

# Reopening of Schools Plan

School Board Meeting  
July 28, 2020



# Balancing Benefits and Risks

## 1. **Health and Safety Concerns** (Students, Teachers, Staff, Community)

- Minimize risk of virus transmission (COVID-19 may pose low risks to school-aged children, but teachers/staff may be in a higher risk category).
- Ensure containment if there are positive cases
- Effectively clean and sanitize buildings

## 2. **Quality in-person educational experience** (Students, Teachers)

- NJ DOE mandate that districts offer in-person instruction
- Maximize amount of time in the classroom
- Increased student focus and direct one-on-one students/teacher interaction
- Provide special education and counseling services to meet developmental needs

## 3. **Meaningful remote instruction** (Students, Teachers, Parents)

- NJ DOE mandate the districts offer an all-remote instruction option
- Keep students engaged; remote learning makes absorbing information more difficult
- Sufficient time for teachers to prepare remote/virtual instruction
- Parental engagement with remote/independent instruction

## 4. **Social/Emotional/Behavioral well-being** (Students, Teachers, Community)

- Benefits of interaction and development of social and emotional skills
- Stress of balancing work and family needs; child care issues

# Plan A: All Students, Every Day, Full Day

- ▶ Best learning environment; greatest amount of time for in-person instruction
- ▶ A “normal” school day, which is beneficial to student emotional/social well-being and for working parents and child care needs
- ▶ Highest risk of viral transmission; especially in common environments
- ▶ If there is a positive case, increased likelihood that a significant number of students/teachers/staff will need to quarantine (likely for 14 days)
- ▶ Department of Education and local health officer say that **we must follow CDC recommendations** and space all desks 6 feet apart. It is not possible to socially distance students in our buildings 6 feet apart due to space limitations
- ▶ Students would remain in classrooms to limit exposure to other students. Teachers at Gould and of specials would rotate to classrooms to provide instruction. Students would need to eat lunch in classrooms.
- ▶ Difficulty of students continuously wearing face coverings for 7 hours
- ▶ An all-remote option must be offered; limited resources make it impossible to provide an all-remote and an all in-person option

# Plan B: All Students, Every Day AM/PM Split

- ▶ Consistent and frequent in-person instruction; more of a regular routine.
- ▶ Limited in-person instruction time each day (2.5 hours a day); arrival/departure time limits teaching time
- ▶ Limited time to clean and disinfect buildings between sessions; unclear if building/classrooms would be fully sanitized given uncertainty about respiratory droplets
- ▶ Allows for social distancing to the maximum extent possible
- ▶ Eliminates lunch time, decreasing risk of transmission
- ▶ Unclear when teachers would be able to focus on all-remote students
- ▶ Increased time for child care coverage; creates more of an uneven workday for working parents

# Plan C: Half Students, Split Schedule All Day

- ▶ Two potential options: (1) Alternating Fridays in School, (2) All Remote on Fridays
- ▶ Smaller groups allows for quality, personalized instruction
- ▶ Allows for social distancing to the maximum extent possible
- ▶ Half of the number of students each day limits student interaction and limits potential viral transmission; decreases number of people that would need to quarantine if there is a positive case
- ▶ Allows for easier, overnight cleaning and disinfecting of buildings
- ▶ Consistent, in-person instruction provides more of a regular routine
- ▶ Option 1 allows for more in-person instruction than AM/PM split days; however, unclear when teachers would plan/address remote
- ▶ Option 2, with all-remote on Fridays, allows teachers to pre-record remote lessons and conduct office hours with one-on-one check-ins.

# Plan D: Half Students, Split Schedule Early Dismissal

- ▶ Fewer hours of in-person instruction; however, only 30 minutes less for core instruction than full day schedule as all specials will be provided remotely
- ▶ Smaller groups allows for quality, personalized instruction
- ▶ Allows for social distancing to the maximum extent possible
- ▶ Half of the number of students each day limits viral transmission; decreases number of people that would need to quarantine if a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19
- ▶ No lunch reduces viral transmission; addresses lunch coverage issues
- ▶ Allows for easier, overnight cleaning and disinfecting of buildings.
- ▶ Consistent, in-person instruction provides more of a regular routine
- ▶ Early dismissal allows time for teachers to plan/address remote lessons and prepare pre-recorded lessons



# Plan E: All Students, Remote, Every Day

- ▶ Under current NJ DOE, this is not permitted as Districts are required to open schools in the Fall. Based upon shifting health data, however, we may be forced to go with this plan, and we will be prepared
- ▶ Lowest risk of viral transmission
- ▶ Worst plan for learning experience and social/mental well-being
- ▶ The New Jersey Department of Education provided updated guidelines last week that now allows parents to choose to have their child educated remotely



# Remote Instruction

- ▶ Various approaches that could be utilized and are being explored and worked on prior to the start of school:
  - ▶ Livestreaming of classes (full classes or smaller sections)
  - ▶ Virtual instruction via online platform (Zoom or Google Meet)
  - ▶ Outsourcing of remote/independent study to third party providers
  - ▶ Pre-recorded lessons and planned independent study plans
- ▶ Restart Committee will be devising procedures that a family/guardian must follow to submit a request to transition from fulltime remote learning to in-person services, including any relevant timelines
- ▶ Clarifying Expectations Regarding Fulltime Remote Learning Options for Families in 2020-2021:  
<https://nj.gov/education/reopening/updates/docs/7.24.20%20RtR%20Fulltime%20Remote%20Update.pdf>





# COVID Committee Recommendations

## **Kindergarten, First and Second Grade Plan:**

- ▶ All students in school, every day, with 1:00 PM dismissal
- ▶ Additional class sections will be added to ensure social distancing in all classrooms
- ▶ Installation of physical barriers in the classrooms
- ▶ Facial coverings will be required to be worn by students, teachers and staff
- ▶ No lunch, but snack breaks
- ▶ Ability to check-in/depart through outside doors



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# COVID Committee Recommendation

## Grades 3 – 6 Plan:

- ▶ Grades 3-6 split into two cohorts, attend school on alternate days and every other Friday. Dismissal at 1PM
- ▶ Specials will be delivered remotely (Art, Library, Technology, World Language, Music, Physical Education)
- ▶ Option for All Remote Learning will be offered



# Questionnaire

- ▶ A questionnaire will be sent out tomorrow, Wednesday, July 29<sup>th</sup> to all families. The needs to be completed by Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- ▶ Questionnaire will ask all families to identify the option that they will be selecting for the reopening of school:
  - ▶ In-person
  - ▶ All Remote
- ▶ Responses will be used to plan and prepare classes for the fall