board/Culturally\\_Responsive\\_Ed.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Board/Culturally_Responsive_Ed.pdf).

Sincerely,



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Superintendent