



The Road Forward in 2021-2022:
COVID-19 Health & Safety Procedures

August 25, 2021

Introduction

The East Greenwich Township School District eagerly welcomes our students and staff for the 2021-2022 school year. While COVID-19 mitigation strategies remain in place, we are focused on providing our school community with the traditional, full day of teaching and learning. We recognize our traditional setting provides our students with the most academic and social emotional benefits, and we look forward to supporting students' growth as learners and citizens.

We remain committed to the health and safety of our school community, and this plan details our "Road Forward". The health and safety information is based upon The New Jersey Department of Education and the New Jersey Department of Health's "The Road Forward: Health and Safety Guidance for the 2021-2022 School Year".

1 General Health and Safety Guidelines

1.1 Vaccination

- Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - A person is considered fully vaccinated:
 - 2 weeks after a single dose vaccine such as Johnson and Johnson
 - 2 weeks after the second dose in a 2 dose series, such as Moderna or Pfizer
 - Given that vaccinations are currently available only for students age 12 and older, and COVID-19 vaccination is voluntary, our district buildings contain a combination of vaccinated and unvaccinated staff and students.
 - Additional mitigation strategies are in place to mitigate transmission of COVID-19.
- Vaccination status of students and staff is confidential.
 - District staff will be asked to provide their vaccination status at the start of the 2021-2022 school year in a confidential survey. This information will be used as a component of decision-making about in-person district events, such as staff meetings and in-service days.
 - Administrators and/or the school nurse may inquire about vaccination status in situations such as potential close contacts of COVID-19, potential quarantine of COVID-19, contact tracing, etc.
 - If the district is unable to determine the vaccination status of a staff member or student, he or she will be considered unvaccinated.
 - Vaccinations are free to NJ residents age 12 and older. The Gloucester County Department of Health hosts a vaccination clinic at 1200 North Delsea Drive in Clayton. Click [here](#) for a schedule of days/times.

1.2 Communication

- The district remains committed to making COVID-19 information and resources readily accessible to our school community. The district will continue to maintain a “COVID” tab on our district website where all district correspondence, as well as state and community COVID-19 resources, are maintained.
 - The EGTSD COVID Case Tracker will be posted on the district website for the 2021-2022 school year. The tracker will be updated at least weekly with positive cases of COVID-19 by date of report to the district and building location.
 - District-wide email notifications of COVID-19 positive cases will discontinue.
 - Weekly community updates with district and local positive cases will be provided.
 - Staff will continue to be notified of positive cases on the day reported to the district.
 - Close contacts will promptly be notified by the school nurse or administrator.
 - **NJ Weekly COVID-19 Activity Report** is published every Thursday by the New Jersey Department of Health. This report provides information on COVID-19 transmission at the regional level. There are 6 regions in the state, and Gloucester County is part of the Southwest Region. There are 4 levels of transmission: low (green), moderate (yellow),

high (orange), and very high (red). These levels of transmission are linked to the New Jersey Department of Health's [Public Health Recommendations for Local Health Departments for K-12 Schools](#).

- [Gloucester County COVID-19 Information](#) page provides a cumulative list of cases in Gloucester County by municipality.
 - [NJ COVID-19 Dashboard](#) provides information on COVID-19 throughout the state.
 - [CDC COVID Data Tracker](#) provides information on COVID-19 throughout the country.
- The district will continue to work closely with the Gloucester County Department of Health. Positive cases will continue to be reported to the Gloucester County Department of Health.

1.3 Masks

- On Friday, August 6, 2021, Governor Murphy signed [Executive Order 251](#). Effective Monday, August 9, 2021, this order requires all public school staff, students and visitors to wear a mask when indoors. Per the order, exceptions are listed below:
 - a. When doing so would inhibit the individual's health, such as when the individual is exposed to extreme heat indoors;
 - b. When the individual has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face masks without assistance;
 - c. When a student's documented medical condition or disability, as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Educational Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, precludes use of a face mask;
 - d. When the individual is under two (2) years of age;
 - e. When the individual is engaged in activity that cannot physically be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating or drinking, or playing a musical instrument that would be obstructed by a face mask;
 - f. When the individual is engaged in high-intensity aerobic or anaerobic activity;
 - g. When a student is participating in high-intensity physical activities during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals; or
 - h. When wearing a face mask creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.
- Masks are available in the nurse's office for any student or staff member in need.
- Masks continue to be required on buses by a federal mandate from the Transportation Security Administration. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Masks are optional outdoors. The CDC recommends that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people. Fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings if they or someone in their household is immunocompromised.
- Medical mask exemptions procedures are consistent with the 2020-2021 procedures. If your student has a documented medical condition, and a physician's note stating he or she is unable to wear a mask, please contact your child's principal for next steps. Approved medical exemptions will be documented in an individual health plan to identify accommodations to keep your student, other students and staff safe.

1.4 Maintain Physical Distancing and Cohorting

Social distancing is considered a best practice for mitigating the spread of COVID-19, and it will be implemented to the greatest extent practicable given that all students will return for full days of instruction.

- The district will implement 3 feet of social distance between students to the greatest extent possible in the classroom and during meals.
 - Seating charts will be maintained to aide in contact tracing.
- Siblings will be seated together on buses.
 - Seating charts will be maintained to assist in contact tracing.
- Desk barriers will no longer be used for all students, but they continue to be available as an added layer of mitigation.
- Outdoor spaces are available for instructional use when feasible.
- Outside visitors will be limited.
- Events and activities may be virtual depending upon the ability to social distance and the current COVID Activity Level.

1.5 Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- The district will continue to reinforce hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) can be used.
 - Hand sanitizer is available in all classrooms, offices and hallways.
- The district will continue to encourage respiratory etiquette.
 - Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue if not wearing a mask.
 - Throw away used tissues immediately.
 - Wash your hands. (See above).
- Signage will continue to be posted with reminders about proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

1.6 Meals

- All students are eligible for free lunch through a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture. This grant is at no cost to the district.
 - A monthly menu will be shared from the cafeteria.
 - Students wishing to order lunch will make their lunch selection during homeroom. A weekly order form will no longer be used.
- Students are discouraged from sharing food.
- Tables will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- Meal times will be staggered to increase the ability to social distance.
- Students will be seated 3 feet apart during meals. Students will not be seated directly across from each other.

1.7 Transportation

- Masks are required on school buses, per federal order from the Transportation Security Administration. Click [here](#) for more information.
- When possible, windows will be opened to increase airflow.
- Siblings will be seated together.
- Seating charts will be maintained to assist with contact tracing.

2 Cleaning, Disinfecting and Airflow

2.1 Limited Use of Shared Supplies and Equipment

- Students are encouraged to have a personal supply of high touch items, such as pencils, headphones, etc. to avoid sharing. A student in need of school supplies can obtain them through the school counselor.
- Some materials may be shared, and hand hygiene practices are encouraged between uses.
- Disinfecting supplies are available in every classroom for routine disinfection.

2.2 Cleaning and Disinfection

- The school district will continue routine cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces and daily cleaning and disinfection of classroom and common spaces.
- Enhanced cleaning protocols will be employed if a person exhibits COVID-19 compatible symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19.
- Staff will have access to gloves, sanitizer and paper towels to wipe down in-classroom surfaces as needed.
- All cleaning products will be used according to the directions on the label and EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19.

2.3 Improving Airflow

- All indoor facilities will have adequate ventilation, including operational heating and ventilation systems.
- Re-circulated air contains a fresh air component. The HVAC system is purged nightly with 100% outside air. Throughout the school day, the HVAC system utilizes 25% outside air.
- Windows and doors may be opened, if practical. Do not open doors if doing so poses a security risk.
- Filter(s) for A/C units are maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations.
- Each classroom and office space contains an air purifier.

3 Screening, Exclusion and Response to Symptomatic Students & Staff

3.1 Parental Screening

- Parents and guardians are asked to monitor their children daily for signs of illness, and to keep sick students home from school.
 - A daily symptom monitoring form will not be used for staff or students.
- The district will provide frequent communication on the importance of monitoring symptoms and reminders to check for symptoms prior to leaving for school.

3.2 Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff

- If a staff member or student exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day, he or she will be isolated from the school population.
- The student or staff member's classroom will be closed for cleaning. Students/staff occupying that room will be relocated to another space.
- The nurse and/or administrator will conduct contact tracing and communicate with all impacted staff and parents/guardians.

3.3 Exclusion

- In school settings, the NJ Department of Health recommends that students and staff with COVID-compatible symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school:
 - At least **two** of the following symptoms: fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose;
 - OR
 - At least **one** of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, or new taste disorder.
 - For students with chronic illness, only new symptoms or symptoms worse than baseline should be used to fulfill symptom-based exclusion criteria.
- Exclusion periods are based upon the rate of community transmission and the New Jersey Department of Health's [Public Health Recommendations for Local Health Departments for K-12 Schools](#) Exclusion Criteria.

3.4 Close Contact

- A close contact is within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more in a 24 hour period.
 - **Exception:** In the K-12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition ***excludes students*** who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or clinically compatible symptoms/illness) when both students ***correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time.***
 - This exception does not apply to staff or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.
- Unvaccinated close contacts are excluded based upon the rate of community transmission and the New Jersey Department of Health's [Public Health Recommendations for Local Health Departments for K-12 Schools](#) Exclusion Criteria.

- Vaccinated close contacts with no COVID-like symptoms do not need to quarantine, be excluded from school or be tested following an exposure.
 - They should still monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following an exposure. If they experience symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 testing and inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care.

3.5 Remote Instruction/180 Day Requirement

- Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9, schools must be in session for 180 days to receive state aid. The statute requires that school facilities be provided for at least 180 days during the school year.
- When a district is required to close the schools of the district for more than **three consecutive school days** due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive and/or recommendation by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure, days of virtual or remote instruction commensurate with in-person instruction will count towards the district’s 180-day requirement.
- In circumstances when the school facilities remain open and in-person instruction continues in those classrooms that are not required to quarantine, those days in session will also count towards the district’s 180-day requirement in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.
- Remote learning is not permitted for inclement weather, so inclement weather closings will be made up in accordance with the 2021-2022 district calendar.

4 Contact Tracing

4.1 Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is the process used to identify those who come into contact with people who have tested positive for many contagious diseases, including COVID-19. The district will fully cooperate with the Gloucester County Department of Health in the process.

- School officials will engage the expertise of their school nurses on the importance of contact tracing, and school nurses will regularly communicate with the Gloucester County Department of Health.
- The superintendent and any designee(s) will work closely with the Gloucester County Department of Health to support any efforts towards identifying students/staff necessary to facilitate contact tracing for confirmed COVID-19 cases that impact the district/school community.
- Based on the guidance from the Department of Health, the school nurses and administrators will notify parents and staff of close contacts and exclusion requirements. Confidentiality will be maintained.

5 Testing

5.1 Diagnostic Testing

- Our school nurses will continue to connect families with options for COVID-19 testing.

5.2 Screening Testing

- To mitigate risk, the district will continue to encourage staff and students to stay home when they are sick.
- The district is not engaged in an onsite screening testing program.