

School Reopening Options

NORTH CALDWELL COMMUNITY FORUM

JULY 8, 2020



The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education

- On June 26, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) issued a 104-page plan to guide local school districts in reopening schools in the Fall (www.njsba.org/NJDOEGuidance)
 - Absent a shift in public health data, **schools are required to open in some capacity for in-person instruction and operations in the Fall, but may supplement classroom teaching with online instruction.**
 - Plan provided “Anticipated Minimal Standards” that are required to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff
 - Standards are controlled by Executive Order and are subject to change
 - Plan also provided “Considerations” that refer to components that districts and schools should incorporate into their thinking about reopening but are not required components
 - Districts were provided with flexibility to develop a model that best fits their local needs
 - Districts must publicly announce, four weeks before school starts, how they are going to resume instruction.

Anticipated Minimum Standards

- **Adopt a policy for screening students and employees for symptoms of COVID-19 and history of exposure to COVID-19**
 - Parents and staff will need to fill out a health form daily (finalizing option of online completion)
 - Temperature checks for students and staff daily (teachers/aides to conduct temp checks)
- **Strive for social distancing in classrooms and on school buses**
 - Minimum of 6 feet between students required (not possible due to physical classroom constraints with all students in attendance)
 - If cannot maintain social distance, consider modifications such as physical barriers between desks, turning desks same direction, masks
 - Consider hybrid model to allow for social distancing (split sessions – direct instruction/remote learning) (face coverings not required when students are seated at desks/tables)
- **Cleaning and disinfecting procedures**
 - Frequent cleaning and disinfecting of common surfaces, bathrooms, shared materials/equipment
- **Masks**
 - School staff and visitors **must** wear face coverings unless doing so would be a health concern
 - Students **must** wear face masks when social distancing cannot be maintained

Options for Restart of School in the Fall

School Restart Options

- Option 1: All students in school every day for the entire day
 - Face coverings required by students at all times
 - Lunch at school (in classrooms)
 - Dismissal at 3:15 PM daily

- Option 2: Split Schedule
 - Two groups of students (A & B) attend school on Alternate days.
 - Lunch at school (in classrooms)
 - Dismissal at 3:15 PM daily
 - If staffing permits, teachers may be available to support distance learning

- Option 3: Split Schedule
 - Two groups of students (A & B) attend school on Alternate days.
 - No lunch at school
 - Dismissal at 1 PM daily
 - Teachers available in afternoon for distance learning

- Option 4: Full-time Remote Instruction (not currently permitted under the NJDOE plan)

Option 1

All Students in School for the Entire Day

Students would remain in classrooms to limit exposure to other students. Students would eat lunch in classrooms. Teachers at Gould and of specials would rotate to classrooms to provide instruction.

Because Social Distancing Cannot be Maintained Due to Physical Space Constraints this is not a feasible option for our district.

- Physical dividers would be required between all desks
- If no physical dividers, students must wear masks for the entire school day
- All desks must face forward to further limit contact
- Health and Safety Concerns due to larger groups
- Significant Budget Impact

Option 2

Split Schedule

Students are broken into two groups

- Cohort A attends school on Mondays and Wednesdays and alternate Fridays
- Cohort B attends school on Tuesdays and Thursdays and alternate Fridays
- Students remain in classroom for specials, academic subject areas and lunch
- No teachers available to support distance learning
- Students are dismissed at 3:15PM daily

Option 2 (cont.)

➤ **Advantages:**

- Smaller groups of students (likely 10-14 students per class)
- Able to maintain social distancing; no need to wear face coverings at all times; i.e., when seated at desks
- Direct instruction of new concepts/information provided via direct instruction on alternate days. Review/reinforcement and/or extension of previously presented concepts on days students are not in school.

➤ **Disadvantages:**

- Child care concerns
- Increased costs to the District
- Difficulty providing staff to monitor distance learning
- Students remain in classroom all day except for 20 minutes of recess daily

Option 3

Split Schedule with Early Dismissal

students are broken into two cohorts:

- Cohort A attends school on Monday and Wednesday and alternate Fridays
- Cohort B attends school on Tuesday and Thursday and alternate Fridays
- Students are dismissed at 1PM

Advantages:

- Provides time for teachers to check in with students who are working remotely and jointly plan lessons/activities for remote learning
- Smaller groups of students
- No Lunch at school; limits movement in the building
- Teachers available to support distance learning

Disadvantages:

- Less Instruction Time
- Child Care issues
- Students remain in classroom until dismissal except for 20 minutes of recess daily

Option 4

Remote Instruction (Not Currently Permitted Under NJDOE Plan)

Remote Instruction will be required:

- If there is a shift in public health data
- If there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 a 14 day quarantine period will be required for all individuals who had direct contact with individual
- Remote learning will be provided for any student who is medically fragile

Remote Learning Guidelines

State statute states that 2 ½ hours is considered a full day for kindergarten students and 4 hours for all other grade levels

Four hours of instructional time is not defined as a student's time spent in front of a teacher or in front of a screen but time engaged in standards-based learning under the guidance and direction of a teacher.

Changes In Procedures for Upcoming School Year

When school reopens:

- Staggered arrival and dismissal of students

- No parents or volunteers will be permitted in the school building

- All materials will be dropped off in a bin outside of the front door of school. The bin will be checked frequently during the school day

- For early dismissals
 - Parents will remain outside of building and call front desk
 - Student will be signed out by building secretary and brought to the front door of building for dismissal

- For late arrivals
 - Parents will ring bell to alert building secretary that they are dropping student off at front door
 - Secretary will sign student into school

- Parents and staff must immediately contact school should anyone in their family be in contact with an individual who has tested positive for Covid-19

- Students must self-quarantine for 14 days if they vacationed or visited state/country on restricted list

Resources

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>

<https://www.nj.gov/education/reopening/NJDOETheRoadBack.pdf>

Community Survey

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

On Thursday, July 9, we will release an online survey to the community soliciting your input regarding the return to school options that we discussed. Please complete this survey by July 16.

THANK YOU!