



RIDGEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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July 28, 2020

Dear RPS Parents and Guardians,

The Ridgewood Public Schools' administrators and teachers have been hard at work developing a hybrid learning model and new protocols to ensure a safe and measured return to school. The opening of schools has become a topic for local, state, national, and international debate and controversy. Our goal is simple--to provide a learning environment that is safe for students and staff. While we want to open as usual, this public health emergency has shown that safely reopening requires careful analysis of current data and slow, deliberate steps. Consequently, we have designed a phased approach for our reopening of schools, which will allow us to monitor community health data and transition successfully from one phase to another.

Governor Murphy has directed schools to open with some degree of in-person instruction as outlined in the New Jersey Department of Education's *The Road Back*, as well as to offer a remote option to parents who are still concerned about their children returning to school. After discussing our proposed reopening plan with the Village of Ridgewood Health Director, we both agreed that returning to school full-time during phase one is not recommended. Furthermore, we concurred that a hybrid model of half-day, in-person instruction and virtual instruction is the most prudent plan for the first six-week period.

The A-K/L-Z model offers us safe transportation to and from school, as well as the time necessary to clean and disinfect our buildings for the next day. Other options considered caused health and safety concerns related to recess and lunchtime, the necessity for adequate cleaning and disinfecting between an AM/PM session, and scheduling and cleaning of buses. A-K/L-Z alternating half days for in-person instruction was determined to be the best option. Students in grades 6-12 will receive in-person instruction in the morning and virtual instruction in the afternoon. Elementary students will receive four-hours of in-person instruction on the day that aligns with their last name. On their at-home day, elementary students will be provided with two live virtual specials in the morning and a virtual session with their classroom teacher in the afternoon. Based on parent and student feedback from the spring, we intentionally integrated significantly more live virtual instruction into our hybrid model, and should the district need to close schools if circumstances in our community change, this will also be true for our fully remote model.

I want to thank everyone for their input and work toward the school reopening plan. We are all navigating a challenging situation, in particular, how to reopen school when there is conflicting and rapidly changing information. Compounding the difficulty of this situation is the need for parents to return to work. I can assure you that school personnel and health officials are not ignoring or minimizing risks. Though this plan may not satisfy everyone, know that it was carefully designed with the best interest of our students and staff in mind.



At this time, I ask that you review the video presentation and the Reopening 2020-2021 Parent FAQ. Following that, please complete the appropriate survey for each child in your household using the links below. Please be sure to complete only one survey per child.

- [Video Presentation of Transition to September, 7.23.2020](#)
- [Reopening 2020-2021 Parent FAQ](#)
- [Glen School Survey](#)
- [Elementary Survey](#)
- [Middle School Survey](#)
- [High School Survey](#)

Survey responses are due by noon on Friday, July 31, 2020.

Please continue to remind your children to wear masks when they are out in public, practice social distancing, and sanitize their hands as much as possible. These necessary measures will help us return to school safely. Finally, if you plan to travel to states on the [New Jersey Travel Advisory List](#), your child will have to quarantine before attending school.

In closing, let's work together to keep our children and community safe to ensure a successful reopening in September.

Sincerely,



Daniel Fishbein, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

C Board of Education
Dr. Wayne Yankus, School Physician
Dawn Cetrulo, Health Officer/Director, Village of Ridgewood Health Department