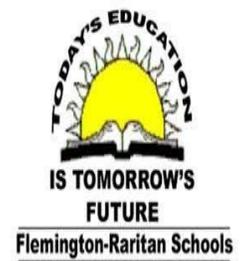


Flemington-Raritan Regional School District
Dr. Kari McGann
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August 13, 2020

Dear Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Parents, Faculty, Staff and Community Members,

Guidance from the Governor and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) regarding the opening of schools continues to evolve. Yesterday, the Governor announced that districts may start the school year fully virtual if they show that they are unable to address issues of concern related to health and safety standards.

At this time, a decision has not been made to change the Flemington-Raritan Regional School District reopening plan. It is premature to make any judgment or assumption about the need, if any, to change our plan. We still have not received additional health and safety protocols for schools which have been long awaited and not yet forthcoming. Upon receiving this guidance we will determine if our plan needs to be altered. It is anticipated that a health and safety checklist will be shared with New Jersey superintendents today.

The District has been working tirelessly to prepare for the September 8 school opening. Planning for both hybrid and all-virtual instructional models has presented many challenges. At each step of our process, we have been hampered by incomplete guidance that has arrived late to superintendents from the NJDOE.

The District's re-entry plan was created in accordance with state requirements outlined in the NJDOE Road Back planning document. The District met the State's timeframe for informing the community about reopening plans, which was 30 days in advance of the new school year. Our reopening plan was presented and approved at the August 6, 2020 Board of Education meeting and was submitted to the Executive County Superintendent.

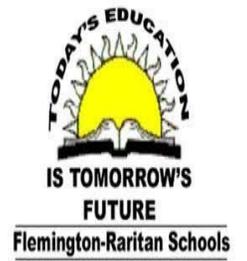
Using survey data received from parents a few short weeks ago, a third of our students have selected an all-virtual instructional model, while two-thirds have opted for hybrid instruction. Our leadership team has respected parental choice as a cornerstone of our reopening plan. Each day I receive emails from parents changing their request from hybrid instruction to virtual.

As we evaluate health conditions and restart challenges, parental choice will not supersede the health, safety and wellness of our staff and students. The hybrid model with in-person instruction will be anything from normal and presents complications. We have received numerous staff requests for leaves of absence or accommodations due to concerns regarding personal health, childcare, or the health concerns of a family member. Also, there are significant concerns with the supply chain and ensuring that the District receives all Personalized Protective Equipment (PPE) that was ordered in preparation for the school year. We are also still awaiting delivery of technology devices and hand gel.

Furthermore, New Jersey remains in Stage 2 with indoor capacity limits in effect. On August 3, indoor gathering limits were cut from 100 people to 25 percent of a room's capacity, with a maximum of 25 people. While public education may be exempt from this indoor capacity limit, logically, this exception makes limited sense. In addition, the American Association of Pediatrics (AAP) reports a marked increase in childhood COVID-19 cases. Between July 9 and August 6, 179,990 new child cases were reported, representing a 90 percent increase in child cases over a four week period.

We will continue to listen to and consult with our health professionals to assess our readiness and ability to safely resume in-person instruction on September 8. We will not waiver on our focus to open safely and with clear health protocols in place to protect our students and staff. The safety of our students and staff remain our top priority.

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Wishing you well,

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