

Restart and Recovery Plan to Reopen Schools



The Road Back in September
Rockaway Borough Schools

July 21, 2020

Revised July 31, 2020



Summary of Governor's Plan

June 24th

- All schools required to offer some in-person instruction as well as create a plan to successfully do so.
- Face coverings required for all staff
- Social distancing of six feet or face coverings required for the most part for all students
- Cleaning and sanitizing of buildings and buses daily as well as throughout the day
- Student flow, entry, exit—monitored and screening for symptoms
- Contact tracing done in conjunction with local Department of Health

Proposed plan is based on current NJ Guidelines, all of which are subject to change

District Response to the Governor's Directives

- The district formed a Reopen School Committee in May to address the issue of reopening schools
- **Over 40 individuals representing diverse stakeholder groups volunteered**
- Six sub committees were established to address the following issues and concerns as well as come up with suggestions for a possible district plan and proposal.
 1. **Wellness**- the physical and emotional support of students, their families and staff
 2. **Curriculum**--the Delivery of Instruction as well as the delivery of all special and related services
 3. **Facilities**--proper disinfecting and sanitizing of all facilities and ways to adhere to proper social distancing
 4. **Governance**--attendance, enrollment and use of human resources
 5. **School Operations**--school calendars, schedules, finances, transportation and meal distribution
 6. **Technology**-availability of devices, access to technology and the use of digital platforms.
- In addition, there was much collaboration, dialogue, and communication with our admin team, local and county superintendents, district nurses, our school physician, local Health Officials, the RBEA and our committees as a whole.
- Pandemic Response Teams have also been formed in each building to basically monitor and carry out the district's proposed plan and initiatives

The “Basics” of our Proposed Plan

- Our proposed basic plan is a A/B HYBRID model which divides students into cohorts to minimize the number of students in the buildings on a given day.
- Students attend school and receive in-person instruction every other day and learn virtually the days they are not in school.
- Team A students will report for in-person instruction on Tuesday and Thursday every week while Team B students will report for in-person instruction on Wednesdays and Fridays. **All in-person instruction days will have a 1pm dismissal.**
- Students will be placed in cohorts and spend the day together. Instead of homerooms, students will start and end the day with their grade level cohort to lessen exposure.
- Students will be divided into teams/cohorts alphabetically to keep families on the same schedule.
- **We will not be able to coordinate with the HS as they have changed their schedule to a different model which we believe is not best suited for our students.**



Breakdown of Weekly Schedule

Student Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •½ Integrated Preschool •General Education Student •Resource Room Students 	Virtual Day	A Team	B Team	A Team	B Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Full day Preschool Disabled Students (PALS) • Students with Special Needs in self-contained rooms (Lincoln & TJ MD classes, TJ LLD Class) 	C Team 8:30am-1:00pm	C Team	C Team	C Team	C Team
Optional Total Remote Learning					

****District Staff will be in person every day.
All person instructions days will have a 1pm for student.***

More Information Regarding In-Person Days

- **In person days will focus on core content subjects (Math, English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies) and end at 1pm. In addition, students will receive instruction in one special area subject daily.**
- **No lunch will be served.**
- Students will spend the day with their designated cohorts while content area teachers as well as most special area teachers and support staff will move around the buildings to provide instruction and support
- Designated students (Resource room, ELLs, and those who receive certain reading interventions) will be pulled out to receive services.
- Other interventions like WIN will be “pushed in”.
- Classrooms for now will look quite different as furniture and other items will be removed to support social distancing and air flow. Each student will be assigned a desk or table seat that is only used by that student the entire week.
- Teachers will be encouraged to take advantage of outside venues like the Outdoor classroom and surrounding areas whenever possible.
- This schedule will be evaluated in the middle of October to determine if any revisions are required and if more students could move into the C Team category.

More Information Regarding Virtual Days

- **Virtual days will support in-person instruction with flipped/blended learning. Each afternoon, teachers will be available to connect and meet with students virtually.**
- **In addition since in-person days will focus on core content subjects, teachers will use virtual days for the delivery of some special area subjects.**
- To assist students and parents, the district will be using Google classroom as the main distance learning platform so that there will be a single streamlined sign-in platform.
- When at home, students will be required to sign in daily.
- The Monday virtual schedule will be used for cohort teachers (both grade and content level) to connect with students virtually as a whole group in order to review previous content matter and preview upcoming material. In addition, teachers will be able to set up meetings with individual students or small groups/classes, or provide interventions, instruction or special services online. The virtual schedule will also provide time for Band, G&T, Chorus, etc. when possible.
- The district is in the process of working with BoroKids as well as other local day care providers to help parents and staff who may be in need of childcare.
- The district while committed to supporting families who wish to choose a total Virtual Option is awaiting guidance from the state.

Support Services and Wrap Around Support

- All students will be tested and assessed once school starts to determine their needs especially following last spring's closure including new K students.
- Multi-tiered systems of support will implement required interventions and referral services for students through individual schools' I&RS teams.
- The district will continue to provide educational programs and related services for students with disabilities in their respective settings both in-person and virtually as appropriate.
- The needs of targeted groups like special education, 504, ELL, At-risk and Gifted and Talented students will continue to be met and served through appropriate educational programming both in-person and virtually.
- Feedback provided by staff will be used to assess and possibly adjust curriculum to identify learning gaps and how best to address them. District enrichment and remediation programs will be considered for designated students.
- Guidance counselors will be available for all members of the school community and be prepared to offer trauma support if needed.
- Continued focus will be placed on the integration of Social Emotional Learning into the curriculum as well as ensuring a positive School culture and climate to best support students, their families and the staff especially in transitioning back to the buildings both in-person and virtually through both established & new programs.

Other Considerations for Both Platforms

- Both schools will return to standard grading procedures to start the year.
- While teachers will continue to work with students on an individual basis, specific expectations will be set for both in-person and distance learning to raise the bar for academic achievement and increase accountability.
- More synchronous learning will be integrated into daily lessons to keep everyone engaged and connected.
- Feedback from all stakeholders (administration, staff, parents, students, Board of Education, community members, health officials) will continuously be used to assess and if needed modify practices, procedures and instructional models.
- All parties will need to be FLEXIBLE and THINK OUT OF THE BOX as “school” as we know it will be very different.

Student Flow, Entry & Exit and Common Areas

- **In common areas as well as classrooms, all students will wear face masks to protect themselves as well as staff. (updated 7/22)**
- Each child will be required to have at least one cloth mask daily and be prepared to put it on when needed.
- All staff will also be required to wear masks.
- Both buildings will limit visitors.
- Signage will be used universally to promote social distancing and traffic flow as well as to encourage mask wearing, good hygiene and hand washing.
- In the Middle School, students will not use hall or gym lockers.
- Arrival and dismissal times will be staggered and grade levels may be assigned to specific doorways to reduce traffic flow.

Screening

- Parents/guardians will be encouraged to symptom screen children at home each morning before the school day. Students with any symptoms should stay home and not come to school.
- Staff will also be encouraged to screen themselves prior to leaving for work and should stay home if ill.
- Both students and staff will be encouraged to go to the nurse immediately if feeling symptomatic.
- Homeroom/Cohort teachers will be trained to assess and visually screen students as they arrive each day and alert the nurse if there is concern.
- Students or staff that show any indicated COVID 19 symptoms will respectfully be placed in isolation until an adult or guardian can be contacted to pick them up, or in the case of staff, they can successfully drive or get themselves home.
- Screening procedures were developed based on consultation with school nurses, the school physician, and the local board of health as well as guidance based on literature from the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- These procedures will be shared with staff, parents and students via Online Reopen School Handbooks that are currently being developed.

Hygiene and Facilities Cleaning Practices

- All individuals in school will be encouraged to wash or sanitize their hands on a frequent basis.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers will be installed at all entrances and exits of the buildings as well as around the building. Pump bottles of sanitizer will be made available in common areas, hallways, and/or in classrooms .
- Three portable sinks/hand washing stations have been purchased for each school building to supplement the use of classroom and bathroom sinks.
- District staff has addressed and upgraded ventilation systems in both buildings especially at Lincoln to promote better air flow.
- In addition to general evening disinfecting, the custodial staff will clean targeted classrooms, instructional spaces and bathrooms during the day. Additional part time custodians will be hired to assist with the increased work load.
- District staff will be trained on necessary cleaning procedures, keep up with the supply of materials and keep abreast of current CDC guidelines.

Meals and Nutrition Distribution

- **With the change to a 1pm dismissal daily, LUNCH WILL NOT BE SERVED.**
- **There will however be a “working snack time” where students will be permitted to bring a small snack that will be eaten in the classroom. In addition to wiping their desks before and after eating, students will be encouraged to wash their hands both before and after the snack.**
- **Breakfast however will be served for all students attending in-person instruction.**
- **Meal distribution for those students who participate in the Free and Reduced program will begin immediately in conjunction with the start of school and will continue throughout as long as the district is following a hybrid model, a total virtual model, or until all students are on campus and receiving in-person instruction.**
- **Arrangements are currently being made with our contracted food service provider (Pomptonian) regarding the time, place and frequency of distribution.**
- **This will also apply for all students who choose a total virtual learning option.**

Transportation

- Face coverings will be required for all students who ride buses.
- Bus drivers and aides will also wear face coverings while on runs.
- Students will be assigned seats and will board and unload in a “first on, last off” fashion.
- In order to adhere to social distancing, multiple or staggered runs will most likely take place in the morning and the afternoon. Families from different buildings may be assigned to the same runs to maximize allowable and safe numbers.
- All buses will have a supply of hand sanitizers and wipes and will be disinfected after each run.
- Families who receive transportation, may sign a waiver to opt out of services.

Recess and Physical Education

- **Since the district has decided upon a 1pm dismissal for in-person days, recess will not be part of the schedule.**
- **Teachers, however, will be encouraged to take advantage of outdoor venues for instruction.**
- Physical education will take place, but look very different. It will be more focused on physical fitness and movement as use of equipment will be discouraged.
- Whenever possible, physical education teachers will take advantage of outside venues.
- We will be asking all students to come to school each day “PE Ready”.

Field Trips, Extra-Curricular Activities and Use of Facilities

- **Field Trips** are currently on hold for the 20-21 school year. Teachers will be encouraged to explore virtual and online options.
- **Extra-Curricular activities** are also on hold and will be addressed on an individual basis pending the nature of the activity and the ability of the group to social distance or meet/work virtually. That goes for sports as well.
- **Use of facilities** if any, will be very limited to essential groups, such as childcare. Moving forward, all groups will have to adhere to district guidelines and protocols.

Technology to Support Instruction

- All students K-8 will be provided with Chromebooks to work at school and at home.
- Distribution dates for Lincoln students and TJ entering 4th grade will be scheduled.
- All students will be required to bring their devices back and forth to school when they attend in person and be responsible to charge them nightly.
- To support students and their families, the district is planning for Virtual Parent Academies as well as providing online resources and videos regarding our chosen platforms.



Upcoming Time Lines Moving Forward

- Finalize details of the overall plan and submit to County and State for approval
- Share plan with families and staff no later than the week of 8/3.
- Ask families to inform their respective principals about their intentions no later than 8/10.
- Principals prepare class lists aligned with Hybrid model and share with families by 8/17.
- Provide staff with appropriate professional development to support both learning platforms as well as health and safety precautions.
- Develop 3 Online handbooks based on the plan to set clear expectations for students, parents & staff.
- Schedule virtual Orientations for Kindergarten and 4th grade parents as well as Parent Academies for the 1:1 Initiative for grades K-8.

Please be aware any district plans can change at any moment pending directives from the Governor's Office and/or local Health officials