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June 26, 2020

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**SUPERINTENDENT SHAFER SAYS THE DISTRICT’S EFFORTS TO REOPEN  
SCHOOLS REFLECT MANY OF STATE’S GUIDELINES FOR REOPENING**

*“Data will be our guide and safety will be our priority,” Shafer says*

PATERSON – After reviewing the state’s guidance for reopening schools released today, Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer said that many of the state’s guidelines are already a part of the plans currently being developed by the district’s task force on reopening schools.

“The Governor and the State Education Commissioner have always been guided by public health experts and the empirical data they have provided in order to keep people in New Jersey safe,” said Shafer. “We will do the same. In the Paterson Public School District, data will be our guide and safety will be our priority. The health and safety of our students and staff must be, and has been, our top priority. We will be prepared to open our school buildings in September.”

Shafer added that the district has convened a Reopening of Schools Task Force that includes 18 committees focused on different aspects of resuming in-person learning and extra-curricular activities at school buildings. The committees include parents, community leaders, and clergy, as well as teachers, administrators and other professionals from the district. Already, essential staff and visitors are required to wear masks and maintain social distancing while in district buildings.

“Based on the guidance we received today, the district is on the right track. But we have a lot of work to do to prepared for the reopening of our school buildings,” Shafer said. “We know that the life students will return to when school buildings reopen will be different from the life they had when the buildings closed in March. But we will work together as a community to educate our students as effectively and safely as we can. We’ll keep parents and the community updated throughout the summer as we continue working toward reopening our schools.”

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