



PATCHOGUE MEDFORD CONGRESS OF TEACHERS



DEAR COLLEAGUES,

AS ANOTHER WEEK COMES TO A CLOSE, WE FIND OURSELVES GETTING CLOSER AND CLOSER TO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE DISTRICT.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, WE FULLY REALIZE HOW FRUSTRATING IT MUST BE TO NOT HAVE ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS AND WE TRULY APPRECIATE ALL OF YOUR PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING. IN CRAFTING THESE REOPENING PLANS WE WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYONE UNDERSTANDS IT IS THE DISTRICT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO DEVELOP SUCH PLANS. THE ROLE OF PMCT IS TO MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY OF OUR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT AND ASSURE THAT THESE PLANS DO NOT COMPROMISE THIS AGREEMENT. WHILE AT TIMES THE DISTRICT'S IDEAS HAVE REACHED DEAD-ENDS, WE CONTINUE TO WORK DILIGENTLY TO TRY AND DEVELOP MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL PLANS. EVEN THOUGH THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IS RAPIDLY APPROACHING, WE ARE CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC THAT THEY WILL BE FINALIZED SOON.

THIS WEEK, BOTH COHORTS WERE NOTIFIED AT THE ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVELS AS TO WHICH DAYS THEY WOULD BE ATTENDING SCHOOL. THIS WILL PROVIDE CLARITY TO THE NUMEROUS MEMBERS THAT LIVE WITHIN THE DISTRICT. THE HIGH SCHOOL MASTER SCHEDULE HAS RECENTLY BEEN LOCKED IN. ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN ADVISING TEACHERS ON WHICH COURSES THEY WILL BE TEACHING. ROOM ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD BE OUT EARLY NEXT WEEK. OUR GUIDANCE COUNSELORS HAVE ALREADY REPORTED BACK TO WORK TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF REPROGRAMING THE STUDENT'S SCHEDULES. WE HAVE BEEN STEADFAST IN OUR DEMAND TO HAVE OUR MEMBERS BE NOTIFIED, PRIOR TO STUDENTS OR PARENTS, OF ANY GRADE LEVEL OR COURSE CHANGES, AND SEEMINGLY THAT MESSAGE HAS BEEN HEARD.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT TWO PLANS ARE BEING NEGOTIATED SIMULTANEOUSLY. THE HYBRID PLAN AND THE FULL REMOTE PLAN. THROUGHOUT THESE DISCUSSIONS, WE HAVE NOT WAVERED FROM OUR STANCE THAT LIVE-STREAMING OF "IN-PERSON CLASSES" RAISES MANY CONCERNS AND WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL BE AGREEING TO A PLAN THAT DOES NOT CALL FOR SUCH. THAT'S A HUGE RELIEF! ADDITIONALLY, WE ARE QUITE CERTAIN THAT WITHIN THE FULL REMOTE PLAN, THERE WILL BE NO RECORDING OF LIVE LESSONS. WE ARE AWARE THAT THIS IS ANOTHER AREA THAT BRINGS ABOUT MAJOR CONCERNS TO OTHER LOCAL UNIONS WITHIN NEIGHBORING DISTRICTS. THE REMOVAL OF THIS OPTION FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE DISTRICT

USING SUCH RECORDINGS FOR APPR AND THE STUDENTS' OPTION OF SKIPPING A SCHEDULED LIVE CLASS AND VIEWING THE LESSON AT A LATER, SOMETIMES MUCH LATER, TIME BECOME A HUGE WIN FOR PMCT.

MANY OF OUR EDUCATORS HAVE ALSO RAISED PRIVACY CONCERNS WHEN RECORDING OCCURS IN A CLASSROOM. TO THAT END, THE DISTRICT'S CODE OF CONDUCT HAS BEEN REVISED AND THE DISTANCE LEARNING DOCUMENTS DO NOT ALLOW FOR STUDENTS TO RECORD LESSONS. ADDITIONALLY, ANY LIABILITY THAT MAY EXIST UNDER FERPA, IDEA, EDUCATION LAW 2-D, OR OTHER PRIVACY LAW, RULE OR REGULATION IS BORNE EXCLUSIVELY BY THE DISTRICT, IF THE TEACHER IS USING DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY AND DIRECTIONS WHILE PROVIDING THE INSTRUCTION. IT'S OF THE UPMOST IMPORTANCE THAT WE USE THE PROGRAMS AND PROCEDURES PUT IN PLACE BY THE DISTRICT.

WE HAVE BEEN ADVOCATING FOR THE ABILITY FOR ALL OF OUR MEMBERS TO WORK FROM HOME ONE DAY A WEEK. WE ARE VERY CONFIDENT THAT WEDNESDAY WILL BE THE DAY FOR THAT TO TAKE PLACE. DURING THE HYBRID PLAN, THE WORK DAY WILL BE FROM 8:00AM – 3:12PM. THERE WILL BE A CLAUSE THAT THE DISTRICT HAS THE ABILITY TO CALL OUR MEMBERS IN FOR A PDP MEETING, IF GIVEN A MINIMUM OF ONE WEEK'S NOTICE. HOWEVER, THAT SHOULD ONLY BE IN THE RARE CASE WHEN RATIONAL IS PROVIDED AS TO WHY THE MEETING CANNOT BE HELD REMOTELY. AGAIN, THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT HAS NOT BEEN FINALIZED, BUT WE'RE CONFIDENT THE DISTRICT WILL REMAIN TRUE TO ITS WORD REGARDING THESE AFOREMENTIONED TOPICS.

AS WE DO BEGIN TO FINALIZE THESE PLANS, WE CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE FOR THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL PREPARATION TIME FOR LESSONS. WE ALSO CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE FOR A SIMILAR NUMBER OF MINUTES OF INSTRUCTION AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS. THERE WILL BE FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THESE TOPICS IN THE DAYS TO COME.

YOU SHOULD BE RECEIVING A MEMO FROM THE DISTRICT, EARLY NEXT WEEK, REGARDING THE START AND END TIMES FOR ALL LEVELS, FOR BOTH THE HYBRID AND REMOTE PLANS. THERE ARE SLIGHT SCHEDULING DIFFERENCES IN SOME INSTANCES. AS ALWAYS, WE APPRECIATE YOUR PATIENCE WITH THIS. ALSO, WITHIN THIS MEMO, THEY WILL PROVIDE AN AVENUE FOR OUR MEMBERS TO SUBMIT QUESTIONS IN ADVANCE OF THE DISTRICT'S THURSDAY MEETINGS. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS. THE SCHEDULE FOR THESE MEETINGS, AS STATED IN THE SUPERINTENDENT'S MEMO, WILL BE BY LEVEL ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2020. THE ELEMENTARY MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE AT 9AM, MIDDLE SCHOOL AT 10:30AM, AND HIGH SCHOOL AT NOON.

THE PMCT EXECUTIVE BOARD WILL ALSO CONDUCT MEETINGS WITH OUR MEMBERSHIP TO ANSWER QUESTIONS LATER THAT SAME DAY. WE WILL BE PROVIDING A LINK TO A ZOOM MEETING

EARLY ON THURSDAY MORNING. WE WILL MEET WITH EACH LEVEL ON THE FOLLOWING SCHEDULE; HIGH SCHOOL AT 2PM, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT 3:15PM AND MIDDLE SCHOOL AT 4:30PM. WE HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT THERE WILL BE A LOT OF QUESTIONS AND IN FAIRNESS TO ALL LEVELS, WE WILL CONDUCT THOSE MEETINGS FOR ONE HOUR EACH. SHOULD THE NEED ARISE FOR ADDITIONAL MEETINGS, WE WILL PLAN THEM ACCORDINGLY.

FINALLY, WE WILL NOT COMPROMISE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR MEMBERS AND OUR STUDENTS. IF IT IS NOT SAFE, WE WILL WORK WITH OUR STATE AFFILIATE NYSUT TO PURSUE AN OPTION AT OUR DISPOSAL TO MAKE SURE OUR BUILDINGS DO NOT REOPEN UNTIL WE ARE ASSURED THAT THEY ARE IN FACT SAFE. IT HAS BEEN OUR FOCUS, TO HAVE ALL OF OUR MEMBERS WORKING WITH THEIR STUDENTS IN AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCIVE TO THEIR ACADEMIC GROWTH. WE HOPE TO HAVE AN AGREEMENT THAT ADEQUATELY BALANCES THESE IDEAS DURING THESE VERY DIFFICULT TIMES. WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND RESOLVE AS WE WORK TIRELESSLY TO REACH AN AGREEMENT ON ALL OF OUR BEHAVES FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR.

IN SOLIDARITY,

KEVIN, CHRIS AND THE PMCT EXECUTIVE BOARD

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