

# **Township of Union School District Safe Return to School 2021-2022 Plan**

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# Maintaining Health and Safety

## Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks

- Masks are a required part of the K-12 school day for students, personnel, and visitors regardless of vaccination status.
- Masks are required at all times when being transported on school buses. Students, drivers and bus aides must wear a mask at all times and be forward facing.
- Guidelines will continue to be based on state, federal, and local policy regarding mask requirements for Pre-K - 12 settings. All students will be allowed to remove their masks to eat. Elementary students will be provided physical distant “mask break” opportunities when possible. Pre-K students will not be wearing masks during nap time.
- Signs will be posted throughout the school building on rules for the correct wearing of masks.

## Physical Distancing

- Guidelines will continue to be based on state, federal, and local policy regarding physical distance requirements for Pre-K-12 settings.
- Student desks will be as far apart as allowable in each classroom; they will be arranged in rows and columns with all students faced the same direction. Every effort will be made to provide three feet of space between students in a classroom.
- Masks will be required when a student is not actively eating during snack (elementary schools) and lunch.
- Students will not use lockers so that students do not congregate in the hallways.
- Students will not change for physical education and are prompted to wear clothing that will allow them to participate in physical activities to the greatest extent possible. Physical education teachers will adapt lessons accordingly.
- Open Houses will be virtual.

## Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

- Guidelines will continue to be based on state, federal, and local guidance regarding handwashing and respiratory etiquette recommendations for Pre-K-12 settings.
- Schools will reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, build time into the day for washing hands, make hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol content available in all classrooms, offices, and in hallways, and promote hand hygiene, including the advertisement of the district’s handwashing video. and will be stored appropriately to prevent poisoning.
- To avoid poison emergencies, hand sanitizers will be stored away and out of sight of children under six years of age and will be used with adult supervision.
- Personnel will continue to demonstrate proper coughing/sneezing etiquette, especially in elementary schools.

## Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities, Including Improving Ventilation

- Each custodian will be equipped with an electrostatic sprayer and will use BruTabs to sanitize every space in all the schools and respective offices each afternoon after the school day has ended. All schools will be sanitized.
- The facilities department will have all heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) filters replaced prior to the return to school and will regularly replace filters throughout the school year.

- Personnel will be encouraged to keep classroom and office windows open at all times except when the weather does not permit. Classes and offices without windows will be moved to spaces with windows if possible and/or hydroxyl generators will be made available.
- Guidelines will continue to be based on state, federal, and local guidance regarding cleaning and ventilation requirements for Pre-K-12 settings.

#### Contact Tracing, Quarantine, and School Closures

- Contact tracing guidelines and practices will continue to be based on state and local as well as CDC guidelines regarding requirements for Pre-K-12 settings.
- Isolation areas will be established in each school building.
- The following flowchart of actions, as prescribed by the CDC, will be followed in the event a student or district personnel exhibit symptoms associated with COVID-19:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/student-becomes-sick-diagnosis-flowchart.html>
- Virtual instruction may be offered only to students who are mandated to quarantine for an extended period.
- Continuous monitoring of the CALI Report (<https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/statistics/covid/>) recommendations regarding transmission rates relative to the recommendations for length of quarantine time and close consultation with the Township of Union Board of Health will be the catalyst for quarantine time recommendations throughout the District.
- To date current recommendations do not require a quarantine period, regardless of vaccination status, as long as the criteria specified below, have been met.
- In the event an individual (student or personnel) tests positive for COVID-19, no quarantine will be necessary if the following criteria have been met:
  - Masks have been properly worn at all times within the classroom and hallways
  - A minimum of three feet has been maintained at all times within the classroom
  - The individual remains asymptomatic. In the event the individual becomes symptomatic they must follow the quarantine guidance provided by the district.
- An assessment of the health status of the other schools will be conducted and a decision on whether the district will return to virtual learning, if so allowed, will be made by a consultation between the superintendent and the board.
- The superintendent will review local COVID-19 infection data on a regular basis and may make the decision to close schools if necessary.
- Per the CDC, once a school is open, that school may remain open for in-person instruction even in cases of “substantial” or “high” community transmission if the school strictly implements mitigation strategies and as long as remaining open would not violate the above protocol on in-school transmission.

#### Efforts to Provide Vaccinations to District Community

- The district will cooperate with borough officials to provide vaccine clinics to both the district and the resident community.
- The district will continue to encourage all eligible people to receive vaccinations and will advertise opportunities for vaccination.

#### Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities With Respect to the Health and Safety Policies

- Personal Protective Equipment will be made available (gowns, gloves, visor shields, clear insert masks, goggles).
- Plexiglass will be provided where needed.
- If a student cannot wear a mask due to a medical reason, a school nurse will determine if an Individual Health Plan is needed. If a student cannot wear a mask due to disability, the student's previously assigned case manager will be contacted and an Individualized Education Program Meeting may be convened. A school nurse will be contacted in case of medical considerations.
- Reasonable modifications will be made to allow students with Individualized Education Plans to either use alternate methods of protection such as face shields, plexiglass dividers, and/or increased distancing between students and personnel within a room. The child study team may consider adding a goal for increased mask tolerance and, until that goal is achieved, adding an accommodation so that the student will enter the hallways (changing classes/entering and exiting the building) a few minutes either before or after large masses of students do so, to limit unmasked exposure, by and to the unmasked student.

## **Ensuring Continuity of Services**

The school district is committed to providing full day in-person teaching and learning for all students starting September 8, 2021. The following academic, social-emotional, and mental health supports will be provided to make sure students are able to be successful as they transition to a post-pandemic school year.

### Academic Support

- Teachers will differentiate instruction to address student's specific learning gaps.
- The Intervention and Referral Services Team (I&RS) will review a student's academic progress when he/she/they is referred by a teacher or counselor because classroom instruction support did not have a positive impact on learning growth.
- Academic needs of students will continue to be assessed using diagnostic and formative assessments and support programs/resources (including ESY, after-school programs, etc.) will continue to be developed/provided based on identified needs.

### Social-Emotional, Mental Health, and Food Service Support

- Faculty will be responsible for integrating activities that emphasize social and emotional wellness. Supplemental activities, including counseling programs will focus on enhancing relationships and connections among all stakeholders.
- Normalizing the conversation about mental health and wellness will be a priority.
- Parent academies will continue to address topics related to adolescent mental health and wellness, including, but not limited to, suicide prevention, and support for LGBTQIA+ communities.
- School meals will continue to be provided free to all students based on state/federal guidelines. The district will continue to encourage all families to complete Free and Reduced Meal Application.

# **Stakeholder Collaboration and Communication**

## Public Comment and Development of Plan

- Public comment was requested via survey distributed to all stakeholders and posted on the district website.
- Multiple surveys asked stakeholders to identify levels of concern for various areas and space was provided for stakeholders to write in their own areas of concerns and/or comments for consideration.
- Survey data was reviewed by members of the Safe Reopening Plan team, the School Reopening Task Force, the board of education and the general community and have been utilized to develop and update the Safe Reopening Plan.

## Plan Accessibility

- The Safe Reopening Plan is provided to stakeholders via the district website and its social media outlets.
- A translation (oral or written) or alternative format (video or audio) may be provided upon request if a parent with limited English proficiency and/or an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA requests such; requests should be made to the building principal.