

## EAST RUTHERFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT SAFE RETURN TO INSTRUCTION PLAN

**UPDATED 09/09/2022 - APPROVED BY NJDOE 12/05/2022**

### 1. Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks

As of August 29, 2022, the NJDOE recommends that masks are worn in the following situations:

- During periods of elevated community levels: Medium or high community level especially for individuals who are immunocompromised
- During an active breakout: The District will consult with the local health department to determine if masks are required
- After returning from isolation: Students and staff who return to school after 5 full days of isolation should be required to mask during 6-10, or until they test negative using two antigen tests collected at least 49hrs apart starting on day 6.
- After Covid-19 exposure: exposed individuals should wear a well-fitting mask for 10 days from the last exposure, regardless of vaccination status.
- When illness occurs in school

### 2. Physical Distancing (e.g. including the use of cohorts/podding)

- Within classrooms, physical distancing to the greatest extent practicable. Combine this with masking for all individuals in high and very high COVID-19 transmission (CALI).
- Outside of classrooms including in hallways, locker rooms, indoor and outdoor physical education settings, and school-sponsored transportation, maintain physical distancing to the greatest extent practicable.
- The CDC recommends a distance of at least 6 feet between students and teachers/staff and between teachers/staff who are not up to date with vaccinations in all settings.
- As feasible, we will maintain cohorts or groups of students with dedicated staff who remain together throughout the day, including at recess, lunch times, and while participating in extracurricular activities.
- Cohorting people who are not up to date with vaccinations and people who are up to date with vaccinations into separate cohorts is not recommended. East Rutherford will ensure that cohorts are done in an equitable manner.

### 3. Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

- Hand Sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) are placed in each classroom, near lunchrooms, and toilets, for preschool classrooms that have existing handwashing stations.
- The district prepares stations with soap, water, and alcohol-based hand sanitizers and all students under 5 years of age are closely monitored by staff when using hand sanitizers.
- Handwashing protocols are widely emphasized especially with the younger population.
- Students will continue to clean hands in the following situations: Upon or before entering the school building, before snack and lunch, after snacks and lunch particularly if hands are sticky and greasy, after using the toilet, or an adult after assisting a child to use the toilet, when re-entering the building after outside recess, after sneezing, wiping and blowing of the nose.
- Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school and the district has newly installed no-contact water fountains (bottles).

**4. Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities, Including Improving Ventilation**

- Frequently touched areas such as desks, chairs, door handles, handrails, kitchens, bathrooms, light switches, shared telephones, shared desktops, shared computer keyboards and mice, drinking fountains, school bus seats, and windows will be cleaned daily.
- The district will continue using no-touch foot pedal trash cans when there is a lid on the trash can or as necessary.
- With safety in mind, doors should be propped open to avoid frequent touching of handles.
- Disposable wipes are provided in ALL classrooms and offices so that commonly used areas such as keyboards etc. can be wiped down before use.

**5. Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine, in Collaboration with State, Local, Territorial, or Tribal Health Departments**

- According to the August 29th health update, schools can now move away from contract tracing. The district will continue working with the local health department to determine the best ways to respond to clusters of cases and outbreaks.

**6. Diagnostic and Screening Testing**

- CDC no longer recommends routine screening testing in schools/ECE. However, at a high COVID-19 Community Level, K-12 schools and ECE programs can consider implementing screening testing: For students and staff for high-risk activities (e.g., close contact sports, band, choir, theater); At key times during the year, for example before/after large events (such as prom, tournaments, group travel); and when returning from breaks such as holidays, spring break, and/or at the beginning of the school year. Testing strategies will be developed with the LHD and East Rutherford continues to work with parents and local health authorities to ensure that every student who tested positive is identified. The district will report screening testing results, including the number of tests performed, directly to NJDOH through the Surveillance for Influenza and COVID-19 (SIC) Module in CDRSS as required in NJDOH Executive Directive 21-011.

**7. Efforts to Provide Vaccinations to Educators, Other Staff, and Students, if Eligible**

- Vaccines remain the best defense against COVID-19. The district continues to provide staff and parents/guardians with information regarding where vaccines may be obtained. This information is posted on the district nurse's webpage as well as the district website. The district works closely with local hospitals, pharmacies, and healthcare providers to disseminate vaccine information to staff and parents/guardians as appropriate. More recently, the district partnered with Hackensack Hospital to host a virtual Parent Academy session informing parents of the benefits of vaccinating their children. The East Rutherford School District has continued to partner with Dr. Martha Sliwowski at 42 Locust Avenue, Wallington, NJ for any students, parents, or staff members who are interested in vaccinations. The Pfizer vaccine is administered at this location.

**8. Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities with Respect to Health and Safety Practices**

- Our School District will continue to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) consistent with all health and safety guidelines. If students with disabilities are unable to access the district reopening plan as designed, school teams

facilitate individualized and alternative plans based on student needs, present levels of functioning, developmental levels, and student/parent input. Students with Disabilities follow the school routines with accommodations and modifications required per the IEP or impact of the student's disability. Related services are provided primarily through individual and small group sessions in a separate setting with staff wearing appropriate PPE. Special Education services will be provided as described in the student's current IEP to the maximum extent possible in order to maintain the safety of the student and staff. Parents continue to be partners in the planning for students with disabilities.

**9. Mental Health & Social Emotional Initiatives**

The School Counselors, the Social Worker, and School Psychologists who constitute our mobilized crisis recovery team provide emotional and psychological support as needed. School counselors, the Social Worker, and School Psychologists in conjunction with pertinent outside providers co-facilitate staff training related to trauma, grief, school avoidance, etc. School counselors and district behaviorists consult with classroom teachers about student needs and develop classroom strategies to provide support as appropriate to the age and grade level. Our new Social Emotional initiative was launched and this has been an area of focus for all District staff. Some of the goals are: Change or broaden faculty perspectives on SEL, change faculty expectations with SEL, identify and empower like-minded staff interested in change, commitment and consistency with the whole team and focus on all levels of stakeholders in the plan.

**10. Describe how the LEA sought public comment on its plan and how it took those comments into account in the development of its plan**

- Parents are provided a forum to give input at work sessions and public board meetings
- The District's Safety Committee met to determine safety procedures for the 2022-2023 school year.
- The district will continue to provide professional development and training for staff members and continue to do so throughout the 2022-2023 school year.
- Furthermore, the Pandemic Response Teams/Committees consisting of multiple stakeholders will continue to meet on a regular basis to keep all relevant stakeholders informed of the changes and upcoming plans of the district. This process will continue until the pandemic has subsided.

**11. Describe how the LEA ensured that the plan is in an understandable and uniform format; is to the extent practicable written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, will be orally translated for such a parent, and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA will be provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent.**

- The plan is written in simple language using bullet points to delineate essential information.
- Subheadings, bold, and italics were utilized to highlight essential information.
  - Plan is presented in Spanish as well for our Spanish-speaking parents.
  - Plan will be translated into other languages as requested on a "as needed" basis.

**12. Briefly describe any guidance, professional learning, and technical assistance opportunities the LEA makes available to its schools.**

- All staff district-wide will receive continuous training during monthly staff meetings.
- Parent sessions will be offered through our parent academies.