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# JERSEY SHORE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

LEARNING | GROWING | SUCCEEDING

## Re-Opening Schools

### Frequently Asked Questions

(updated August 18, 2020)

#### **Will schools reopen for face-to-face instruction?**

The District's Pandemic Team has been meeting regularly in order to develop procedures to be able to open schools on time. The current plan is to provide instruction in the building, online and through a hybrid option.

#### **What other options will our family have if we do not desire in building instruction full-time?**

Families can choose the Jersey Shore online option. See the website for more details.

#### **Will I be able to switch my child's learning mode from in building to online or hybrid whenever I want?**

Frequent changing of a student's mode of learning is can be detrimental to their education. We are asking that you commit to a mode for at least a marking period. However, we also understand that as conditions change (for the student, within the family or within the community) that families may need to change the mode for their student. This will be looked at on a case-by-case basis with decisions being made in collaboration with the family.

### **Will the Jersey Shore Online curriculum be the same as the students are getting in the classroom?**

Teachers at the secondary level worked over the spring to make sure their curriculum was online accessible. Elementary teachers will be trained throughout this year on how to teach remotely and how to get necessary items to be online accessible. This will allow (over time) for our online students to receive the same curriculum as our in-person students. Until then, any classes that cannot be taught through our own curriculum will be taught through the IU's online curriculum (just as they are currently for the secondary students in JSOL).

### **How will attendance be tracked with the three different modes of instruction?**

For in building instruction, attendance is tracked by the students' physical presence. For the online instruction, attendance is tracked by completed work. For the hybrid option, attendance is tracked by both physical presence and completed work.

### **How will attendance requirements be impacted if a student is sent home or tests positive for COVID-19?**

Documented cases that result in absences would fall under the medical portion of the attendance laws. For individual questions regarding a situation you have within your family, please contact your building principal.

### **What steps are the district taking for cleaning, sanitizing and hygiene?**

Please refer to the JSASD Reopening Health and Safety Plan on our website for answers to these questions; some are addressed more specifically below. The district has purchased additional cleaning supplies and equipment to address the need for additional disinfection. Electrostatic sprayers are an example of addition resources that will be utilized to properly disinfect areas of the building.

### **Will students be required to clean areas?**

Secondary students will help sanitize prior to leaving a class so that it is ready for the next class. Elementary students will be self-contained much of the day and limit (or eliminate depending on the current conditions) use of shared resources.

### **What will cafeteria spaces look like?**

Building administrators are developing seating arrangements that keep classroom/team units together when feasible. Spacing and arrangements are also being modified to provide additional space as feasible.

### **Will water fountains still be utilized?**

The district is putting in water bottle filling stations that can be utilized instead of the water fountains. Water fountains can be turned off if current conditions at the time warrant it.

### **Do students have to wear masks all day?**

The requirement to wear masks will be dependent on state requirements at the current time of the Governor's orders. As of the last update, masks are to be worn in areas where 6 feet of social distancing is not possible. This will mainly be on buses, in hallways, and other areas where social distancing is not feasible. However, some classes may need to wear masks as well if social distancing is not feasible in the classroom.

### **Will teachers/staff be wearing masks?**

Yes, but some may be wearing clear face shields instead of masks so that children can see their whole face. This will also be helpful for example in classes where mouth formation is an important aspect of the lesson (speech, phonics, etc.)

### **When do students not have to wear masks?**

When 6 feet of social distancing is feasible in the setting they are in or when the student has a documented medical condition that exempts them from wearing a mask. For medical exemptions, the current State guidance states: *"children...are required to wear a face covering unless they have a medical or mental condition or disability, documented in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or IDEA, that precludes the wearing of a face covering in a school."*

### **What if I do not want my child to wear a mask?**

The online mode of instruction would be an option unless the child has a documented medical condition that would preclude them from wearing a mask.

### **Will students still have recess?**

Yes. Playground equipment will be sanitized at least daily if not more frequently.

### **How does the state guidelines impact students while on a bus?**

Students will be given assigned seats and will be assigned seats within family units when possible. Masks are required where social distancing is not feasible, so masks will need to be worn on the buses as state guidelines dictate.

### **Are buses going to be sanitized?**

Buses will be sanitized daily; more frequently if feasible. The bus companies have also taken additional cleaning measures.

**Will there be additional bus runs to space students out?**

Where students cannot social distance, masks are required. Depending on the current level of restrictions, additional runs may be utilized if a bus has more than 2 per seat (there are only a few runs with this scenario).

**Will classroom doors be open for ventilation?**

Yes, but for safety purposes they will be locked while propped open so they can easily lockdown into a classroom and not have to take time to lock the door.

**Will schools have resources to deal with the mental and emotional stress caused by the pandemic?**

In addition to school counselors available to students, we also have an outreach worker who can connect families to additional services. Our teachers/staff will also be including mental health lessons as appropriate to the ages and needs of the schools/students (Second Step curriculum is one of the programs being used). School-wide positive behavior programs will also focus on some of these areas/topics within the schools.

**Will students and employees be screened upon arriving to school?**

Yes. The district utilized grant funding to purchase facial temperature scanners to help screen students and staff as they arrive. This is only being utilized as an initial screener. If a temperature reading causes concern, students will be rescreened to determine if further action is necessary. Parents will be contacted if the screening presents the need to return home.

**How will social distancing work at student arrival for schools that have students congregate in the gym or another common area?**

Building administrators are developing plans and schedules to allow students to social distance during these times. This may result in a change of when walkers/parent drop off can arrive, so please watch for this information as it comes from your building administrators.

**What happens if a student or employee of the school tests positive for COVID-19? Will the whole school shut down? If so, for how long?**

The Department of Health is responsible for contact tracing and notification. PDE has indicated that school districts will collaborate with the Department of health on these decisions.

**Will the latchkey program still be available to students?**

Yes. This program is limited to our students who were already screened at the beginning of the day. The latchkey program also has protocols they must follow to screen their own employees, sanitize, etc. Their plan has been provided to and reviewed by administration.

**How will attendance requirements be impacted if a student is sent home or tests positive for COVID-19?**

Documented cases that result in absences would fall under the medical portion of the attendance laws. For individual questions regarding a situation you have within your family, please contact your building principal.

**Will families be notified if a child or teacher in the classroom or school tests positive for COVID-19?**

Notification is the role of the PA Department of Health.

**How is the district preparing for substitute coverage that was an issue before the pandemic even started?**

The district has already met with Source 4 Teachers regarding substitute coverage.

**Will substitutes be made aware of the health and safety plan and protocols?**

The plan has been sent to their employer.

**How will students keep belongings separated, especially at the elementary level?**

The administrators are planning classroom routines for handling student belongings.

**If schools are forced to close, what will remote learning look like?**

Utilizing the student devices in the district's 1:1 environment, we will be able to continue with new instruction. Teachers are being given training to teach in a remote environment upon returning to school in August

**We were not able to do remote learning in the spring, how can we do it now?**

There were four primary issues in the spring when trying to deliver new instruction:

1. One barrier to remote learning with new instruction in the spring was that we did not have devices for Kdg-5<sup>th</sup> grade students. The Board approved the use of CAREs funding from the federal government to purchase iPads for Kdg-5<sup>th</sup> grade. The district will now be 1:1 again from Kdg-12<sup>th</sup> grade.
2. Much of our curricular content was not available online in the spring. The teachers spent time in the spring to get information online and devise ways to address areas with packets if needed. Now that we are 1:1 again, we have online options at the elementary level instead of utilizing packets for teaching.

3. Most of our staff has never had to teach/work in a remote environment and were not set up to do so or did not have the connectivity to do so. Training has been planned out for the teachers upon return to teach new instruction in a remote environment. Other staff that are needed to work remotely are now set up to do so or come in on a specific schedule as essential.
4. Accessibility for all families to high speed internet is one of the bigger issues in our region. The issue of accessibility will be addressed through partnerships. Access points are being planned for various areas so that families in more remote areas will have an access point closer to them in order to download and upload materials and assignments from an online platform, or to connect with teachers.

*The questions below were added on August 5, 2020*

**Will masks breaks be given to students where classrooms cannot social distance?**

Yes, the plan is to provide mask breaks by taking the students to areas they can social distance.

**Have the attendance laws changed so that my child can miss more than 10 days?**

No, the laws haven't changed, but any note from a doctor will not count against the 10 parentally excused days (that is a change for this year).

**Are hybrid days still with the regular classroom teacher?**

In the hybrid option, the days the student is at home are still considered days with the child's JSASD teacher. The student would be completing assignments and accessing materials virtually while at home.

**How do I find out about my child's schedule?**

Any scheduling questions need to be directed to the building principal.



### **Is the school providing face coverings?**

The schools will provide face coverings for students and staff that do not bring their own face covering.

### **What does “at-home” learning look like?**

For the online option (JSOL) all work is accessed and completed virtually. For the hybrid option, work is done both in class, and then the days they are home the student will be completing assignments and accessing materials virtually as well.

### **If a student or staff tests positive for COVID 19, will the whole class shut down or will parents be notified?**

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has informed us that decisions regarding the scope of shut downs and notifications are the responsibility of the Department of Health.

### **Will the school enforce a two-week quarantine if a family travels out of state?**

The self-quarantine for traveling to certain states is a recommendation from the State of Pennsylvania.

### **Will students be using lockers?**

Principals are working on plans to eliminate, space out and/or limit the use of lockers.

### **If schools close, how quickly will we be ready to educate all students virtually?**

The district is working on a plan so that completely virtual learning could occur within 2-3 days.

### **Does the hybrid or JSOL option impact the student’s ability to participate in sports?**

No, as long as the student remains PIAA/academically eligible.

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**Will plexiglass shields be placed on every student's desk?**

No. Face coverings will be utilized when social distancing is not feasible.

**Is transportation provided for students in the middle of the day with any hybrid options?**

No. For students eligible for transportation, it will be provided only at the regular beginning and end of the day times. Families who need transportation at other times of the day due to the hybrid option they chose will be responsible for providing transportation at those times.

**Are hybrid days flexible from week to week?**

No. The hybrid days are consistently scheduled. Contact the building principal for more specific information.

**Are the online teachers the same as the in person teachers?**

For the hybrid classes, yes, but for completely online classes it would depend on the level (elementary, middle or high school) and on the class/course.

**Will the after school academic program still be occurring this year at Jersey Shore Area Elementary?**

Yes. The same precautions are in place for this program and students from outlying buildings are also eligible to participate. The start date for this program is later in the 1<sup>st</sup> marking period. Parents of students identified for this program will be notified of the start date when it is set.

**Are Open Houses still occurring?**

Yes, but the Open Houses will be done virtually. Teachers will be available virtually as well to meet students/families.

**Will special education services, including speech, be available in the options provided?**

Special education services will be provided per the IEP.

*The questions below were added August 13, 2020*

**Will the hybrid option impact college plans for universities?**

Many colleges and universities are offering similar plans, but we would always encourage you to reach out to college/university you are going to be attending to get their input.

**Will student temperatures be taken before getting on the bus?**

In the Health and Safety Plan it states that parents need to screen their children before sending them to school, so parents should be taken their child's temperature before sending them to the bus or school (and then not send them to school if they are sick). Bus drivers will not be taking student temperatures.

**Is there anything planned for student's going to new building's or starting school (kindergarten, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 9<sup>th</sup> grade, etc.)?**

Due to the Pa Department of Health restriction on indoor gatherings of no more than 25 people (this applies to school events outside of academic instruction), we will need to have a virtual Open House. Students/families will also have the opportunity during this Open House to meet their teacher virtually. Any new students that enrolled after March 13, 2020, can take a building tour prior to the start of school. All building tours must be scheduled with the building principal.

**Are face shields allowed in place of face masks?**

Yes. Parents who wish to send their child with a face shield may do so. Any student without a face covering will be given a face mask by the bus driver (if riding a bus) or by the school.

*The questions below were added 8/18/2020*

**Do students have to wear masks all day? UPDATED**

The requirement to wear masks will be dependent on state requirements at the current time of the Governor's orders. As of the last update, **masks are to be worn at all times**. Mask breaks can be taken but the students must be 6 feet apart and the breaks can be no longer than 10 minutes.

**When do students not have to wear masks? UPDATED**

For medical exemptions, the current State guidance states: "children...are required to wear a face covering unless they have a medical or mental condition or disability, documented in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or IDEA, that precludes the wearing of a face covering in a school."

Additional FAQs

**What should I do if my child has a temperature above 100.4 in the morning?**

If your child is sick or has a temperature of 100.4 or higher, they need to stay home. If you are concerned about exposure to Covid 19, please contact the hotline for coronavirus in PA at 1-877-724-3258.

**Will all building entrances be used at the start of the school day to do temperature checks and reduce groups of students waiting at the main entrance?**

Student entrances are assigned by the building principals and all students and employees will need to initially enter the school through an assigned entrance in order to have their temperature scanned.

**Are we considering the use of plexiglass shields for student desks?**

No, nor does the use of these shields negate the mask order from the state.

**Will visitors be scanned with temperature scanners as well?**

Yes. Visitors are also very restricted during this time. In many cases and conditions, visitors will not be in the building or be very limited. All visitors must be screened for temperature before entry.

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**Are schedules being modified to reduce crowding in hallways?**

Building principals are adjusting schedules as they can to reduce hallway congestion.

**Do face shields meet the face cover requirement from the state?**

Yes.