

## Dover Students and Staff Preparing for the Future

Staff and students in Dover City Schools remain committed to tackling the learning challenges presented by COVID-19. At the same time, the district looks toward the future. We realize there will be a process to recover from the effects of learning amid a pandemic, and we are ready.

We are currently assessing the learning gap that likely emerged as a result of interrupted learning. We are prepared to use that data to plan to close that gap with targeted interventions for our students. An integral part of our plan will include summer school options this year. Building principals will provide more details about our summer school plan very soon.

Our commitment to bridging the gap included a close look at building schedules. Returning to a longer school day and possibly changing the number of class periods at the high school are strategies we want to use to maximize learning. Our plan is to keep Dover Avenue Elementary on the 7:50-2:30 time schedule. This has worked well for our students and helped to alleviate some transportation issues. We will continue to communicate with parents regarding any changes to come.

While transitioning to remote learning was one of the most challenging transitions for Dover City Schools to date, we learned many valuable lessons through the process. There are some changes we will incorporate into our “normal” school years in the future.

Technology was present in the classroom prior to COVID-19. It has now become integral to our education delivery method. While relationships and individualized learning will always be the Dover experience, our students and staff have effectively integrated technology into our model of learning. We will continue to utilize online tools and curriculum for the benefit of all students.

Through the challenges of emergency remote learning, we have also seen the benefits of improved communication with parents. Communicating course content and expectations with parents has allowed us to better work together to support student achievement. This will remain a cornerstone of education in the 2021-2022 school year.

Finally, we expect wellness fund monies through additional CARES Act funding from the federal government. This will be helpful in our attention to social/emotional wellness in the wake of the pandemic and providing academic support to all students. We are committed to addressing the needs of the whole child – making sure all of the students’ needs are met.

Hope is on the horizon, and the coming year for Dover City Schools is promising. We are looking forward to clubs, activities, and after-school programs returning to normalcy over the next year. Finishing this school year with students in school five days a week has been rewarding and beneficial for all. Planning for our future is a welcome challenge as we incorporate the lessons learned over the past year into our future.