

Rockaway Borough Public Schools

Reopening School Plan



September 2020

ROCKAWAY BOROUGH REOPEN SCHOOL PLAN--DRAFT

District Contact Information

Superintendent	Phyllis Alpaugh	pa@rockboro.org
Supervisor of Curriculum & Instruction	Jamie Argenziano	jargenziano@rockboro.org
Lincoln Elementary Principal	Milissa Dachisen	mdachisen@rockboro.org
Thomas Jefferson Principal	David Waxman	dwaxman@rockboro.org
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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

On June 26, 2020, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) published “The Road Back – Restart and Recovery Plan for Education” (NJDOE Guidance), a Guidance document to assist New Jersey school districts to develop, in collaboration with community stakeholders, a Restart and Recovery Plan (Plan) to reopen schools in September 2020 that best fits the school district’s local needs. The NJDOE Guidance presents information for New Jersey public school districts related to four key subject areas: Conditions for Learning; Leadership and Planning; Policy and Funding; and Continuity of Learning.

The Rockaway Borough Board of Education Restart and Recovery Plan (Plan) has been developed to be consistent with the requirements in the NJDOE Guidance with consideration to the school district’s local needs in order to ensure school(s) in the district reopen safely and are prepared to accommodate students’ unique needs during this unprecedented time.

To ensure consistency with respect to the health and safety of school communities across the State, the NJDOE Guidance speaks specifically to health and safety measures identified as “anticipated minimum standards.” These “anticipated minimum standards” are items the NJDOE Guidance recommends a school district incorporate into the Plan as definite components related to health, safety, and operations. Through this established set of Statewide standards, the NJDOE can ensure the State’s educational health does not come at the expense of public health. The “anticipated minimum standards” in the NJDOE Guidance are listed and have been incorporated into the school district’s locally developed Plan.

The NJDOE Guidance also provides “considerations” that may help school officials in strategizing ways to adhere to the “anticipated minimum standards”, but do not represent necessary components of the Plan. These “considerations” are not listed in the school district Plan, but school officials have reviewed and incorporated the “considerations” included in the NJDOE Guidance when developing the Plan.

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The NJDOE Guidance uses the term “should” throughout the document when referencing “anticipated minimum standards ... that school districts should incorporate into their reopening plans as definitive components related to health, safety, and operations.” Therefore, those provisions in the NJDOE Guidance listed as “anticipated minimum standards” have been interpreted to be required components in the Plan.

The NJDOE Guidance uses the term “school districts” or “schools” or “districts” when referring to the completion of tasks. For example, “districts must develop a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfection.” This Plan assigns the responsibility for completing tasks to “school officials” which would be the Superintendent of Schools or a designee of the Superintendent of Schools. The NJDOE Guidance requires a Board Policy to address several elements outlined in the NJDOE Guidance. The Board of Education has adopted Board Policy 1648 – Restart and Recovery Plan that includes the policies required in the NJDOE Guidance.

This Plan is aligned with the requirements outlined in the NJDOE Guidance while including school district’s unique and locally developed protocols to ensure school(s) in the district reopen safely and are prepared to accommodate staff and students' unique needs during this unprecedented time. Also included in the Appendices section is a chart that includes all websites and outside guidance information that are listed in the NJDOE Guidance.

The requirements outlined in the NJDOE Guidance and incorporated into this Plan are controlled by Executive Order of the Governor of New Jersey and are subject to change.

This plan addresses all ten (10) of the critical areas of operation as identified in The Road Back as well as ways the district will address the Continuity and Conditions of Learning.

1. General Health and Safety Guidelines
2. Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms
3. Transportation
4. Student Flow, Entry, Exit and Common Areas
5. Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms
6. Contact Tracing
7. Facilities Cleaning Practices
8. Meals
9. Recess/Physical Education
10. Field Trips, Extracurricular Activities, & Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours

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Reopening Committee

In mid-May, the district formed a Reopen School Committee composed of a variety of school community stakeholders to undertake the challenge of reopening of schools for the 2020-21 school year. The committee membership was open to any interested individuals willing to serve and consists of 40 + representatives from both the district and community.

The vision was simple and clear: To safely reopen schools in an inclusive manner addressing academic, social emotional, health/wellness, facility and technological needs.

In conjunction with guidance from the state and local health officials, six different subcommittees were formed to collect data and drive decisions based on district input as well as direction from the Governor's The Road Back. They include the following:

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.

Consideration and initial discussions were also given to what these components might look like in different educational scenarios so the district would be potentially prepared and ready in regards to future health situations around the state as directed by both state and local mandates.

- All students in the physical building
- Some students in physical buildings with some virtual
- All students virtual
- Intermittent virtual

After meeting initially as a whole, the subcommittees met numerous times on their own with chairpersons reporting back their findings. The membership consists of the following individuals:

Phyllis Alpaugh	Superintendent
Sally Ascoli	Administrative Assistant to Superintendent
Bill Stepka	Business Administrator
Dave Waxman	Thomas Jefferson Middle School Principal
Nicole Fernandez	Thomas Jefferson Administrative Assistant
Milissa Dachisen	Lincoln School Principal
Jamie Argenziano	Supervisor of Curriculum & Instruction
Shaun Reyes	Technology Coordinator
Mike Klein	Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds
Tim Yobs	Assistant to Maintenance Supervisor
Nancy Beiermeister	Payroll and Transportation Coordinator
Linda Savercool	Thomas Jefferson Nurse
Dr. Jon Bonnet	School Physician
Alexa Barbone	Thomas Jefferson Guidance Counselor
Kate De Santis	Lincoln School Guidance Counselor
Christine Matrisciano	District Occupational Therapist

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Lisbeth Schnurman	District Speech Therapist
Michelle Lawton	District contracted BCBA
Kerri Iapicca	Parent Representative
Rosely Caliendo	Parent Representative
Karen Walter	Board of Education
Mark Rogalsky	Law Enforcement, Class III Officer

LINCOLN SCHOOL TEACHERS

• Carol Coulther	Special Ed/Resource Room
• Jeri Hurley	ESL
• Sharon Izzo	3 rd grade
• Mary Leslie	Preschool
• Jenny Marsh	Reading Specialist
• Nicole McCarter	WIN
• Maryann Medore	2 nd grade
• Aileen Schumacher	3 rd grade
• Christine Savini	Special Ed/Resource Room
• Mihaela Tuluca	2 nd grade
• Dodi Yobs	1 st grade

LINCOLN SCHOOL PARAPROFESSIONALS

- Rosely Caliendo
- Eileen Garbarini
- Judy Julian

THOMAS JEFFERSON TEACHERS

• Chrstitine Capen	5 th /6 th grade Social Studies
• Nicole Dilizia	Resource Room/Special Ed
• Kelli Fowler	4 th grade
• Helena Holmes	ESL
• Tara Keegan	Resource Room/Special Ed
• Monica Koerner	6 th grade ELA
• Cindy O'Brien	8 th grade ELA
• Mike Onischuk	PE/Health
• Sherry Rich	4 th grade
• Diane Rounsaville	District Media Specialist/Librarian

THOMAS JEFFERSON PARAPROFESSIONALS

- Jeff Burke
- Jean Swanick

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General Overview

The Rockaway Borough Public School District has developed a Hybrid Plan as an option for the district to re-open buildings and provide “in-person” educational experiences for students, while still addressing the health and safety of all parties. This “Hybrid” plan will cycle students through a schedule that will include two “in-person” instructional days and two “distance learning” days. Students will be evenly divided, by grade level, into two groups, resulting in approximately one half of the student population on site, per day. In-person instructional days will begin at 8:20am for the Middle School and 8:30am for the Elementary School. Both will end at 1:00pm. To provide staff adequate time to connect and support students, an all Virtual Day on the onset of the school week each Monday will be used for staff to connect virtually with all students as well as provide interventions and supplementary instruction. Staff will also take advantage of Mondays to collaborate and plan together for the coming week as well as share much needed feedback to drive future instruction. Priority to scheduling, when possible, will be provided to families with multiple children.

Socially Distant Classrooms:

The hybrid model will allow Rockaway Borough to follow the Governor’s directives to reopen schools for in-person instruction. By reducing the amount of students on campus by approximately 50% each day, classroom settings would house between 8-14 students daily. These numbers would attempt to provide students and staff more space to socially distance.

Instructional Highlights

While still not comparable to “normal” school days, this hybrid model permits in-person instruction to smaller cohorts until health conditions permit the return of all students.

During in-person instructional days, teachers will focus on core content subjects such as English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies with the delivery of one special area subject daily. All other Special area classes will be addressed via virtual platforms.

In addition to addressing students’ academic needs, the district will continue to address the social emotional needs of students, their families and those of the staff as well.

Upon return to school, all students will be screened with the resulting data used to drive both individual and group instruction as well as determine students’ needs for the coming year.

Students will continue to receive all designated support services, wrap around services and targeted interventions in a variety of methods.

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Virtual Mondays

The Monday virtual schedule will be used for cohort teachers (both grade and content level) to connect and meet with students virtually as a whole group in order to review previous content matter and preview upcoming material. It will be synchronous in nature with time blocks designated to certain subject areas or classes. In addition, teachers will be able to set up meetings and or classes with individual students or small groups to provide additional instruction, interventions or special services. The virtual schedule may also provide time for special area subjects such as Band, G&T, Chorus, etc. to meet with their students.

Mondays will also be used to help bridge the connections between students in both A and B cohorts as well as all other students who have chosen total virtual learning platforms. It will also be used to address both academic and social emotional progress. As per our overall proposed plan, certain targeted special education students scheduled for every day programming will attend in-person classes on Monday.

Staff will also take advantage of Mondays to collaborate and plan together for the coming week as well as share much needed feedback to drive future instruction. Staff will be on site on Mondays and will work virtually with individual or small groups of students from the school.

The 10 Critical Areas of Operation

Critical Area of Operation #1 - General Health and Safety Guidelines

In accordance with state law and guidelines, medical advisement, and input from legal counsel, provisions will be made for High Risk Staff. Protocol for will be developed on an individual basis.

Protocols to address the needs of High Risk Students will be developed in consultation with students, families, physicians, the school nurse, the Guidance counselor, appropriate Child Study Team members, and the building principal.

Critical Area of Operation #2 - Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms

Social Distancing in Instructional and Non-Instructional Rooms

Classrooms will be set up to allow for social distancing. Unnecessary furniture, rugs and classroom items will be removed to create more space and better airflow. Desks and tables will be spaced apart with students facing all in the same direction. Students will also be assigned seats so that there is only one occupant per desk or designated table spot throughout the week. When seasonally appropriate, teachers will be encouraged to take advantage of outdoor spaces for instruction around the campus.

Social distancing signage and floor marking have been purchased and will be placed in hallways and larger areas such as entrances and exits.

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Plexiglass partitions have been purchased for the main offices in each building, the guidance offices, the nurses' offices, therapy rooms and a number of classroom and instructional spaces to support both social distancing as well as the possible spread of the virus.

The Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds has worked with the custodial staff to ensure that indoor facilities have adequate ventilation and circulation through the use of workable windows with screens and the maintenance of all building exhaust fans.

Shared objects will be limited when possible or sanitized between uses. Students will be encouraged to store their belongings (pens, pencils, crayons, etc.) in individually labeled containers, pencil boxes, cubbies, etc. or in their backpacks. For certain classes or grades, individual toy boxes or workboxes will be created. Extra attention will be given to clean and sanitize rooms and equipment where therapies are conducted and multiple tools are used for communication, mobility and instruction.

Procedures for Hand Sanitizing

- All individuals in school will be encouraged to wash or sanitize their hands on a frequent basis including some if not all of the following situations:
 - At the start of the day when entering the classroom
 - Before and after snack or lunch
 - After using the toilet or helping a student use the toilet
 - When students come in from outdoor play or recess
- To support hand washing, three portable sinks/hand washing stations have been purchased for each school building and will be located around the halls and be made available for student and staff use throughout the day to supplement classroom and bathroom sinks. In addition, hand sanitizer dispensers have been 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 where sinks for hand washing are not available.
- In addition to general evening disinfecting, the custodial staff will clean targeted classrooms, instructional spaces, bathrooms and "high touch areas" during the day to curb the spread of possible germs.

Critical Area of Operation #3 – Transportation

As the district transports only 7% of its students, bussing will continue for those students and families eligible for busing based on their distance from the campus as well as those students where transportation is part of the Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Depending on the amount of eligible students and their designated school building, bussing routes may be staggered to ensure social distancing. On all bus runs, students will be assigned seats and required to wear face coverings to better support safety especially where social distancing is not possible. Bus drivers and bus aides will also be required to wear face coverings. All district buses will be disinfected to the maximum extent practicable following best practices for cleaning and disinfecting of vehicles used for transporting students.

To ensure safety for all parties, the district will encourage parents to self-screen their children each morning before they get on the bus.

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As bus routes and times may be staggered, any families who receive bussing may opt out of transportation services by signing a waiver. Also families from different buildings may be assigned to the same runs to maximize allowable and safe numbers.

Below is a link to the district bus waiver.

[Waiver - Student Transportation.doc](#)

Critical Area of Operation #4 - Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas

As per recent directive of the Governor, all students, staff and visitors will be required to wear face coverings.

Both district schools will limit traffic in the hallways and use signage to help students and staff keep necessary social distance. Both schools will also post signs that support good health practices like washing hands, wearing masks in appropriate places, and staying home when feeling ill or presented with COVID-19 symptoms.

In addition, markings and cones will be used to help support social distancing outside of buildings during arrival and dismissal times.

In addition, certain grade levels in each building will be assigned specific doorways and times for both arrival and dismissal daily.

Certain Bathroom times will be assigned to stagger hall traffic. In the same vein, middle school students will not use lockers. To support social distancing, Lincoln School will establish UP and DOWN pathways on stairways as indicated by appropriate signage. In general, the creation of A/B cohorts will substantially limit the amount of students in the building on a given day.

In both buildings, staff will be used to help monitor hallway traffic as well as use of common restrooms.

Critical Area of Operation #5 - Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms

As per the Governor's directives, the Rockaway Borough School District will plan to safely and respectfully screen students and employees for symptoms of and history of exposure to COVID-19 when apparent. Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 will be respectfully isolated from others. If a school district becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in a district facility tests positive for COVID-19, district officials must immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.

- 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 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. If not family members or emergency contacts will be notified.

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- Designated isolation rooms will be established in each school building along with the necessary supervision if needed to monitor students or staff. In Lincoln, the designated space will be the adjoining room to the existing nurse's office on the second floor, and in Thomas Jefferson, it will be Rm 132.
- Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 may not return to school until they are cleared by a physician and have quarantined for the appropriate time as per CDC guidelines.
- 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 and the CDC.
- **These procedures will be shared with both staff and students via our Online Reopen School Handbooks.**
- Recognizable symptoms include the following:
 - Fever or chill
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea

Face Coverings

- All school staff and visitors will be required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health or if the individual is under two years of age.
- Students will also be required to wear face coverings and are required to do so, unless doing so would inhibit the student's health. Staff will work with students to support this important safety practice and provide "mask breaks" when appropriate especially for younger students.
- The district has ordered PPE equipment such as gloves and face coverings for use in the buildings and will provide face coverings for those individuals (both students and staff) who do not have proper face coverings on a daily basis. Parents, however, have been asked to make sure their children have adequate face coverings.
- Partitions and face shields will also be provided for certain staff and rooms in order to best support instruction and communication, but also taking into account required safety precautions.

Critical Area of Operation #6 - Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is the process used to identify those who have come into contact with people who have tested positive for many contagious diseases, including COVID-19. It is a long-standing practice and is an integral function of local health departments.

- The Rockaway Borough School District will work closely to cooperate with local officials by collecting and providing information regarding employees and/or students who test, or have tested positive in the past in order to help support the contact tracing process locally, but more importantly help support the spread of the virus.

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- District nurses who will act as liaisons with local health officials as well as provide staff with the necessary information to support all contract tracing efforts.
- The NJDOE will credit district nurses with six hours of training upon completion of the Johns Hopkins University's COVID -19 Contract Tracing Course.

Critical Area of Operation #7 - Facilities Cleaning Practices

In preparation to the reopening of school, the Custodial staff under the direction of the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds will maintain campus facilities in the following manner:

- Continue with established district facility disinfection procedures.
- Work with administration to limit and/or monitor people in the buildings as well as enforce all necessary social distancing protocols.
- Maintain an inventory of supplies for disinfecting procedures and the handling of ill students, faculty and staff as well as continue to explore the use of newly introduced products and procedures.
- Provide district custodial staff with appropriate guidance and professional development to support any changes in protocol and disinfecting as dictated by local and state officials.
- Keep current with the most updated CDC guidance to identify and revise any designated courses of action as well as share pertinent information with all stakeholders.
- In addition, the district has hired two (2) additional part-time custodians to aide in daily and evening cleaning and disinfecting.

Critical Area of Operation #8 – Meals

Since currently the district is planning to run on an early dismissal schedule, there will be no lunch period for students. Should conditions improve and a decision be made to allow schools to return to a full day schedule, including a lunch period, lunch times shall be staggered or students shall be assigned to eat in classrooms to provide for social distancing.

When there is in-person instruction, however, both schools will serve breakfast each morning in their respective cafeterias prior to the start of school.

At the present time, recess periods will also not be provided in accordance with the early dismissal schedule.

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.

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.

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- Eligible students will be able to pick up their meals for the week at Thomas Jefferson Middle School every Monday.
- For students/families who are unable to pick up the meals, meals may be dropped off utilizing district buses and support staff.
- All students who choose to remain home and receive total virtual instruction will also be eligible for free and reduced benefits.

Critical Area of Operation #9 – Recess/Physical Education

Recess

Under the proposed schedule for reopening, recess periods will not be provided. If, at some point in the future, schools are able to provide a recess period, recess will be staggered by groups and thus, may occur throughout the day and based on individual teacher schedules. In the case of inclement weather, recess will be held indoors, but still will allow students time to unwind and move around within the classroom. To support recess in general, teachers will be provided with a variety of resources that can be used in either venue. If playground equipment is used, staff must disinfect equipment and other shared items between uses. In general, however, use of shared equipment will be discouraged.

Physical Education

During the hybrid schedule, students will continue to receive physical education instruction both in person and virtually. During in-person instruction physical education may take place in the gymnasium with students adhering to social distancing with an emphasis on personal fitness as the use of shared sports equipment will be limited at this time. If equipment is used however, it will be properly sanitized after each use. Whenever possible, physical education classes will be held outdoors with a focus on physical activity so students are encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather.

In the Middle School to assist with social distancing, traditional locker rooms will be closed and students will not change for physical education, but rather be encouraged to wear comfortable clothes and safe footwear/sneakers that will facilitate both physical activity and exercise. All students will be encouraged to come to school “PE Ready” each day.

Critical Area of Operation #10 - Field Trips, Extra-Curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours

- While COVID-19 precautions are in effect, there will be no physical field trips, but rather teachers will take advantage of virtual opportunities to visit sites and explore places like museums, historic sites, local places of interest, etc.
- Resumption of extra-curricular activities will begin gradually based on the activity itself as well as the district/school’s ability to properly social distance participants and or work virtually. Any activities, however, that involve large groups or gatherings, such as concerts, drama productions, talent shows, etc. will be postponed for the immediate future pending guidance from the state and local health authorities.

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- For the upcoming school year and in conjunction with COVID-19, if district buildings are closed for instruction, all uses of facilities will also be closed to outside groups. When students are receiving in-person instruction, minimal use of district buildings will be allowed in order to minimize the spread of infection and the need to disinfect and sanitize facilities. Priority will be given to groups that directly support instruction and families such as child-care. All external community organizations, however, that are given use of school facilities must follow district guidance on health and safety protocols.



Conditions of Learning

Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports

School Counselors/CST/Educational Specialists: School counselors and CST members will be available via Google Hangouts and “In-Person” as needed. Ed Specialists may use their time for virtual conferencing with students, IEP meetings, etc. School Counselors will be reaching out to students who are not turning in assignments or checking in to ensure that all students have access to instructional materials. The counselors will also follow up on teacher concerns expressed about individual students. Case managers as well as nursing staff may be reaching out for wellness checks as determined by the student’s individualized Health Plan, 504, or IEP. Clear and constant communication will be emphasized to ensure parents and guardians are aware of issues that arise and that they can be addressed in a timely manner.

Special Education Related Service Providers: In addition to regular “In-Person” services with social distancing practices and precautions engaged, related service providers such as Speech, Physical and Occupational Therapists, as well as Reading Specialists and Interventionists will provide students with services virtually on designated afternoons and Mondays.

The district will also provide specialized equipment and PPEs to therapists to ensure the safety of both therapists and students. OT/PT equipment will be disinfected/cleaned between use.

Special Education Instructional Staff Assistants: Staff assistants/aides will be present in all classrooms, both virtual and in person to provide the necessary supports as mandated by IEP and will be required to check in with their teachers daily. Staff assistants will also complete professional development through NJ Safe Schools and GCN.

Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities/OOD: Students will be transported to their placement when open. Transportation Services Waivers will be also be offered to student families. The placement will be responsible for coordinating services for distance/“in-person” learning. District case managers will oversee student progress.

Some specialized IEP driven programs will be scheduled to attend “in-person” instruction daily with consideration for others pending numbers in the future.

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Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments

- Prior to the end of the 2019-20 school year, grade level and content area teachers were asked to review curriculum to identify areas of concerns and possible academic gaps that will need to be addressed for the coming school year. Grade levels were also asked to share information regarding curriculum covered prior to shifting to distance learning, standards covered during distance learning, and content/standards unable to be covered due to the pandemic.
- Benchmark assessments for learning and diagnostics such as Renaissance, IXL, Linkit!, Nessy, etc. will be administered to all students including new kindergarten students in September and will be used to assess students needs both individually and as a whole.
- Grading will return to “pre-COVID-19” systems.
- Ongoing analysis and student progress will be monitored using lesson and unit plans as well as assessment data.
- In addition, district enrichment and remediation programs (Ready Set Go, Beyond the Bell, W.I.S.E, etc.) will be considered for designated students and may be delivered either in-person or virtually.
- To better support both in-person instruction and distance learning, teachers have been asked to share best practices as well as critique other instructional strategies.
- Input from parent and staff surveys as well as the district Reopen School committee has and will continue to be used to drive scheduling and instruction.
- Moving forward, all pertinent data and information will be used to better guide instruction upon return to school in September.
- Attendance for in-person as well virtual days will be taken daily in accordance with state requirements and district policies. Individual accommodations may be implemented for students impacted by the virus and other surrounding circumstances.

Support Services and Wrap Around Services

- Once back in school, multi-tiered systems of supports 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.
- 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
- 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. See below resources for contact information:

Borokids

Direct Contact—Mrs. Brenda Budd
201-400-7570 bab364@aol.com

Little Learner Academy

89 US 46, Denville, NJ 07834
973-625-2800 littlelearneracademy.com

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Little Learner Rockaway

25 Green Pond Road, Rockaway, NJ 07866
973-983-0600 littlelearnersnj.com

Professional Development will be provided to the staff including, but not limited to the following topics:

- Learning loss especially for high risk and vulnerable populations (students with disabilities, ELLs, etc.)
- Effective use of data to identify learning gaps
- General health and safety guidelines
- Screening for COVID-19 symptoms
- Health and Social emotional well-being
- Best practices for distance learning

Upon return to school, individual building SciP committees will meet to discuss continued professional development needs.

Equitable Access to Technology and Connectivity

- To ensure the continuity of instruction and better assist students and their families to stay connected in both virtual and hybrid-learning models, **all students in K-8 will be issued a Chromebook**. Since all students in grades 5th-8th already have Chromebooks, distribution of devices for students in K-4 will take place prior to the start of school in September.
- To familiarize as well as assist both parents and students regarding the use of devices and district guidelines and policies, Parent Academies will be held either in person or virtually as dictated by current health guidelines for all families with students in grades K-8.
- Tutorials and videos highlighting specific technological platforms and applications will also be posted and made available to both parents and students for reference and guidance.
- All students will be responsible for their particular devices and will need to bring them back and forth to school every day they are present for in-person instruction. Students are recommended to have a backpack with a laptop/device sleeve for protection.
- The District IT Coordinator will continue to be available for tech support during given school hours via gentech@org for both students and staff.
- In addition to Google Classroom, a varied list of software and tech platforms already in use within the district will be available to both students and staff from home with the possibility of adding additional resources when needed.
- As part of regular district protocol, additional firewalls, Go Guardian and other monitoring procedures are already in place to provide enhanced cyber-safety and to monitor any potentially unsafe student activity.
- All professional staff has been issued a district laptop with other devices available for support staff as well.

In addition, a number of other provisions will be taken to ensure equitable access for all students.

- District officials will continue to coordinate with the Regional High School, and surrounding sending districts in regards to the purchase and placement of “hot spots” around the community.
- Local libraries have been contacted regarding the availability of possible Internet services for students in need.
- Information regarding free Internet service will be shared with parents and if needed, the district will assist with its delivery especially for non-English speaking parents.
- If needed, Title funds will be used to help families secure WiFi and Internet access.

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Scheduling of Students Rockaway Borough Hybrid Schedule

Student Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ day Integrated Preschool • General Education Students • Resource Room Students 	Virtual	A Team	B Team	A Team	B Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full day Preschool Disabled Students (PALS) • Students w/Special Needs in Self-Contained Rooms (Lincoln & TJ MD Classes, TJ LLD Class) 	C Team	C Team	C Team	C Team	C Team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full time Remote Learning Option 	RL	RL	RL	RL	RL

In order to best keep students, their families and the staff safe and adhere to the required social distancing protocols, the Rockaway Borough School district has selected a Hybrid Cohort model to deliver in-person instruction come September. The basic tenet of this model is to identify small groups of students and keep them together (cohorting) to ensure that student and staff groups are as static as possible by having the same group of children stay with the same staff as much as possible to limit the mixing of groups.

All in-person instruction days will begin at approximately 8:30am and end at 1:00pm with members of the A cohort reporting for in-person instruction on Tuesdays and Thursdays and members of the B cohort reporting for in-person instruction on Wednesdays and Fridays. (Times and points of entry may be staggered for grade levels to support social distancing.) Students in Team C will report for in-person instruction Mondays through Fridays.

- This will eliminate the need for lunch as well as provide the afternoon for teachers to meet and connect with students who are working at home virtually.
- Monday will be a virtual day for most students. The in-person schedule on Monday will also run from 8:20am-1:00 pm for the Middle School and 8:30am-1:00pm for the Elementary School with no lunch served in either building. Mondays will be a MEETING day in which teachers will be able to virtually connect with all students as well as provide time for small group instruction, interventions, and support services. Teachers will use Monday afternoons for collaboration as well as preparation for the coming week.
- The choice to pursue a hybrid A/B day allows the districts to bring students into the buildings for in-person instruction, but still complies with recommended social distancing guidelines while offering continuity of instruction throughout the week. The choice of Monday as the given Virtual Day was chosen to align with the local high school and other sending districts.
- Assignment to cohorts will be coordinated to keep families on the same A/B schedule.
- Special consideration will be given to some of our high-risk populations regarding the return to school and the scheduling of in-person days.

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- Families will have the option of selecting in-person or remote instruction. Once the school year begins, changes in the choice of learning platforms may take place within the established guidelines.

Information Regarding In-Person Instruction

- 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.
- In-person instruction in both schools will focus on Core content subjects such as ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies.
- The middle school day will consist of seven (7) – forty (40) minute periods in which students will receive double blocks of ELA and Math and single blocks of Science and Social Studies daily. Their day will officially begin at 8:20 am and end at 1:00 pm.
- The elementary schedule will consist of six (40)– forty (40) minute periods in which students will receive double blocks of ELA and Math and a combined block of Science and Social Studies with the first half hour devoted to an online “morning meeting” to include both in-person and virtual students. Their day will officially begin at 8:30 and end at 1:00 pm.
- All students in both schools will also receive instruction in one special area subject daily with specials generally taking place in cohort classrooms with the exception of physical education.
- Designated students (Resource room, ELLs, and those who receive certain reading interventions) will be pulled out to receive services.
- Other inventions like WIN (What I Need) will be “pushed in” at the elementary level but will be delivered virtually for the middle school.
- Classrooms for now will look quite different as furniture and other items will be removed to support social distancing and airflow. 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 be moved into the C Team category as well as our ability to return back to a full day schedule pending health and safety conditions.

Information regarding Virtual Days

- Virtual days will support in-person instruction with flipped/blended learning and will focus on both core content as well as special area subjects.
- Since in-person instruction days will end at 1:00pm, teaching staff will be available in the afternoons starting at 1:45 pm to meet virtually with students regarding current course work.
- 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 sign-in platform.
- When at home, students will be required to sign in daily utilizing a designated Google form.
- Weekly lesson plan that students must follow, including all activities that must be completed, all resources and applications used, assessments that must be taken, and the times (and length of time) for live synchronous sessions for Virtual Mondays will be posted each week by Monday on teachers’ respective Google classrooms. This will help students and families understand the expectations for the

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week. Nevertheless, the teachers will still have the flexibility to adjust and change plans, if they believe it is in the best interest of their students' instructional program

Virtual Mondays

The Monday virtual schedule will provide a synchronous model that will be aligned with the delivery of instruction on in-person days and 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, submit or receive class assignments and participate in group discussions. The designated schedule will contain targeted blocks of time devoted to specific content areas/classes so that teachers will be able to meet with individual students or small groups/classes, to provide instruction, interventions or special services online. Team C students will continue to meet in person on Mondays.

The following are some expectations for students on Virtual Monday that we believe will enhance both instruction and engagement:

- Attend daily class meetings
- Arrive on time for virtual classes
- Come to virtual classes prepared with needed materials
- Follow rules for behavior during online class time
- Use conference features appropriately; mute, camera, messaging
- Participate in classroom discussions
- Complete online assignments in a timely manner

EXAMPLE OF A TYPICAL LINCOLN SCHOOL/ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN-PERSON SCHEDULE:

Homeroom	8:30-9:00	Morning Meeting
Period 1	9:00-9:40	ELA
Period 2	9:40-10:20	ELA
Period 3	10:20-11:00	Special
Period 4	11:00-11:40	Math
Period 5	11:40-12:20	Math
Period 6	12:20-1:00	Science/Social Studies
	1:00	Dismissal

EXAMPLE OF TYPE OF THOMAS JEFERSON/MIDDLE SCHOOL IN-PERSON SCHEDULE

Period 1	8:20-9:00	Science/HR in cohort
Period 2	9:00-9:40	Math
Period 3	9:40-10:20	Math
Period 4	10:20-11:00	ELA
Period 5	11:00-11:40	ELA
Period 6	11:40-12:20	Social Studies
Period 7	12:20-1:00	Special
	1:00	Dismissal

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*Virtual Monday schedules will mirror in-person schedules especially in regards to core content subjects so that all teachers will have designated blocks of times and opportunities to meet with students virtually. Attendance for each session will be taken.

Total Remote Instruction Schedule

In the event that a total closure of the school district is required and the Rockaway Borough School District has to instruct via remote lessons, the distance learning schedule will align with the same in-person class schedules especially in regards to core content subjects.

Teacher online remote office hours will be held Tuesday through Friday from 1:45-3:15pm. The student day will start at 8:20am (Thomas Jefferson) or 8:30am (Lincoln) and end at 1:00pm



Full-Time Remote Option

On July 24, 2020, the New Jersey Department of Education released guidance to local school districts with regard to the provision of a full-time remote learning option for families during the 2020-2021 school year. The guidance indicates that all students are eligible for full-time remote learning. Districts are directed to develop procedures for parents to submit a request to enroll their child(ren) in a fulltime remote program. The guidelines for the Rockaway Borough School District are as follows:

- 1) All parents electing this option must fill out **this form** no later than August 12, 2020. If we have not heard from parents by this date, we will assume that your child(ren) will be attending school in-person.
- 2) Any questions or concerns about the remote option should be directed to the respective building principal.
- 3) Any determinations regarding the need for an IEP meeting or amendment for students with disabilities will be made in conjunction with the student's case manager.

The proposed remote learning plan for district students is currently being finalized and will depend greatly upon how many students per grade level or building choose a total remote option. Needless to say, all remote students for now will be placed in grade level cohorts so if in the future they choose to return to in-person instruction, they will have a seat in an established classroom that adheres to social distancing. It will also provide remote students the opportunity to take part in virtual meetings for their designated grade or class and connect with grade level peers.

We recognize that circumstances may change over the course of the academic year and parents may wish for their children to transition to in-person attendance at school. The district has determined that in order to maintain consistency of instruction, these changes can be made only at the start of a new marking period.

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Notification of the desire to make such a change must be submitted in writing to the building principal ten (10) school days prior to the start of the new marking period. Any student who is attending school in-person and wants to transition to the fulltime remote option may only do so at the start of a new marking period by providing written notice to the principal with the same ten (10) day notice. Changes that might be necessitated by medical or other reasons will be evaluated on an ongoing case by case basis.

All students and parents who elect to participate in full-time remote learning will continue to receive correspondence and communication from the district and their child(ren)'s school via Oncourse Connect and K-12 alerts.

Staffing

Staff will play a major role in the success of reopening schools in September. So like students and parents, they will need clear communication regarding their expectations so they may best support learning and instruction. This might also include monitoring safe movement of students in hallways and other areas as well.

They themselves will also need support, guidance and applicable professional development to navigate the designated instructional platforms as well as the much-needed health and safety guidelines that will be put into place. **To assist staff in better understanding their roles and responsibilities during this reopening phase, a Staff Handbook will be created.**

With regard to in-person learning, instructional staff should:

- Reinforce social distancing protocol with students, co-teachers, and support staff
- Limit group interactions to maintain safety.
- Support school building safety logistics with regard to entering, exiting, and use of restrooms.
- Become familiar with district online learning systems and platforms standards-based lessons to meet the needs of student at various levels, ensuring versatility of lessons to apply to both in-person and hybrid learning environments
- Teachers will comply with district guidelines with regard to standards and expectations for ongoing virtual lesson contact with students.
- Develop predictable routines and structures for students while maintaining student engagement through varied instructional strategies/modalities.
- Provide regular feedback to students and families on expectations and progress.
- Set clear expectations for remote and in-person students.
- Assess student progress early and often and adjust instruction and/or methodology accordingly.
- Develop opportunities for real-time interactions with students (office hours, virtual meetings, etc.).
- Instruct and maintain good practice in digital citizenship for all students and staff.
- Administrators, supervisors, and instructional coaches shall support teachers in making necessary curricular adjustments and continuously improving the quality of instruction in remote and hybrid

Entire Staff and Faculty Meetings will be held virtually during the implementation of this Hybrid Model. Smaller groups meetings such as grade level, content area, PLCs, etc. may meet in person depending on the number of individuals and the given locale. Professional Development will be provided "virtually" or in small groups depending on the targeted group and the ability to maintain proper social distancing.

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Mentoring

Mentoring and Induction practices will continue in the district and be provided for all novice provisional teachers as well as experienced teachers new to the district in both a hybrid and fully remote learning environment. As per past practice, the district will post for 1:1 mentors for all provisional teachers, and “Buddies” for experienced teachers, with candidates selected based on their qualifications and pertinent needs of staff. Since the future of the school year is undetermined, emphasis will be placed on providing support and guidance to all parties especially in regards to working in a remote environment. Based on lessons learned last spring during the mandatory pandemic closure. Under the direction of the district’s *Beyond Mentoring* program, the following steps will be taken to best support staff and their endeavors as they begin their tenure in the district:

- Mentoring orientation will be held as always during New Teacher Orientation probably using a virtual platform to best meet current social distancing guidelines.
- Sharing of suggestions with all parties on how to best schedule individual meetings, and communication with each other and the group as a whole for both in-person and virtual learning environments as well as how best to observe each other in a COVID-19 world.
- The use of online collaborative tools such as Google Docs to remain connected as well as log in meetings and communications between paired individuals
- Scheduling of monthly *Beyond Mentoring* meetings to share ideas and support collegiality will take place in-person or via virtual platforms.

Athletics

At this time due to the uncertainty of health conditions and the proposed hybrid model, all interscholastic athletics like extracurricular activities, are on hold until further notice but 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. In preparation however, of resuming programming, students were encouraged to register over the summer and obtain the necessary health physicals.

Pandemic Response Teams

To centralize, expedite and implement COVID-19 related decision-making, each of the Rockaway Borough schools has established a school-based Pandemic Response Team comprised of varied individuals that will report to district-level administrators to ensure coordinated actions across the district. Each building principal will lead the team and act as a liaison to the Superintendent.

Below is a list of both schools’ Pandemic Response Teams:

	Lincoln Elementary School	Thomas Jefferson Middle School
Principal	Milissa Dachisen	David Waxman
Subject Area Chairperson	Jamie Argenziano	Jamie Argenziano
Teachers representing various grade levels & disciplines	Mary Leslie (Preschool) Elizabeth Hickman (Kindergarten) Dodi Yobs (1 st grade)	Kim Blackadar (4 th grade) Christine Capen (5 th grade) Joe Corbo (6 th grade)

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	Maryanne Medore (2 nd grade) Aileen Schumacher (3 rd grade) Christine Savini (Special ed)	Jenna Schreck (7 th grade) Cindy O'Brien (8 th grade) Janet Dobbs (Special ed) Ceil Isenberg (Special area)
Support staff	Eileen Garbarini	Jeff Burke
Child Study Team/ Support Services	Lisbeth Schnurman Michelle Lawton	Leslie Mozulay
School Counselor	Katelyn De Santis	Alexa Barbone
School Safety Team Member	Mike Jones	Alexa Barbone
School Safety Personnel	Officer Mark Rogalsky	Officer Mark Rogalsky
School Nurse	Denise Jacobus	Linda Savercool
Parent	Anita West	Margaret Truesdale
Custodian	Rob Lenahan	Mike Gibbons
Student representative	N/A	Kelly Zeman

The Pandemic Response Team is responsible for:

- Overseeing each school's implementation of the district's reopening plan, particularly health and safety measures, and providing safety and crisis leadership.
- Adjusting or amending school health and safety protocols as needed.
- Providing staff with needed support and training.
- Reviewing school level data regarding health and safety measures and the presence of COVID19 and reporting that data to the district as required.
- Developing and implementing procedures to foster and maintain safe and supportive school climates as necessitated by the challenges posted by COVID-19
- Providing necessary communications to the school community and to the district
- Creating pathways for community, family, and student voices to continuously inform the Team's decision-making.
- The Pandemic Response Team will meet regularly and provide the community with timely updates and any changes to protocols. As the needs of New Jersey communities evolve, Pandemic Response Teams will be well versed in creating pathways for community, family, and student voices to continuously inform the Team's decision-making. These teams will serve a critical role in building confidence and addressing concerns as they arise. The teams will ensure accurate, timely and transparent information is shared within the school community.