

THE ROAD FORWARD

The Road Forward: Operations Plan for the 2021-2022 School Year



Old Tappan Public School District Board of Education

Developed August 2021

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Appendix A

Vaccination

- A. Determine the vaccination status of students and staff.

According to documentation issued by the CDC and NJDOH, vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy. According to the CDC, vaccines are safe and effective at preventing COVID-19, can reduce the risk of people spreading COVID-19, and are effective against variants of the virus that causes COVID-19, including the Delta variant.

While vaccinations are not mandatory, they are an effective means to help prevent outbreaks within the school community. Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccination by consulting with your healthcare provider.

When conducting contact tracing, families may choose to inform the school nurse of a child's vaccination status, which will aid in determining the need for quarantine.

- B. Actively promote vaccination for all eligible students and staff.

When Bergen County hosts local vaccine sites, they will be shared with the community as information.

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Appendix B

Communication with the Local Health Department

- A. Maintain close communication with the Local Health Department in order to provide information and share resources on COVID-19 transmission, prevention, and control.
- B. Establish procedures for Local Health Department notification and response to COVID-19 illness in school settings.

School officials maintain consistent communication with our Department of Education, Local Health Department, New Jersey Department of Education, and our School Physician to determine appropriate local guidelines and protocols, share information and resources on COVID-19 transmission, and to establish procedures for response to COVID-19 illness in school settings.

The school community receives an e-mail alert, maintaining all anonymity, with each positive COVID case that affects the District.

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Appendix C

Mask Wearing Protocol

A. Address all mandatory Orders regarding the use of masks in schools.

In early August, Governor Murphy signed Executive Order 251 announcing that all students, faculty, staff, and visitors will be required to wear face masks indoors, in school buildings, for the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

We will continue to monitor guidance from the State and collaborate with the Health Department to monitor local data should districts be permitted to make decisions on the local level.

Mask breaks will be given to anyone who needs them. Gaiters and bandanas are not acceptable. We will continue to monitor and share updates as we receive them.

Masks are required on school buses as per the Federal Order.

Learn more about the proper use, removal, and washing of masks on the CDC website.

Generally, have at least two layers of washable, breathable fabric, completely cover your nose and mouth, and fit snugly against the sides of your face without gaps.

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Appendix D

Physical Distancing and Cohorting Protocols

- A. Implement physical distancing measures as an effective COVID-19 prevention strategy.
 - (1) Maintaining three feet of distance between students in classroom settings.
 - (2) Consider structural interventions within classrooms to aid with social distancing.
 - (3) Outside of the classroom, a school district should consider approaches to implement physical distancing.
- B. Address the use of cohorts or groups of students with dedicated staff who remain together throughout the day.

The District will continue to adhere to the latest NJDOE/NJDOH guidelines (*The Road Forward*, June 2021). “Consider maintaining three feet of distance between students in classroom settings to the extent possible while offering full-time, in-person learning to all students.”

Students will return to schools in un-cohorted formats. Social distancing protocols will be implemented as much as possible.

While our classrooms are being returned to their typical configurations, all instructional and non-instructional spaces will be configured to maintain physical distance to the maximum extent practicable while considering best instructional practices and the risk/benefit for the physical, mental, and social-emotional health of students and staff.

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Appendix E

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette Protocols

- A. Teach and reinforce hand washing.
- B. Encourage students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue if not wearing a mask.
- C. Maintain adequate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette supplies.

Fully functional hand sanitizer stations are located at main entrances in each building and throughout the schools. We have prepared and will maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol): in each classroom (for staff and children who can safely use hand sanitizer); at entrances and exits of buildings; near lunchrooms and toilets.

Hand hygiene opportunities will be provided during the school day. Students will be reminded to wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds:

1. Upon arrival to school and before leaving school;
2. Before and after eating;
3. After using the bathroom;
4. After blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing; and,
5. When hands are visibly soiled.

If washing with soap and water is not possible, it will be suggested to use alcohol-based hand sanitizer/wipes.

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Appendix F

Provision of Meals

- A. Implement layered prevention strategies to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in cafeterias or other group dining areas.

Lunch will operate as normal as possible. Students will be encouraged to spread out and use the outdoors during good weather. Students will be able to use the lunchrooms, additional spaces, and outdoors, as the administration has open. Lunch deliveries will be permitted and will be organized for distribution.

At the elementary school, snack will operate as it typically does and students will be encouraged to spread out and use the outdoors during good weather.

Hand hygiene will be encouraged during lunch and snack.

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Appendix G

Transportation Protocols

- A. Address the use of masks on school buses.
- B. Address mitigation strategies to reduce the risk of infection on a school bus.

Bus companies will provide transportation to eligible students and follow normal school schedules. Masks must be worn by all students who are able to do so before entering the bus. Students will follow the same protocol when boarding a bus as required to enter a school building. Students refusing to wear masks may lose their transportation privileges. Buses will be disinfected each time they return to the bus yard after morning routes are complete, and before the afternoon routes. When weather permits, windows will be opened. Masks are required on school buses as per the Federal Order.

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Appendix H

Cleaning, Disinfection, and Airflow

- A. Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are touched often; such as desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, phones, and toys at least daily.
- B. Improve airflow to the extent possible to increase circulation of outdoor air, increase the delivery of clean air, and dilute potential contaminants.

School officials will continue to adhere to existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures, and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise.

The custodians will disinfect all rooms every night. Adequate ventilation shall be ensured in indoor facilities, including operational heating and ventilation systems where appropriate. Filters must be maintained and changed according to manufacturer's recommendations. When weather allows, windows should be opened to the most reasonable extent possible to allow for greater air circulation when air conditioning is not in use, unless doing so poses a safety or health risk.

Use of Shared Supplies and Equipment:

Classroom materials, physical education supplies, and art supplies etc. will be used in accordance with pre-pandemic practices. Proper hand washing practices will be encouraged, and shared equipment will be cleaned and disinfected.

Cleaning and Disinfection:

All spaces will be cleaned daily by the custodial department using the following three-step process:

1. Remove soil, giving attention to high touch surfaces,
2. Use hospital-grade disinfectant on hard surfaces, and
3. Re-sanitize rooms with electrostatic spray applicators and disinfectant.

Appropriate cleaning will be completed before, during, and after lunch. While school is in session, all custodial staff will have access to disinfectant and a clean dry cloth and there will be dedicated custodians that will disinfect high touch areas. This will be used to continuously wipe down all high touch areas (e.g., doorknobs and push bars, water fountains, hand railings).

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Improving Airflow:

All room unit-ventilators and rooftop units are operable and in good repair. Units are maintained, and filters are changed per manufacturer's specifications. All windows are operable with opening restrictions for student and personnel safety. Air conditioner units and filters are maintained per manufacturer's specifications. Every instructional space has an air purifier and units are maintained and filters changed per manufacturer's specifications.

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Appendix I

Screening, Exclusion, and Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff Members

- A. Establish procedures to identify and respond to a student or staff member who becomes ill with COVID-19 symptoms.

Health Office Procedures:

School nurses are in regular contact with the School Physician and the Principals. When a student or staff member comes to the health office and presents symptoms typical of the COVID-19 disease, following the NJDOH guidelines, students will be placed safely and respectfully in isolation. This isolation will be supervised in a reasonable manner, maintaining appropriate physical distancing. Appropriate PPE will be worn to protect the staff member. The parent/guardian will be notified and instructed to pick up the child promptly. Should the parent/guardian not be reached, the emergency contact person will be contacted and notified to pick up the child. When the parent/guardian arrives at the school for pick up, the student will then be escorted out of the building maintaining a physical distance. For the health and safety of all, this pick-up must be completed efficiently. Upon being sent home, the student shall be in consultation with the family physician in order to determine the appropriate diagnosis and recommended treatment plan, which may result in a required COVID-19 test.

Definition of COVID-19 Compatible Symptoms:

As per *The Road Forward*, parents/guardians must 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.

For students with chronic illness, only new symptoms or symptoms worse than baseline should be used to fulfill symptom-based exclusion criteria.

When Illness Occurs in the School Setting:

Following the NJDOH guidelines, students and staff members with COVID-19 symptoms will be placed safely and respectfully in isolation. This isolation will be supervised in a reasonable manner, maintaining appropriate physical distancing, and

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appropriate PPE will be worn to protect the staff member. All school nurses are trained contact tracers and collaborate with the Health Department in this capacity.

Individuals with COVID-19 compatible symptoms will be sent home and referred to a healthcare provider. Persons with COVID-19 compatible symptoms should undergo COVID-19 testing.

Regardless of vaccination status, if a student or staff member experiences COVID-compatible symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, and tested for SARS-CoV-2.

Exclusion:

- Unvaccinated Close Contacts
 - Quarantine for 7 days and test on day 5, 6 or 7. With a negative test, staff/student may return on day 8 OR
 - Quarantine for 10 days and not test. Staff/student may return on day 11.
- Vaccinated Individuals Who Are Close Contacts
 - Excluded from quarantine requirements.
 - The individual should still monitor for symptoms of COVID-19.
 - If symptoms are present, the individual should be excluded from school and be evaluated by a health care professional for COVID-19.
- COVID Positive
 - Individuals who have tested positive may not attend school and must complete a 10-day quarantine from the onset of symptoms.
- Positive and Asymptomatic
 - Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 but who are asymptomatic must stay home for 10 days from the positive test result.

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Appendix J

Contact Tracing

- A. Identify school-based close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases in the school.
- B. Notify parents and staff of the close contact exposure and exclusion requirements while maintaining confidentiality.

Per the CDC, close contact in a school setting, for students, is defined as being within 3 feet of someone infected with COVID-19 for 15 or more minutes during a 24-hour period. In certain situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire cohort, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed. Working in partnership with parents/guardians, it is essential for parents/guardians to communicate with the school nurse if your child has been identified as a close contact outside of school.

Contact tracing responsibilities include:

- Assisting in identifying the contacts with the school and communicating this information with the Health Department
- Notifying parents/guardians and staff of the close contact exposure and exclusion requirements with the guidance of the Health Department while maintaining confidentiality.

The Health Department contact tracing team may notify and interview the close contacts identified by the school and reinforce the exclusion requirements.

When reporting absences to the school, parents/guardians should provide information about symptoms. School nurses will follow-up with the family when COVID-related symptoms are present.

Temperature checks will not be taken as students enter school.

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Appendix K

Testing

- A. Identify rapid viral testing options in their community for the testing of individuals who were exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- B. Develop and implement screening testing as a strategy to identify cases and prevent secondary transmission.

Families will be reminded of the COVID symptoms and will be responsible for screening their children daily before sending them to school. School newsletters will regularly remind families of this responsibility.

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Appendix L

Student and Staff Member Travel

- A. Follow the recommended CDC guidelines for student and staff member travel out-of-State.

As of May 17, 2021, New Jersey's travel advisory is no longer in effect. The CDC, however, has recommendations, not mandates, for both vaccinated and unvaccinated travelers. Please refer to the New Jersey Covid site for travel and transportation to find the latest mandates, to which the District will adhere.