

THE ROAD FORWARD

Appendices

The Road Forward

Pequannock Township

Board of Education

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Note:

As of August 10, 2021, the only mandatory requirements are included in Appendix C – Mask Wearing Protocol and Appendix G – Transportation Protocols. The school district should anticipate potential updates to The Road Forward Guidance as additional guidance becomes available.

Fall 2021

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Appendix A

Vaccination

The school district may include in Appendix A the locally developed protocols to:

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

All employees have provided vaccination status documentation to the building principal or superintendent, or his designee. Those records are stored in the medical files housed at the Board Office.

Students' families have been encouraged to send verification of vaccination status to the school nurse. That documentation will be stored in each student's medical file.

- b. Promote vaccination for all eligible students and staff.

Employees had the opportunity to participate in a vaccination program through Atlantic Health Systems. The district also publicizes updates provided by the state and township health department about vaccination programs as well as general information. Those updates appear on the district website and in the safe return plan.

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Appendix B

Communication with the Local Health Department

The school district may include in Appendix B the locally developed protocols to:

- 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.

The school nurses, superintendent, and principals maintain a strong working relationship with our local Health Department to provide support for contact tracing, isolation and quarantining, if necessary. The group met together in September to review procedures and expectations. There is an ongoing exchange of information to help strengthen the practice of both organizations.

The district continues to communicate regularly with the Health Department regarding confirmed positive cases or other responses to COVID-19 illness in school settings.

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Appendix C

Mask Wearing Protocol

The school district shall include in Appendix C the locally developed protocols to:

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

Effective with the implementation of Executive Order 251 on 8/6, mask wearing is required for staff, students and visitors while inside our school buildings. Anyone refusing to wear a mask in the school will be denied entry or need to leave. All stakeholders should be prepared for the possibility that masks will become optional again, or that conditions will warrant a middle ground such as what the district employed for the extreme heat protocols in June 2021.

From the state's information: While masks will be broadly required in school buildings for the coming school year, exceptions will remain unchanged from the 2020-2021 school year, and include:

- When doing so would inhibit the individual's health, such as when the individual is exposed to extreme heat indoors;
- When the individual has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance;
- When a student's documented medical condition or disability, as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Educational Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, precludes use of a face covering;
- When the individual is under two (2) years of age;
- When an individual is engaged in an activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating and drinking or playing an instrument that would be obstructed by the face covering;
- When the individual is engaged in high-intensity aerobic or anerobic activity;
- When a student is participating in high-intensity physical activities during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals; or
- When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

We will continue the practice of encouraging frequent mask breaks throughout the day. The masking regulations do not currently apply while outdoors, though it is recommended that unvaccinated individuals "wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings [...]"

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Appendix D

Physical Distancing and Cohorting Protocols

The school district may include in Appendix D the locally developed protocols to:

- 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 current guidance on physical distancing states that three feet or the maximum amount possible should be enforced in the classroom. Administrators, custodians and teachers have worked together to ensure safely distanced desks and tables. Desk shields are in place at the elementary school level and are an option for students at the middle and high school.

Outside of classroom settings, the district will practice the greatest degree of distancing possible based on available space and mitigation strategies available. This logic also applies to activities that involve removing masks or increased exhalation.

Students will attend school in person every day for a full day; however, to be prepared if there are significantly changed health and safety conditions, every student has been assigned to a cohort proactively. The district does not intend to use cohorts unless absolutely necessary, but has a plan that would limit the number of interactions among different groups of students and staff.

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Appendix E

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette Protocols

The school district may include in Appendix E the locally developed protocols to:

- 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.

Signage will remain in place with reminders about hand washing. Teachers will review proper handwashing procedures and etiquette with students on the first day of school. Hand sanitizer will be provided at school entrances, in each classroom, the cafeteria and elsewhere. Washroom facilities will continue to employ touchless controls.

Students will be encouraged to wash their hands several times throughout the day, particularly before and after eating or sharing equipment.

Coughs and sneezes should be covered with a tissue, which should in turn be thrown away immediately. Hand sanitizer will also be provided in classrooms and public areas, and supplied by the district throughout the year.

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Appendix F

Provision of Meals

The school district may include in Appendix F the locally developed protocols to:

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

The schools are prepared to expand the lunch blocks to enable us to have lunch in school while also limiting the number of students at each table. Schedules were shared at the school level by the principals.

The ordering and lunch service systems will remain intact at the elementary schools. Students at PV and PTHS will have grab-and-go lunch service to begin the year, with as little contact involved in the payment process as possible.

While masks are required, students will wear their masks as they pick up their food and move to their tables, but will remove their masks while eating their lunch.

In the event that a school needs to employ a remote instruction model, Pomptonian and our transportation department will ensure lunch delivery for students receiving free and reduced lunch.

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Appendix G

Transportation Protocols

The school district shall include in Appendix G the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Address the use of masks on school buses.

Currently masks are required on school buses as they would be for public transportation.

The school district may include in Appendix G the locally developed protocols to:

- b. Address mitigation strategies to reduce the risk of infection on a school bus.

The district encourages improved ventilation, conditions permitting, by opening windows, and maximizing physical distancing when possible.

For contact tracing purposes, students will have assigned seats on buses. Coaches will track seating for teams that ride a bus.

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Appendix H

Cleaning, Disinfection, and Airflow

The school district may include in Appendix H the locally developed protocols to:

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.

The district will continue to utilize electrostatic cleaning with a botanical disinfectant (Bioesque) weekly for classrooms, and more frequently for higher traffic areas. Should more regular spraying be needed, we will add an additional day midweek.

Disinfectant will also be available in classrooms for regular wiping down of desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, phones, toys, and frequently handled materials. Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned daily, if not more frequently, as conditions warrant.

The district will continue to use air purifiers in classrooms, media centers and offices. All filters have been replaced and systems cleaned for the new school year. Internal vents have also been fitted with MERV-11 filters. To the maximum extent possible, we will also introduce as much fresh air into our buildings through open windows, doors, and the ventilation system; however, when air conditioning units are running, windows will remain closed and air purifiers will provide sufficient ventilation.

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Appendix I

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

The school district may include in Appendix I the locally developed protocols to:

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

The district will follow protocols similar to what we employed for 2020-21:

- Plastic barriers will be employed in each nurse's office.
- An isolation room will be set up in each nurse's office. The rooms will have curtains to create isolation partitions.
- Nurse's offices will be set up for social distancing.

Students who are symptomatic will be referred to Chilton's pediatric emergency room for screening and/or testing. Staff members will be referred to their physician and expected to get tested as well.

From *The Road Forward*:

- Ill individuals with COVID-19 compatible symptoms who have not been tested or individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 should stay home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and at least 24 hours have passed after resolution of fever without fever reducing medications and improvement in symptoms.
- Persons who test positive for COVID-19 but who are asymptomatic should stay home for 10 days from the positive test result.
- An alternate diagnosis (including a positive strep test or influenza swab) without a negative COVID-19 test is not acceptable for individuals who meet COVID-19 exclusion criteria to return to school earlier than the timeframes above.

Per doctor's standing orders, any student who was diagnosed with COVID-19 by a medical provider must be excluded from school for at least 10 days. Upon readmission to school, students are required to present written evidence of being free of COVID-19 such as a medical provider's statement indicating the symptoms of the disease have ceased.

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Appendix J

Contact Tracing

The school district may include in Appendix J the locally developed protocols to:

- 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.

The district will follow the exclusion criteria based on our region's designation according to the most current CALI score. The definition of a close contact is currently someone who was exposed to a confirmed positive case within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes over the course of 24 hours. We will continue to coordinate with the township Health Department on determining quarantine needs for staff and students.

Exception from *The Road Forward*: In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinically compatible illness) where both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

Families are notified via phone call and/or email of exposures from school settings and exclusion requirements, if any, that need to be followed. No identifying information is shared about those who are infected other than the school or classroom/other setting in which the exposure is likely to have occurred.

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Appendix K

Testing

The school district may include in Appendix K the locally developed protocols to:

- 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.

The district is able to direct staff and families to various organizations that provide viral testing options. Per our compliance plan with Executive Order 253, the district has also partnered with Longview to provide weekly testing for staff, volunteers, and interested students at no cost to the district or those being tested. These testing protocols can also qualify as a screening measure.

For screening purposes, families will be expected to conduct a daily screening at home before sending students to school. Students who are symptomatic should stay home and be called in sick for the day. Visitors will complete a similar screening in hard copy before entering a building. Staff members will complete a health screening Google Form each day before reporting to work.

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Appendix L

Student and Staff Member Travel

The school district may include in Appendix L the locally developed protocols to:

- a. Follow the recommended CDC guidelines for student and staff members who travel out-of-State.

New Jersey eliminated the travel ban but continues to employ travel recommendations based on CDC guidance. The position of the state is to recommend that unvaccinated individuals who travel outside states connected to New Jersey should self-quarantine for 7 days after domestic travel.

International travel is subject to more stringent requirements. Staff and students who travel internationally need to follow the most current quarantine guidance based on the countries they visited, which can either prevent return to the United States, enforce a quarantine period, or require evidence of a negative test result.