

July 12, 2021

Dear LRHSD Families and Staff,



We hope you are enjoying your summer! We don't want to rush through break, but we are looking ahead with excitement to the 2021-2022 school year and eager to share our plans. "Operation Open LRHSD" has gone through many iterations this past year, guiding us through new challenges and helping us move toward a full reopening. Today, we are pleased to announce school in the fall will closely resemble what we were accustomed to pre-COVID, with all Lenape Regional High School District students and staff returning for five full days of in-person instruction.

Our plan to resume a more traditional school experience must continue to incorporate recommended health and safety measures. Committees are analyzing feedback regarding our previous plans and reviewing the recently released [NJ Road Forward Health and Safety Guidance](#). Although our committees are still at work on finalizing some details, we can share a **broad overview of key aspects of our district's draft plan**. We are releasing these initial components to help families begin making informed decisions about their students' education.

While daily COVID-19 cases are in the single digits in Burlington County, please keep in mind that the public health situation is constantly evolving, and this draft plan is subject to change. As of today, our plans include:

Schedule:

- LRHSD will operate five full days following our regular Four Day Rotating Schedule (7:30 AM – 2:27 PM).
- Per Governor Murphy, there will be no remote option for class; all classroom instruction must be in-person.
- There will be hot and cold "grab and go" FREE lunches (and free breakfast) daily for ALL students, per the U.S. Department of Agriculture, at no cost to the district. (Lunch period details are currently being determined.)
- All sports and extracurricular activities will be offered.

Health and Safety Measures:

- Masks will be optional for all individuals in LRHSD. Masks are encouraged for unvaccinated individuals but not required.
- All classrooms will accommodate all students registered for classes scheduled to meet there, with reasonable social distancing in effect (approximately 3 feet, for example).
- Contact tracing will occur with requirements for quarantine if there is close contact with a COVID-positive individual (defined as being within 6 feet for a period of 15 minutes or longer). Per the NJDOH guidelines, all vaccinated students/staff identified as a close contact DO NOT have to quarantine if they are symptom-free.
- School officials will continue ongoing consultations with the Burlington County Health Department and district physicians.
- Staff and students shall continue to use the COVID-19 screening tool and stay home when they are sick.

Cleaning and Disinfecting:

- Tubs of wipes will be located in all classrooms and hand-sanitizing stations will be placed throughout LRHSD buildings.
- Air scrubbers will be used in the nurses' offices, locker rooms and weight rooms.
- Disinfecting protocols will remain, and if/when there is a confirmed positive Covid-19 case, other measures and the Halo Disinfection Fogging System will be put into service.

While this past school year was challenging, it did create scenarios for new and effective ways to support our students academically and emotionally. The principals will share the changes as we finalize our 2021-2022 plans. However, we can announce now that all students will be issued a Chromebook, all teachers will use Google Classroom and the Wellness Centers will have new features.

We also intend to maintain the level of communication and close relationships we established with parents and guardians last year. Your involvement and interest helped students stay engaged and focused while learning remotely and helped us identify ways to improve their experiences. Please contact your school principal if you have any questions about the upcoming school year, but please keep in mind many details are still not finalized.

Additional Information for Non-Vaccinated Individuals

For all parents of vaccinated students, you can stop reading this lengthy letter – but for the remaining group, please indulge me with a bit more of your time. We understand it is a parent’s right not to have his or her child receive the COVID-19 vaccine; it is not required to attend public school in NJ. LRHSD is not requiring students to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, nor are we requiring the vaccine to opt out of wearing a mask. However, wearing a mask is encouraged to protect other non-vaccinated individuals and to keep our classes, clubs and teams intact. Aside from the reasons presented by the medical community, being vaccinated against COVID-19 will better ensure a student’s education and participation in athletics and activities is not disrupted.

Since we will be operating with less than 6 feet of spacing between students, there is the potential for more close contacts with each case of COVID-19. Per the NJDOH guidelines, any unvaccinated person who is identified as a close contact must be excluded from school, practice or their activity for 7-14 days, depending on other factors. We can make up missed instruction, upon a student’s return, but there is no replacing the in-person classroom dynamics and conversations, nor can you “make up” missed practices, games or other extracurricular events. We want next year to be as uninterrupted as possible for every student and staff member, and that is more likely for vaccinated individuals.

For your convenience, we will send a separate notification regarding a vaccination clinic this summer at Cherokee High School offered at no cost to the district by Walmart Pharmacy. This will be open to all unvaccinated students and staff from Lenape, Cherokee, Shawnee and Seneca. We also understand that you or your child may have concerns or questions about the vaccine. We urge you to speak with your primary physician to seek answers directly from someone you trust.

Once again, please contact your school principal if you have any questions before our next, much more detailed communication later this summer. Soak up these summer days, relax and rejuvenate for our September return to school, *Better Than Ever in 2021!*

Sincerely,

Carol L. Birnbohm, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Lenape Regional High School District