

# *FROM THE DESK OF Phyllis Alpaugh*

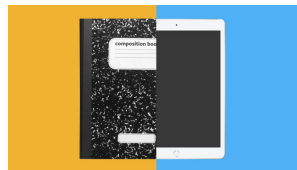


## SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

Rockaway Borough Schools  
July 2020

### PROPOSED SUMMER REFERENDUM PROJECTS MOVE AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

[CLICK HERE TO GET AN UPDATE ON HOW THE DISTRICT IS CONTINUING TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE REFERENDUM THIS SUMMER](#)



Dear Parents and Members of the Rockaway Borough Community,

I hope everyone is well and safe.

As many of you are aware, on June 24th, the Governor released his reopening school plan "The Road Back--Restart and Recovery Plan for Education" which provides guidance for New Jersey school districts regarding the safe reopening of schools for in-person instruction for September.

To best develop a plan that addresses academics as well as the safety and health of students, their families and staff, we formed a Reopen School Committee with a variety of stakeholders to begin the process. I want to openly thank our 40+ volunteers who have been meeting regularly since May to share ideas and investigate options as well as the Board of Education for their support and insight. On Tuesday evening July 21st, we presented our **proposed plan** at the Board of Education meeting that included essential points that address both academics as well as the necessary health and safety measures. Thank you so much to all who attended virtually or in person. Following that presentation, the Governor announced last Friday June 24th that all families may choose a full time remote learning option. Here are some of the key elements our proposed plan as well as some of the updates we are considering based on overall feedback:

- The district will follow a hybrid model with Monday reserved for virtual instruction for most students with in-person instruction focusing on core content subjects such as English Language, Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. We are currently in the process of placing students into A/B cohorts with the hope of keeping families in the same cohort.
- Half-day integrated preschool classes will attend AM/PM sessions twice a week with virtual instruction the other three days.

- Students in self-contained programs in both Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson will receive in person instruction Monday through Friday every week.
- Due to our concern to better address hybrid students working remotely as well as students choosing a total remote option, we plan to forego lunch on in-person days and dismissing students at 1:00 pm. This way teachers can utilize the afternoon to support and check in with students virtually on a daily basis.
- Also while we were hopeful in coordinating our assignment of cohorts with the high school, they have changed their proposed model and as a result, we have decided to stay with our original choice as it is more suitable for all our students.

In regards to safety, we will implement physical spacing measures in all classrooms, hallways and other common areas. **Although we will attempt to create social distancing of six feet whenever possible, unless a student or staff has a documented medical condition that precludes the use of face coverings, all students and staff will be required to wear masks in the building or on a bus at all times.** Additionally, we will build in time during the day for hand washing, appropriate mask "breaks", snack times, and any other necessary measures.

Once our plan is finalized and approved, we will share it with the community and be asking parents to let us know whether their children will be attending school in person or learning entirely remotely, so that building principals can prepare class schedules as well as prepare their respective buildings for our reopening in September. More information in particular will follow regarding the procedures for those families who choose full time remote learning options. In preparation for our return, here are a number of other things you can start to do to better prepare your family.

1. Purchase a thermometer so you can easily screen your child(ren) daily at home to confirm that they are free from all symptoms --including fever so that they are not coming to school ill.
2. Purchase or make several well-fitting, comfortable, but washable cloth face masks as your child will need a clean mask each day.
3. Work on building mask stamina with your children so they are comfortable when they return to school. (See the below article for more information and resources).
4. Continue to be positive and reinforce healthy habits with your family. Children often take cues on how to handle challenging situations from the adults in their lives. If they see you are calm hopefully they will be too.

I know this is a lot to process, and may not be the answers you are looking for, but hopefully the information in general will help you as a family to plan for the coming months. Please remember, any of our proposed plans are fluid and subject to change as we must follow directives from the Department of Education as well as local and state health officials. Also in making district decisions, we have tried to create programming and protocols that take into account the health and safety of all parties.

Many thanks always, for all your support, patience and understanding during this very trying and unprecedented time. As we move forward, I am confident that Rockaway Borough can work together to do what's best for our students, families and staff

Best wishes always,  
Phyllis Alpaugh

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## **Wearing a Mask Keeps Everyone Safe... So Be a Superhero and Wear One Too!**

In anticipation for this coming September and to ease your child(ren) into the projected routine, I would suggest (if you have not done so already) that you start practicing wearing a mask or face covering with them.

Even though wearing a face covering has become rather routine in today's world, for some children especially for younger ones, it still may be difficult and scary and create a bit of uncertainty that hopefully can be avoided with



practice and reinforcement. I know myself that I am still getting used to prolonged use, but know how important wearing the mask is to stopping the spread and keeping everyone safe and hopefully virus free. In addition to the "7 Quick Tips for Parents" , I am also including a short, but informative article that should help you start practicing with the Superheroes in your house.

### Getting Your Child to Wear a Mask

*Good luck and let's continue to work together to keep our Rockaway Borough family healthy and safe!*

## *Summer Reading Rewards Earn Cups of Water to Splash your Favorite Lincoln School Staff*

As a big proponent of literacy, I am so excited to share with you an update regarding our Summer Reading Initiative at Lincoln School. While the rest of the world is a bit crazy regarding Coronavirus, I am happy to report that our summer reading numbers at Lincoln are soaring and students are really engaged in reading this summer. Maybe it's some great literature or it may be that for every book or a chapter they read they can vote to add a cup of water that will be dumped on some of our Lincoln School staff when we return in September. The "lucky" staff that volunteered to be "splashed" include Principal Ms. Dachisen, her administrative assistant Mrs. Stockstill, Daytime custodian, Mr. Rob Lenahan and the Lincoln School Physical Education Teacher, Mr. Michael Jones.



So students keep reading as the program runs from June 15th through August 15th and Lincoln School Staff get your raincoats and umbrellas ready!

[For more information regarding these or other topics, feel free to contact me at pa@rockboro.org](mailto:pa@rockboro.org)

## SUMMER OF 2020 Just a reminder of some important pertinent announcements

Even though it's summer, don't forget to take advantage of online platforms to register or re-register for school. Here is a list of some platforms to get you started:

- Our annual **Re-registration** for students entering 3rd and 6th grades this year can be completed online for the first time through the FamilyID website. Please take advantage of the below links to go directly to the site: **3rd Grade Re-registration**

### **6th Grade Re-registration**

- Kindergarten and Preschool registration for 20-21 also continues on online. Use the following link to obtain more more information and get your child registered for September. **Kindergarten registration**





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