



Dumont Public Schools

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Superintendent of Schools

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Good Afternoon Dumont School District Families and Staff:

I hope you and your families are having a good summer and enjoying some fresh air and sunshine. I have a few updates from our Restart Committee to share, some of which I expect may be impacted by changing standards from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New Jersey Department of Health, and the Governor's office. While we wait for more information to be provided, I wanted to share our reopening status based on the most recent information to date from the Department of Education's recently published guidance document, *The Road Forward*, the State of New Jersey, and the CDC. Please remember that our status may be subject to change based on local and state mandates, so we ask for your continued understanding and flexibility as we plan and prepare for this school year.

DAILY SCHEDULES

All of the district's schools will operate on a **full-day schedule** with lunch. **All learning will be in-person.** The State of New Jersey recently announced that **remote learning is no longer an option** for students, and would only be counted towards the 180-day school attendance requirement if a district is required to close due to a declared state-of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive or recommendation by a local health agency or the state. With that being said, all districts are also being asked to prepare to offer virtual/remote instruction if directed to do so by local or state agencies. The district is prepared for hybrid, or all-virtual instruction should the need arise.

SCHOOL LUNCH

Lunch periods are being reinstated in all of our schools. Students will be provided with a free "cold" boxed lunch option, upon request, regardless of free or reduced lunch eligibility only if they remain on campus for lunch. This program is an extension of the federal program from last year.

As in previous years, students will be able to bring their own lunches to school, and students in grades 6-12 will be able to leave campus for lunch with parent permission. Elementary students can be picked up by a parent for off campus lunch as well. Parents will be asked by their schools to confirm whether or not their child will remain on campus for the lunch period on a marking period basis. Please be aware that students that remain in school for lunch will be seated in lunch areas (i.e. lunchroom, multi-purpose room, classrooms) in homeroom-based cohorts to help assist with potential contact tracing, and to ensure the maintenance of social distancing to the greatest extent possible.

Lunch Aides: We still have opportunities available for those interested in serving as lunch aides for 2021-2022. The hours are great and the company is fantastic. Please visit the district's website to apply.

WEARING OF MASKS

As of right now, the CDC is recommending that all K-12 staff and students in areas of "substantial" or "high risk" designation continue to follow mask wearing protocols regardless of vaccination status. A state or county's overall risk level takes into account three metrics: daily new cases per 100K (incidence), infection rate (Rt), and test positivity. Each metric has the following levels: green (low risk), yellow (medium risk), orange (high risk), and red (very high risk).

Currently, Bergen County is one of the counties in New Jersey with an **orange** designation, indicating that there is a **high risk**. *The Restart Committee will continue to review health recommendations from the state and county health departments, and will inform you if there are any changes to our current protocols and procedures regarding the wearing of masks before the start of the school year.* Please be aware that during periods of extreme heat, students may remove their masks while indoors to protect individual health, and mask breaks will be provided when possible at the direction of the teacher.

OTHER SAFETY MEASURES

The Road Forward recommends that districts implement additional layered protections as they plan for the new school year, this includes maintaining three feet of social distance between students in classroom settings to the greatest extent possible. The Restart Committee has also discussed continuing to utilize structural interventions within classrooms to aid with social distancing such as, facing desks in the same direction and continuing to use desk barriers in our elementary classrooms. The Restart Committee is also currently reviewing our daily screening procedures with the goal of streamlining the process for our families and staff. More information related to these additional safety measures will be released in our next update.

VACATIONS & DOMESTIC/INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

As the summer progresses, we ask that all families and staff exercise prudent judgment when making vacation plans that involve traveling outside of the State of New Jersey to help minimize the potential transmission of COVID-19 in our schools and to ensure that we can all begin the school year.

As a reference, I have attached the most recently updated CDC travel guidance for the vaccinated and unvaccinated. **If you are unvaccinated, traveling outside of the States of New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania and Delaware is currently restricted, and will require a period of quarantine.** International travel will also require a period of quarantine for the unvaccinated and required COVID-19 testing 3-5 days after a return from travel for both unvaccinated and vaccinated individuals.

Please reach out to your child's school if your family is traveling prior to the start of the school year and you are unclear about the guidance and whether or not your child must quarantine at the beginning of the school year. Guidance related to travel is subject to change,

so please visit the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html> for up-to-date guidance prior to making travel plans.

VACCINATION

Getting a COVID-19 vaccine has been recognized by the CDC and local authorities an important step to prevent getting sick with COVID-19 disease. Thus, it is important for the school district to know which of its staff and students has been vaccinated for scheduling and travel purposes. Staff members have been asked to share this information with the district. Parents will be asked to share the vaccination status of their children (if age eligible) to determine whether or not they may have to quarantine if exposed to COVID-19 and/or if they have traveled. **It is important to know that currently vaccinated staff and students do not have to quarantine when traveling domestically or if they have been exposed to an individual with COVID-19 compatible symptoms or COVID-19.**

While we are hopeful and remain positive that our school life is returning to something resembling normal, the Restart Committee is also preparing for more challenging circumstances again if necessary. Please understand that your child's health and safety, and that of our entire school community, is our highest priority. As part of our commitment to seek the input of our school community, we are asking that you complete a brief survey that can be accessed [here](#) or on the home page of our school district website located at www.dumontnj.org.

Please feel free to contact your building principal or my office if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Maria A. Poidomani, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools