

July 31, 2020

Blessings Hephatha Families,

Thank you for your support and partnership as we diligently work and evaluate the new and evolving information that is presented frequently. Additionally, thank you for your prompt response in the completion of the survey titled *2020-2021 opening school*. *Your feedback is valued and greatly appreciated.*

In recent communications, we updated day school families of our process in waiver application, and the materials presented to county health officials. We continue to remain positive that this process will allow in the facilitating of on-campus instruction. After review and discussion of available options, the Hephatha Board of Education voted unanimously to make revisions of the calendar, and delay the date on which school will begin.

Due to factors listed below, the first day of school has been pushed back two weeks from August 19th, to September 2nd. An updated calendar has also been attached. Hephatha will provide on-campus child care for families registered for the 2020-201 academic year during the weeks of August 17th and August 24th. The school days impacted by the push back in start time have been built into the updated calendar.

The following factors were analyzed in the decision:

- The opportunity to lengthen the monitoring of statistics related to Orange County on the state's epidemiological watch list. Three of the five monitoring metrics meet the state standards, with the other two moving in a positive direction.
- Ample time for continued preparation, implementation, and installation of campus-wide safety measures, as supplies continue to be delivered on a daily basis.
- Allowing for ample time for county waiver approval, and, if needed, also having grace for the health department and the heavy inundation of school waivers submitted.
- New drop off policies and protocol for both EC and K-8 will have likely challenges for parking lot traffic. Navigating this with approximately 300 students the same week would be an additional challenge. The staggering of opening dates will provide support in creating routine for Early Childhood Program students and subsequently Day School students.
- The voice and best interest of our community.

Overall, I am ever-so appreciative of your continued patience and understanding as we carefully work through all processes to get our children back in the classroom. We will continue to provide weekly updates on progress made and information learned.

God Bless and Stay Safe!

In Christ,



Eric Deyke
Principal
Hephatha Lutheran Church and School