



EAST RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

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Dear East Rutherford Parents and Guardians:

We recognize that COVID-19 presented a challenge for many families since its onset in March 2020. As our leadership team looks to plan for the return of full in-person instruction as mandated by Governor Murphy for the 2021-2022 school year, we feel it is imperative that we have feedback from our community regarding your needs and desires.

While, to date, we have not received any specific guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education nor the New Jersey Department of Health regarding protocols for returning to full-time, in-person instruction September 2021, we are being proactive in planning ahead. As such, decisions surrounding possible safety protocols and plans for returning to full person instruction in September will be made, keeping in mind the unique and difficult circumstances that these plans will present for the families of the East Rutherford School District.

In order to help us plan, we need to know your specific needs and desires. A short survey posted in Genesis is designed to help us obtain some initial critical information. **PLEASE COMPLETE ONE FORM PER STUDENT IN YOUR FAMILY.** Complete this form no later than, Wednesday, June 9, 2021.

Additionally, many questions have been asked by the community, and there are many conflicting reports being shared through social media and the news. The following FAQ below is designed to hopefully answer many of your questions.

Transition in September 2021 FAQ

1. What is the plan for the 2021-2022 school year?

- Beginning in September 2021, all students will return to the buildings for full-day in-person instruction with lunch in school and following a regular schedule.
- Currently, Section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act requires each LEA that receives ARP ESSER funds to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website, no later than 30 days after receiving ARP ESSER funds, a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools (Safe Return Plan). A Safe Return Plan is required of all fund recipients, including those that have already returned to in-person instruction.
- Pursuant to those requirements, LEAs must submit to the NJDOE and post on their website their Safe Return Plans **by June 24, 2021.**
- Please note that the Safe Return Plan for our District will be developed with information derived from: (a) Parent Survey which will be sent out on Tuesday, June 1, 2021, (b) Safe Return Plan Committee meeting which will be held on June 9, 2021 and comments, feedback and suggestions received at the Board meeting scheduled for June 17, 2021.
- The Safe Return Plan will be posted on the district's website on **June 24, 2021.**
- This Safe Return Plan is **NOT** the final plan for reopening in September 2021, as we are still awaiting specific guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education, as well as, the New Jersey Department of Health.
- Communication will be sent out periodically to notify parents of changes when they occur.

2. Will parents be able to opt out of in-person instruction for the 2021-2022 school year?

- Governor Murphy has announced that schools statewide will fully reopen in September and has indicated that parents and guardians will not be able to opt out of in-person instruction.

3. **Will there be any cases where remote learning may be implemented during the 2021-2022 school year?**
- Districts are awaiting specific guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE); however, the State has indicated that remote learning may be permitted in the event of a localized outbreak. More information will be provided, as guidance for the 2021-2022 school year is issued.
4. **What transportation plans will be put in place for September 2021?**
- The district is hoping to resume transportation services given the community transmission rate remains low to moderate.
 - Specific information regarding *preliminary* transportation guidelines will be shared out in the District's Safe Return Plan, which will be posted on the District's website by June 24, 2021.
5. **What other information will be contained in the Safe Return Plan?**
- Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks
 - Physical Distancing
 - Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
 - Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments
 - Diagnostic and screening testing
 - Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible
 - Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies
 - Ensuring Continuity of Services: Mental Health, Social Emotional, Academic Supports, Transportation, Food Services and Sports & Extra Curricular Activities.
6. **Are students and staff required to be vaccinated to return to school and work in September 2021?**
- The district has not received any information regarding such a mandate. While we can encourage our staff and school community to consider inoculation, we cannot mandate.

We hope that you found this information useful. We look forward to sharing more updates in the near future.

Sincerely,

Giovanni A. Giancaspro

Superintendent of Schools