



EAST RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

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July 12, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians:

I hope that everyone's summer is off to a great start and that students are finding time to read and engage in brain stimulating activities while relaxing. As promised, I would like to share updates with our school community throughout the summer so that everyone is well informed as well as looped in regarding updated guidance for the reopening of our district's schools in September 2021. Please see the following below:

NJDOE General Guideline

LEAs (School Districts) must plan to provide full-day, full-time, in-person instruction and operations for the 2021-2022 school year.

Vaccination

LEAs (School Districts) are encouraged to have a system in place to determine the vaccination status of students and staff, however, if an LEA is unable to determine the vaccination status of individual students or staff, those individuals should be considered not fully vaccinated.

Wearing of Masks

Masks should be worn indoors by all individuals (age 2 and older) who are not fully vaccinated. Consistent and correct mask use by people who are not fully vaccinated is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained. *CDC Updated Guidelines, July 9, 2021. The district will issue final guidance/decision regarding the wearing of masks before the reopening of schools in September.*

Maintaining Physical Distancing and Cohorting

CDC recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask wearing by people who are not fully vaccinated, to reduce transmission risk. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully reopen while maintaining these distances, it is especially important to layer multiple other prevention strategies, such as indoor masking, *CDC Updated Guidelines, July 9, 2021. The district will issue final guidance/decision regarding the wearing of masks before the reopening of schools in September.*

Meals

For meals offered in cafeterias or other group dining areas, where masks may not be worn, schools should consider implementing other layered prevention strategies to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These strategies include:

- Maintaining physical distancing between students and staff, if possible.
- Considering alternatives to use of group dining areas such as eating in classrooms or outdoors.
- Staggering eating times to allow for greater physical distancing.
- Maintaining student cohorts and limiting mixing between groups, if possible.
- Avoiding offering self-serve food options.
- Discouraging students from sharing meals.
- Encouraging routine cleaning between groups.

Transportation

School buses should be considered school property for the purpose of determining the need for prevention strategies.

- Masks must be worn by all passengers on buses, regardless of vaccination status per *CDC Federal Order*.
- If occupancy allows, maximize physical distancing between students.
- Open windows to increase airflow in buses and other transportation.
- Regular cleaning of high touch surfaces on school buses will be implemented.

Exclusion

Parents/Guardians should not send students to school when sick. For school settings, NJDOH recommends that students with the following symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school:

- At least two of the following symptoms: fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose; OR
- At least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, or new taste disorder.
- Please see link below for additional information regarding information pertaining to COVID-19 Exclusion criteria for close contact.

<https://www.nj.gov/education/roadforward/docs/HealthAndSafetyGuidanceSY2122.pdf>

Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff

The district will ensure that procedures are in place to identify and respond to a student or staff member who becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms.

- Designated areas and/or rooms away from others to isolate individuals who become ill with COVID-19 symptoms while at school will be available.
- An area separate from the nurse's office will be used for routine visits such as medication administration, injuries, and non-COVID-19 related visits.

The district will;

- Ensure there is enough space for multiple people placed at least 6 feet apart.
- Ensure that hygiene supplies are available, including additional facial masks, facial tissues, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- School nurses will use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions based on care and tasks required.
- Staff assigned to supervise students waiting to be picked up will not need to be healthcare personnel but will follow physical distancing guidelines.

Please note that the above-shared information is for your information purpose only. The district, while paying close attention to NJDOE, NJDOH and CDC Guidance updates, continues to engage in meaningful conversations with all stakeholders, our Safety Return Team as well as surrounding districts in order to make the best final decisions for re-entry of all of our students into a once again "normal" school year. The district will share its final reopening plan by mid to 3rd week of August, so that everyone can be fully prepared for the new school year. Please see the following links for more

detailed information on: “The Road Forward: Health and Safety Guidance for the 2021-2022 School Year “ and “CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools” - July 9, 2021.

<https://www.nj.gov/education/roadforward/docs/HealthAndSafetyGuidanceSY2122.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

Construction Projects and Renovations Update

To date, we are on schedule with our construction and renovation projects at both Faust School and Mckenzie School. An updated communication will be shared with everyone by mid August. In the meantime, for quick reference and to obtain daily updates on these projects, please visit our district’s website at www.erboe.net. Please click on “*The Expansion and Capital Projects*” tab. Clicking on this tab, will allow you to view the following information:

- Faust School Renovations
- New Four/Five building Construction
- McKenzie school Gym Floor Construction.

As always, thank you for your continued support and attention to matters such as these, which are of great importance.

Sincerely,

Giovanni A. Giancaspro

Superintendent of Schools