



# North Carolina School for the Deaf

517 West Fleming Dr., Morganton, NC 28655

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August 1, 2020

Greeting Parents, Students, and Staff:

I am writing to advise you that the North Carolina School for the Deaf (NCSD) has carefully reviewed and determined our plans for reopening the school for the 2020-2021 academic year. Recent data collected by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), has yielded over 100,000 cases of COVID-19 in NC including; 1567 in Burke County, 368 active positive cases, 9 hospitalizations, and over 10,000 positive cases from the counties in which our students reside. In addition to reviewing the latest data, and guidance we have also carefully considered parental feedback. This was obtained by a recent survey regarding the two options for reopening that have been outlined by Governor Roy Cooper and DHHS. The results are as follows:

- 56% are in favor of Plan B/Moderate Social Distancing
- 28% are in favor of Plan C/Remote Learning Only
- 9% of the families are unsure
- 7% did not reply

On July 14, 2020, Governor Roy Cooper announced that only Plan B and C could be considered in reopening. Therefore, based on the COVID-19 data, the NCSD Parent Survey, and the Governor Cooper's announcement, the Leadership Team at NCSD has decided to begin the 2020-2021 school year on August 17, 2020, with Plan C/Remote Learning Only. We realize Remote Learning Only is challenging for our students and families and that face-to-face instruction is the most ideal learning environment. However, there is noted risk to bring students together from over 30 counties into one location with three shifts of staff coming in-and-out daily. This is especially concerning, because we serve students who present with more significant medical complexities, as well as other special circumstances that may be at an increased risk for severe complications compared to other students.

We will continue to watch the COVID-19 data and trends and will update you on possible changes to our continued implementation of Plan C/Remote Learning Only, on or before September 4, 2020. We appreciate your support and understanding. Registration Packets are being mailed to all families. Please return Registration Packets on Sunday, August 16, 2020 when meeting the bus to pick up student technology and distance learning materials. Bus route times will remain the same. Parents of local/day students may drop off student packets and pick up student technology and distance learning materials at the flagpole from 3:00-4:00 at NCSD.

Families will be contacted in preparation for Remote Learning including process, equipment, and student schedules. You will receive additional information from the Principal, Amy Sargent, on how we will improve remote learning challenges identified in the spring and summer programs.

We appreciate all you are doing to ensure our students continue to make progress on IEP goals and academics. Please stay safe and contact me by phone at 828 432-5200 or by sending an e-mail to [mark.patrick@esdb.dpi.nc.gov](mailto:mark.patrick@esdb.dpi.nc.gov).

Respectfully,

Mark D. Patrick  
School Director  
North Carolina School for the Deaf

cc: Amy Sargent