



**ESSEX REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMISSION  
COMMISSION SCHOOLS**

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the 2020-21 school-year! As we continue to navigate the current health crisis, we are well underway with planning for a beginning like no other we have seen in the past. Although we have addressed needs relative to teaching and learning as well as health and safety measures for staff and students, our central focus will still be to ensure that:

- Every student, every day feels **connected**;
- Every student, every day is being **challenged** by new learnings and experiences; and
- Every student, every day knows they have **committed staff** they can turn to.

Spring of 2020 has challenged staff and students to find a new normal for learning, connected us in new ways and required our committed staff to demonstrate their commitment from afar. What I have most learned through this process is how much I appreciate the expertise our principals and teachers bring to our schools, and the ways in which our students continue to work hard to grow. What I most appreciate about the ERESK Schools' community is how even under unprecedented circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are still a community of stakeholders dedicated to students.

Normal is such a simple word and it is our goal at ERESK to not only find our new normal, but to use this time as a learning experience that will forever impact the learning environments of all ERESK schools. Beginning September 10, 2020, the new school year for ERESK students enrolled at Essex Junior Academy, Essex Campus Academy, Essex High School, and Sojour High School will commence with full remote learning. The details of our three-phase re-opening plan are as follows:

- **Phase 1:** All staff and students will engage in full remote learning from **September 10, 2020 to October 2, 2020**;
- **Phase 2:** Remote learning will continue for students between **October 5, 2020 and October 30, 2020**. If supported by the information from the CDC, NJ Health Department and ERESK leadership, teachers will be required to report onsite to provide remote instruction within their designated classroom spaces; and
- **Phase 3:** Between **November 2, 2020 and November 30, 2020** all ERESK alternative schools will implement an in-person hybrid model. This model will combine in-person learning with remote engagement for student cohorts.

For the 2020-2021 school-year, our school day will begin online at 8:20 am. A new bell schedule that defines time periods devoted to each subject/class will be followed both in-person and during

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remote learning. Students will be expected to sign-in to begin classes under the direction of his/her homeroom teacher. Students' coursework will be completed on Edgenuity, a K-12 online curriculum platform which offers e-learning courses aligned with New Jersey learning standards and course content required for graduation.

Each month, the ERESC's leadership will review available information related to the health crisis in order to determine if transition from one phase to another is recommended. Updates on all decisions will be shared with staff and families via letter, telephone notifications and website updates.

Although we recognize that our opening may not be "normal," we are committed to ensuring that our learning will not only continue, but it will thrive. We can't wait to move on to the next phase of learning under Covid-19 and we know all returning and new students to ERESC schools will be welcomed and will continue to grow as a result of your efforts!

In closing, this year, as always, we are extremely grateful for your support. As we continue to work together to ensure maximum success and achievement for our students, I want to wish you and your families well and assure you that the ERESC schools' leadership stands ready and willing to assist you should the need arise.

Yours in education,

*Kevin E. Guyton*

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Assistant Superintendent of Schools