



June 26, 2020

Dear Ridgewood School Community,

In a news conference this afternoon, Governor Murphy announced that the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is releasing its guidance regarding the reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 school year. At this time, schools will be able to open in some capacity for in-person instruction; however, each district will develop plans to best meet its needs with the priority being the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff.

School districts will have the flexibility to rearrange schedules and/or offer a hybrid model consisting of a combination of in-person instruction and remote learning to ensure adherence to social distancing requirements. Additionally, districts must be prepared for the possibility of transferring solely to remote learning should the public health situation deem it necessary.

The guidelines outlined include but are not limited to:

- Schools must follow social distancing to the maximum extent possible.
- Faculty, staff, and visitors must wear face coverings.
- Students are encouraged to wear face coverings, but they must be worn if social distancing cannot be maintained.
- All school buildings and buses must continue to adhere to existing, required facilities disinfecting and cleaning procedures.
- If social distancing cannot be maintained on buses, students must wear face coverings.
- Districts must establish screening policies for students and staff.

The reopening guidelines outlined today by Governor Murphy and Dr. Lamont Repollet, Commissioner of the Department of Education, provide a basic framework for districts, but now we are all tasked with the development of a plan that best addresses our concerns and student needs. The NJDOE guidance will help to inform the plans that we have already been developing for various instructional models and scenarios. I feel fortunate to be part of a collaborative network of educators and superintendents in Bergen County, where we have been working together to share ideas and discuss possible solutions. Input from our students, parents, faculty, and staff has also been instrumental in working toward the successful, safe, and positive return to school for our entire learning community.

We will share the details of the reopening plans as soon as possible. Until then, I hope you will enjoy some well-deserved relaxation this summer!

Sincerely,

Daniel Fishbein, Ed.D.

C: Board of Education

