

Flemington-Raritan Regional School District
Dr. Kari McGann
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March 12, 2021

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

We are excited to share upcoming dates in March and the finalized plans for more students to return to in-person learning. The next month's instruction is planned as the following:

Date	Cohort A	Cohort B
March 15-19	Remote Learning	In-Person
March 22-26	Cohorts A & B combine for five days a week instruction on an early dismissal schedule.	
March 29-April 1	Cohorts A & B combine for five days a week instruction on an early dismissal schedule.	
April 2-9	Spring Recess	
April 12-16	Cohorts A & B combine for five days a week instruction on an early dismissal schedule.	
<i>~Parents who selected all-virtual instruction for their child will continue with all-remote learning.~</i>		

The District has received additional mitigation supplies such as dividers for all students' desks and restocked our supplies of antibacterial wipes, hand sanitizer, paper towels, disinfectant spray, face shields and masks. Through CARES Act II funding we have the opportunity to modernize our classrooms with equipment that will provide long-term value and support 21st Century learning. Monitors, webcams, microphones, and sound equipment have been purchased to support virtual instruction and livestream/simulcast instruction.

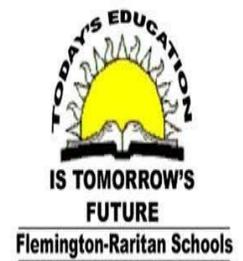
Our faculty has partnered together with our technology team to work together to prepare for additional classrooms to livestream instruction through dual monitors, webcams, pendant microphones, and sound bars. Our technology staff is setting up equipment in our classrooms to support students that are all virtual learners, as well as our in-person learners. Our virtual learners need the district's support to ensure a high-quality instruction that is comparable to our students that are receiving in-person instruction.

First, dual monitors are being set up in classrooms so teachers can extend their screen space and use one screen for Zoom and a different screen for instructional/presentation applications. Additionally, webcams have been ordered to provide wider angle views for instruction. The webcams can be focused on specific instructional areas: white board, smart board, word wall, easel, conference table, etc. The dual monitors and webcams have already arrived in the district.

Moreover, our classrooms will be outfitted with sound bars to help improve in-person students' ability to hear the teacher or students who are speaking. Sound bars will also be used to broadcast the virtual students who are speaking to the class of in-person learners. Amplifying instructional spaces will serve us in the future as an accommodation for students with hearing loss, auditory processing issues, and attentional deficits.

Finally, pendant microphones are expected to arrive soon for our classrooms. Pendant microphones will allow teachers to "un-tether" themselves from their laptops and teach from anywhere in the room while still being audible to virtual students. Pendant microphones can be used by teachers or students, and can amplify both in-classroom teaching as well as online teaching. The speaker/microphone kits were ordered immediately after Board approval, and we anticipate receiving them in approximately two weeks. These technology tools will continue to be valuable for future educational opportunities.

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As required by New Jersey's Governor's Executive Order and the [Department of Education Restart and Recovery: The Road Back](#), the district will continue to provide full time remote learning if a student's parent or guardian chooses this educational platform. Parents may submit for full-time remote instruction through a request to their child's building principal using guidance from [District Policy 1648.02](#). As of March 22, 2021, the district's schedule will include five days per week of in-person learning but will not allow for six feet of physical separation between desks in classrooms, as well as in other physical spaces. As our school district returns students for five days of in-person schooling, it is important that each parent who selects in-person learning does so knowingly and with full understanding of the decreased physical separation between students' desks. The notice to parents is not intended to insulate the District from its responsibilities of health and safety standards for our students, but rather it is intended to ensure that each parent understands the effects of the revision of Policy 1648 to reduce six-foot distancing to three feet between students while seated at desks. The revision to Policy 1648 is different from the previous model for in-person learning, which used a system of alternating cohorts, and did allow for six feet of physical separation between desks. For those parents selecting the in-person option for their child, please know that you also have the option to choose a fully virtual schedule for your child.

We are pleased to report for the past five weeks, the COVID-19 report delineates our Central West region remaining in the "yellow," in the "moderate" range. Despite this week's [COVID-19 report](#) the Central West region case rate (proportion of the population of daily new COVID-19 cases for every 100,000 people) and Percent CLI (the presence of coronavirus diagnosis codes from emergency department data), and the percent positivity rate (percentage of total positive COVID-19 PCR tests out all tests performed) increased slightly, however, we remain in the "yellow," in a "Moderate" range. As we continue to move forward with bringing more students back to school for in-person learning we are committed to carefully monitoring case rates, both county rates and school rates.

COVID-19 Update

The District received notice of a positive COVID-19 case of a Copper Hill School staff member who was last in the building on March 5. Our District nurses follow all contact tracing guidelines from the Department of Health.

Required Travel Quarantine- Travel Plans Are Discouraged

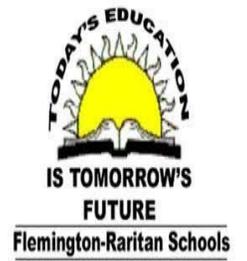
The milder weather is a happy reminder that spring break is just a few weeks away. At this time, the NJ Department of Health guidance is that non-essential, out-of-state travel is discouraged, regardless of a person's vaccination status. Travelers must continue to follow quarantining recommendations after travel. Unless there is a change in this guidance, all students who travel to any U.S. state or territory beyond the immediate region (New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Delaware) must quarantine. Speak with one of our school nurses for questions on the number of days your child must quarantine if your child travels. Also, please contact your child's school principal if your child has been required to quarantine due to exposure or travel out of New Jersey. Students that must quarantine will utilize simulcasting/live streaming support during their quarantine.

Substitutes Needed

Now more than ever, our district is in need of substitute teachers as we work to open doors wider for students while continuing to provide all-remote instruction to families that choose a virtual learning model. If you are interested in substituting in the District, [please click here for more information](#).

My best to all our families for a wonderful weekend.

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Sincerely,

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