

Flemington-Raritan Regional School District
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February 23, 2021

Dear Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Parents,

The District received notice of two positive COVID-19 cases of students, one at Barley Sheaf School and one at Reading-Fleming Intermediate School, who were last in their respective buildings on February 10. Our District nurses follow all contact tracing guidelines from the Department of Health.

In addition, this letter contains an important update from the February 22 Board of Education meeting as the district continues to work toward opening school doors wider for students. During last night's Board meeting, I shared information on opening our doors wider for students while accounting for the COVID-19 case rates in our region. You can find my presentation [linked here](#).

The Board of Education will review Policy 1648- Restart and Recovery Plan. The Policy Committee will meet tomorrow evening, February 24, at 6 p.m. to discuss Policy 1648- Restart and Recover Plan, [linked here](#). The Board is considering revising the policy to include the wording from the [New Jersey Road Back to Recovery Plan](#), *"Schools and districts must allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable. This can be achieved by ensuring students are seated at least 6 feet apart and considering the flow of student traffic around the room."*

The Board has also scheduled an additional public meeting which will be held on Monday, March 1, at 7 p.m. The meeting agenda and Zoom link will be available [online here](#). During this meeting, it is anticipated that the full Board will discuss Policy 1648 and possible revisions. If the policy is revised, a transition toward more in-person learning will mean:

Cohorts and Co-mingling

- An "all-virtual option" would continue to be offered to parents who select an all virtual option for their child.
- Cohort A and B would be co-mingled, which will reduce our ability to provide six-foot social distancing.
- Spacing between student seating will be significantly reduced from 6 feet to 3 feet, or less, between students. All spaces available in the school will be utilized; classroom libraries, gymnasiums, cafeterias, etc.
- Co-mingling with other cohorts/classes will continue to be minimized, as much as possible. However, some students will move between classes.
- There will be substitutes hired for some classrooms to provide supervision for those faculty members that need to teach virtually due to medical accommodations.

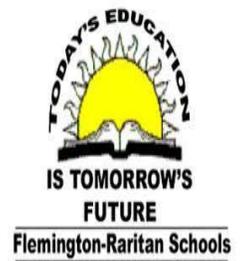
Rotation

- The weekly rotation of Cohort A and Cohort B would not be necessary.
- Schedules would likely return to our "normal" Days 1-6 and Day A/B rotations on an early-release schedule.

Instruction

- With larger class sizes, we would resume full-scale intervention services to support struggling learners. Therefore, in grades K-4, Science and Social Studies would resume being taught by the homeroom teacher.
- A possibility of a discontinuation of virtual "check-in" times and Counselor Corner at the end of the elementary day.
- Modifications to "specials/related arts" would be needed to prevent co-mingling and sharing of instructional materials - to the greatest extent possible.
- Livestreaming (i.e., broadcasting) instruction will be necessary for some classrooms to support students that are all virtual or quarantined due to exposure.

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- If parents opt to transition for in-person learning from an all virtual learning classroom it may not be possible for students to maintain their current teacher because the teacher may be remaining as an all virtual teacher. Building principals are working through transition requests.
- If parents opt to transition from an in-person classroom instruction to an all-virtual classroom instruction model, it may not be possible for students to maintain their current teacher. Building principals are currently working through transition requests.
- Building principals will provide specifics for individual school schedules and teachers assigned to students. Every effort is being made to provide continuity of instruction for all students despite the change in the schedule.

Length of Day and Lunch (At this time we are not considering a full-day schedule)

- At this time, a full-day schedule is not being planned.
- A successful shift to more in-person learning with combined cohorts while at the same time reducing social distancing will prompt further planning for a full-day schedule.

In-person Learning and All Remote Learning Preferences: The deadline to contact your child's building principal to request to transition from in-person learning to fully remote or vice versa for the spring trimester is now Friday, February 26, at 5 p.m.

The Board of Education, Superintendent, and Administrators, along with the School Pandemic Response Teams and District Nurses continue to monitor multiple sources of information to guide our decision making. We will not make impulsive decisions. All decisions will be based on reasoning and analyzing the data from health and education experts.

Below are a few links we are using to guide our planning.

- <https://youtu.be/-EaBJxpfisI> (YouTube link explaining the CDC guidelines and how local school districts should deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.)
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community/schools-childcare/K-12-Operational-Strategy-02142021.pdf> (CDC's Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Mitigation two-page guidance.)
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html> (The CDC's K-12 School Operational Strategy February 12, 2021 guidance.)
- <https://www.straussesmay.com/seportal/Public/DistrictPolicy.aspx?policyid=1648&search=COVID&id=ca89f6c80de04b0fa6a75266e9cf8f26> (District Policy 1648 Restart and Recovery Plan)
- https://nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID_GuidanceForSportsActivities.pdf (New Jersey Department of Health Guidance for Sports Released on February 8, 2021)
- <https://hcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/5b05521aaf1f4e3dbf5e0941572a5ff2> (Hunterdon County COVID-19 Dashboard)

Another letter with further information will be distributed this Friday, February 26, 2021.

Wishing you good health,

Dr. Kari McGann
Superintendent of Schools