



Flemington-Raritan Regional School District
Dr. Kari McGann
Superintendent of Schools
50 Court Street, Flemington, New Jersey 08822-1300
Phone: (908) 284-7561 Fax: (908) 284-7656
kmcgann@frsd.k12.nj.us

Four Readiness Think Tank Task Forces

- 1. Operations and Governance (Chair: Dr. McGann)**
Think Tank on rapid response plan for COVID-19 response, refusals & homeschooling remote instruction, classroom design, facility issues.
- 2. Finance (Chair: Ms. Voorhees)**
Think Tank on purchases for PPE, health & hygiene needs, transportation, meals, & food distribution.
- 3. Personnel (Chair: Mr. Bland)**
Think Tank on schedules, workday compliance, social distancing measures, remote learning.
- 4. Physical and Mental Health (Chair: Dr. Hamblin)**
Think Tank on social distancing, counseling needs, health and safety.

Dear Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Families,

As information about the Coronavirus continues to dominate the news, and the questions surrounding the reopening of our school doors remain front and center, I want to reassure you that, as always, the safety of our students and staff is our top priority. We are working diligently on a plan to return staff and students in the fall safely. On June 26, 2020, Governor Murphy released [The Road Back: New Jersey's Restart and Recovery Plan for Education](#). The long-awaited guidance document sets forth a strategic road map for reopening our schools. The plan calls explicitly for our brick and mortar schools to open in the fall by stating, "...absent a shift in the public health data, school buildings will open in some capacity for in-person instruction and operations in the fall."

We anticipate that New Jersey will continue the road back to economic and social activity with a new resilience. We expect that most activities will be allowed with significant safeguarding. The District continues to apply precautions. Work that can be done at home continues to be done at home. Our actions are guided by local, state, and federal health authorities who are experts in keeping our communities safe from public health threats. We monitor the agencies' guidance daily and are in particularly close contact with our local health department. I continue to talk regularly with Hunterdon County School Superintendents and with Karen DeMarco, the Director and Health Officer of the Hunterdon County Department of Health. You can find information from the [Hunterdon County Health Department about the Coronavirus](#).

Below is an update of our current work:

- ➔ Work began the planning phases weeks ago with our surveys to staff, students, and parents. These surveys, along with other resources, are used to guide our planning.
- ➔ Our Health and Safety Plan must be approved by the Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Board of Education, the New Jersey Department of Education and the Executive County Superintendent's Office for in-person instruction to take place. The plan will include attention to a variety of measures including, but not limited to, attendance, screening, protective equipment, social distancing, cleaning, and transportation. Our plan will also take into account mental health concerns and the needs of special education students.
- ➔ The four Readiness Think Tank Task Forces have been formed and are meeting together to provide recommendations to me on the reopening of schools. Some task forces met last week and others this week. Task Forces will continue to meet next week in preparation for final recommendations due to me by July 20, 2020. I will share Task Force recommendations with the public at our Board of Education meeting on July 27, 2020.

Committee members are listed below and were selected from a group of volunteers that contacted the Superintendent's Office after the publishing of the [May](#) and [June](#) Superintendent's newsletters. In both newsletters, I asked for community members to consider joining a committee. There were 87 members of our community who volunteered to serve. Thank you! While I could not accommodate all 87 volunteers, I encourage community members to reach out to Task Force committee members to share thoughts, concerns, and ideas.



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Operations & Governance Task Force Members: (Chair: Dr. Kari McGann)	Finance Task Force Members: (Chair: Mrs. Stephanie Voorhees)	Personnel Task Force Members: (Chair: Mr. Dan Bland)	Physical & Mental Health Task Force Members: (Chair: Dr. Danielle Hamblin)
Jessica Abbott Sabrina Bajohr Bruce Black Kelly Bowers Jeff Cain Lisa Coster Dr. Tony DeMarco Karen Gabruk Marisa Handren Arione Lawson Laurie Markowski Michael Melillo Melanie Rosengarden Christina Schlegel Jim Shumate Peter Sibia Robin Smith Carla Thompson Katie Vaccarino Susan Vala	Valerie Bart Kristen Boyce Timothy Canonico Tiffany Cinquemani Sher DeGenova Crystal Dibetta Mitchelle Drulis Kaila Fasano Sherri Glaab Sue Gouldey Beth Katz Marybeth Madlinger Jeffrey Milheim Dan Shirvanian Anabela Tavares	Andrew Assini Tim Bart Priyanka Bhatia Bob Castellano Christine Casterline Michelle Cook Mary Jane Custy Danielle Larca Karen Lurie Mindy Pacholick Nydia Peake Betsy Roll Sarah Stangota Kelliann Tenkate Wendy VanDine	Vanessa Ahmed Brielle Ashforth Athena Bagaipo-Penalos Kathleen Barbee Jessica Braynor Rebecca Burns Lori Castronuovo Marie Corfield Ariej Dawood Christine Galloway Liz Gardner Tricia Giordano Dawn Hlavsa-Suk JoAnn Kernan Leigh Ann Koch Jesse Lockett Susan Mitcheltree Rebecca Moeri Sam Nagy Caitlin Persche Scott Vogel Meredith Weil

All task forces are weighing the impact of various scenarios that would impact the school if the Governor moves us into a stricter phase that would combine hybrid in-person and remote learning.

➔ Hunterdon Central Regional High School, along with the Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Transportation Department, is developing guidelines for requirements for riding the bus and how safety parameters and social distancing can be maintained.

➔ The District has used CARES Act funds to purchase touchless hand-gel distributors, mobile hand-gel stations, touchless thermometers, masks, and PPE equipment. We have advertised to hire 25 part-time Health & Safety Hygiene team members to be distributed between our schools to help with contact tracing, maintain cleanliness logs, wipe-down high contact areas, and temperature monitoring.

I understand that you may be concerned and I encourage you to be well informed. Take the time to read the monthly newsletters and attend Board of Education meetings. Talk with your children and explain that school is a safe place and that their teachers and friends all miss them. Reassure them that we will all be together soon. Help your child to wear a face-covering correctly. It is likely that masks will be required, not only on buses but also in hallways and other places where social distancing



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between students cannot be maintained. Emphasize good handwashing. Practice washing hands for 20 seconds using soap and water and using hand sanitizer. Below are resources to help keep you informed.

Despite the immediacy of the COVID-19 pandemic last spring, I am so proud of how our staff, faculty, community, students, and Board of Education responded to the crisis. I can assure you, our goal, if allowed by the Governor and health officials, is to reopen our doors to students, staff, and faculty in the fall with the continued motivation and energy we had this past spring. I expect to have our plans developed by the last week in July and fully shared with the community by August 6, 2020. It may be necessary to slightly adjust our plans if CDC guidelines change or to meet any additional Executive Orders released by Governor Murphy.

The guidelines outlined in *The Road Back: New Jersey's Restart and Recovery Plan for Education* will mean that the 2020-2021 school year will be different than in the past. We are planning for our schools to have responsible, reasonable solutions to open our schools in some capacity while meeting the health and safety requirements of the Department of Health and Department of Education. Our District remains committed to our mission of supporting every child, every day, at every opportunity.

Jon Huntsman, Jr., former U.S. Ambassador to Russia, former U.S. Ambassador to China, former U.S. Ambassador to Singapore, and former Republican Utah Governor is quoted as saying:

"Times of great uncertainty serve as wake-up calls in our lives, inviting us to lean into whatever is awoken, curious, and compassionate about what wants to emerge. We deepen trust as we explore moments we may have never imagined, with perspectives we never expected to hold. This is the birthplace of compassion, creativity, action, and transformation."

"A crisis allows us the opportunity to dig deep into the reservoirs of our very being, to rise to levels of confidence, strength, and resolve that otherwise, we didn't think we possessed. Through adversity, we come face to face with who we really are and what really counts." –Jon Huntsman, Jr.

Sincerely,

Superintendent of Schools

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

New Jersey Department of Health
<https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>

Hunterdon County Health Department Coronavirus information
<http://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/coronavirus.html>