



# RIDGEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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October 2, 2020

Dear Ridgewood School Community,

Together, we have made it through the first month of school, and although there have been some bumps along the way, our teachers and administrators have received an abundance of positive feedback. Parents have expressed gratitude for the smooth operation of building procedures, the warm and welcoming environment, and the consistent communication from schools that keeps students engaged and connected whether they are enrolled in the hybrid or remote learning model. Above all, parents have shared their overwhelming appreciation for the teachers, who are pioneers in this new learning environment, remarking on their exceptional preparation, patience, empathy, and engagement with the students.

Our school nurses have done a phenomenal job managing the new procedures and protocols, and I would like to recognize their efforts in keeping our school community safe and healthy. The nurses are the district's liaisons with the local health department, and they have worked closely with the health officer regarding positive COVID-19 cases and contact tracing. The Pandemic Response Teams have continued to regularly review operations related to the school reopening plan and report feedback to the administrative team. Minor adjustments have been made to the Phase 1 schedules for middle school and high school students based on input received from teachers and students during the first weeks of school. While the initial schedules were successful in providing students with as much face-to-face time at the start of the year for hybrid the model, it was determined that a few changes in the number and length of periods could improve the experience at the secondary level.

Looking ahead, we have been laying the groundwork for the development of Phase 2 of the reopening plan. As part of this process, we are gathering feedback from all of our stakeholders. We have surveyed our staff to collect feedback on Phase 1 from a teaching perspective, given the new expectations of the hybrid and remote schedules, as well as specific recommendations that would enhance the educational experience in Phase 2. We have also met with parent representatives through our Home and School Associations to gather input and review parent surveys, which will help to inform the framework for Phase 2. Links to these surveys were emailed earlier today. Some of the questions contain detailed explanations; therefore, we ask that you take the time to consider them carefully. Also, please complete one survey for each child by October 5, 2020. While the start date for Phase 2 was initially identified as October 19, it is important to understand that this date could be altered, depending on a careful review of all data collected. We will communicate our progress and any potential changes to the original Phase 2 start date with sufficient time for parents to make necessary arrangements.

Finally, it is important to remember that the district follows the recommendations of the CDC and the NJDOH. We work collaboratively with the Village of Ridgewood Health Department to ensure the health and safety of the entire community, which is particularly important as we head into the flu season.



In the upcoming two months, there are several holidays and long weekends (Columbus Day, NJEA Convention, and Thanksgiving). Please remember to check the [New Jersey travel advisory](#) for a current list of states on the quarantine list and know that the list is updated frequently; therefore, it can change while you are traveling. If you visit a state on the list, there is a required 14-day quarantine period upon returning home.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation as we continue to work through the COVID-19 pandemic and provide the safest schools possible for our students and staff. We look forward to continuing to work together to make this a great year for our students!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Fishbein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Daniel Fishbein, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

C Board of Education