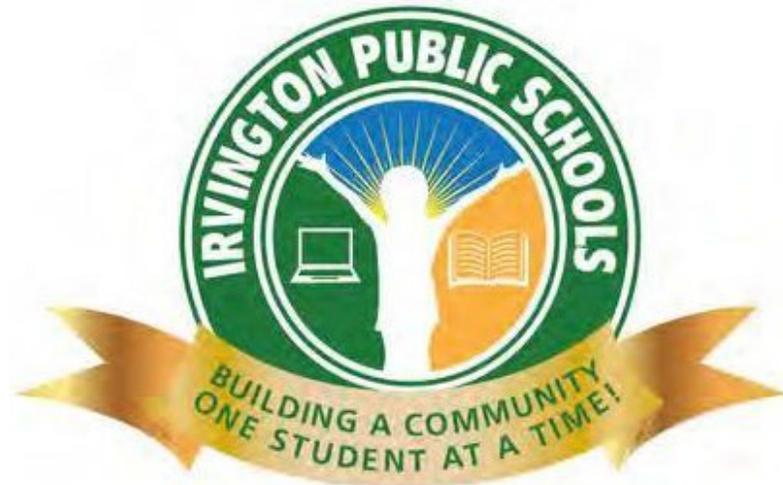


IRVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS: REOPENING PLAN FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR



Dr. April Vauss
Superintendent of Schools

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2020-2021 Irvington Board of Education

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Dr. Deniese Cooper.....	Grove Street Elementary School
Malikita Wright.....	Madison Avenue School
Tyisha Bennett (Acting Principal).....	Mt. Vernon Avenue School
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Stacey Love.....	Thurgood Marshall School
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SCHOOLS
Superintendent

IRVINGTON PUBLIC

Office of the

Dr. April Young

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

August 30, 2021

Dear Irvington Public Schools Stakeholders:

First, I want to thank you for your continued support. It takes parents, students, staff, and community members to join together to ascertain any normalcy in the midst of this nationwide pandemic. While COVID-19 has presented some challenges, with your continued support, Irvington Public Schools will be able to begin a new school year with our students present for learning in their respective school buildings. Our schools will open for in-person learning for all students come September 2021. As we endeavor to prepare an educational environment that will remain conducive to learning, your engagement and support are vital. I would be inattentive if I did not say that Irvington Public Schools will continue to rely on all stakeholders to ensure that our students are college and career ready.

I know you have been challenged to seek normalcy, but I assure you that IPS staff will do everything possible to help our students continue to receive an education that is equipped with superior learning experiences while keeping our students safe. Currently, we are making plans to begin the 2021-2022 school year with 100% in-person learning for all students. We are also returning to the usual schedules and continue to increase our cleaning and maintenance activities to promote the healthiest instructional environment possible.

It is impossible to elaborate on all of the details regarding our planning in this letter, but please know that our goal is to provide the healthiest and highest quality instructional environment feasible for our students before the first day of the new school year. We plan to follow the New Jersey Department of Public Health Guidelines as well as guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New Jersey State Department of Education.

Precisely, IPS will return to:

- Traditional Framework- students will learn in a traditional learning environment and receive face-to-face instruction. Daily physical attendance will be required. This framework will be available if there is no surge in the number of new cases for COVID-19.

We will begin this Traditional Framework on September 8, 2021. Meanwhile, the opening plan is posted on the IPS website for public comments. Public comment on the plan can be submitted in writing to arashid@irvington.k12.nj.us. In addition, the reopening plan will be available on IPS website in languages that best serve our community. I encourage you to continuously monitor the IPS website, school websites, social media, and other forms of media to stay abreast of all updates.

As we move forward with our plan for 100% in-person learning, please remember our priority is to provide our students with the opportunity to grow academically in an environment that is conducive to learning.

I appreciate your cooperation and assure you that the Irvington Board of Education's staff will continue to work tirelessly to provide the best education for students. Irvington Public Schools thanks you for your support as we continue "Building our Community, One Student at a Time!"

Dr. April Vauss

 
Superintendent of Irvington Public Schools

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Introduction

Irvington Public Schools: Reopening Plan- Recommended Procedures for the 2021-2022; and has been developed to be consistent with the requirements in the NJDOE Guidance with consideration to the school district's local needs in order to ensure school(s) in the district reopen fully to in-person safely.

To ensure consistency with respect to the health and safety of school communities across the State, the NJDOE Guidance speaks specifically to health and safety measures identified as "anticipated minimum standards." These "anticipated minimum standards" are items the NJDOE Guidance recommends a school district incorporate into the Plan as definite components related to health, safety, and operations. Through this established set of statewide standards, the NJDOE can ensure the State's educational health does not come at the expense of public health. The "anticipated minimum standards" in the NJDOE Guidance are listed and have been incorporated into the District Plan.

The NJDOE Guidance also provides "considerations" that may help school officials in strategizing ways to adhere to the "anticipated minimum standards". These "considerations" are not listed in the District Plan, but school officials have reviewed and incorporated these "considerations."

This plan is aligned with the requirements outlined in the NJDOE Guidance. Irvington Public Schools: Reopening Plan- Recommended Procedures for the 2021-2022. Reopening of Schools includes the school district's unique and locally developed protocols to ensure school(s) in the district reopen safely for 100% in-person learning.

Irvington Public Schools is aware that soliciting feedback from parents and teachers/staff is vital to evaluating the district's experience during the 2020-2021 school year within the parameters of state requirements. As a result, the district has posted this reopening plan for public comments from June 9, 2021 through June 16, 2021.

The requirements outlined in the NJDOE Guidance and incorporated into this plan are controlled by Executive Orders of the Governor of New Jersey. The Superintendent of Schools reserves the right to modify all guidance based on current information from the governor's office, NJDOE/NJDOH, and the Irvington Township Health Department.

Plan Overview

All students will be back in school for full-time, in-person instruction for the start of the 2021-2022 school year; and a full-time remote learning will not be an option for families. School districts will be required to fully open buildings beginning September 8, 2021 for in-person instruction, and parents or guardians will not be able to opt children out of in-person instruction as allowed for the 2020-2021 school year. However, remote learning will be permitted at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools and in consultation with the Local Health Department in the event that there is a localized outbreak or other emergency. Starting from September 8, 2021, students will attend schools daily and receive face-to-face instruction from their teachers. To be precise, there will be full entry for all students and staff, Monday through Friday.

Building Our Community, One Student at a Time:

Teachers are expected to be confident and positive:

- Teachers will continue to infuse Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into daily instruction in every classroom
- Teachers will prepare lessons and activities to ensure all student engagement
- Teachers will continue to infuse technology into daily instruction
- Teachers will take time to research effective instructional practices to address the diverse needs of our scholars.
- Teachers will continue to report different discipline issues or other problems that might occur in the classroom as a result of COVID 19
- Teachers will share best practices during PLC and/or at staff meetings with fellow colleagues, and district administrators.
- Teachers will partner with colleagues, support staff, parents, principals, assistant principals, supervisors,, and directors to support student instruction throughout the school year,
- Until further notice, teachers will continue to have students remain in rows, as opposed to the small groupings.,

Registration Process

Online and in-person early registration will be available to parents/guardians the week of August 25, 2021. The district will work with community stakeholders to disseminate information regarding access to the online registration process available through the Irvington Public School District Website, school buildings, and on local access radio. This is to limit direct contact with those individuals who are yet to get the vaccine against COVID-19.

A hyperlink to the registration portal is available on the Irvington Public School District Website with systematic instructions as to how to complete the registration process.

- The proposed online registration portal is an add-on module to the current PowerSchool Student Information System used by the district
- Registration documents can either be uploaded to the system or dropped off at a designated secure location (lockbox) outside of each school building in an envelope
- Clearly identifying the name of the student and the date of online registration
- In the case of direct registration at schools, parents/guardians will call the registration clerk for appointment
- Registration documents will be available in other native languages such as Spanish, and Haitian Creole

Attendance Recordings

For in-person instructional days, attendance can be recorded in PowerSchool by 10:30 a.m. However, daily attendance, absences and tardiness will be reviewed by the principals or designees and contact parents/guardians for updates on students. The following options have been considered:

- During instructional days, teachers will mark students present on a daily basis
- A “school day” shall consist of not less than four hours, except that one continuous session of two and one-half hours may be considered a full day of Kindergarten.
- Students who become ill must stay home. Parents will inform the school nurse and absences will be excused based on proper documentation
- If a student is going to be absent as a result of an emergency, parents will inform the school nurse and absences will be excused based on proper documentation

Curriculum

English Language Learners

ESL teachers and classroom teachers will continue to implement instructional strategies to address the academic and language needs of ELL students. In addition, supervisors, building administrators, and teachers will continue to collaborate with families to provide resources and tools to ensure the academic success of ELL students.

- ESL teachers will provide in-person instruction to students
- ESL teachers will adjust lessons accordingly to meet the needs of English Language Learners. Teachers will work to make the curriculum content comprehensible to students. They will focus on helping students develop in the areas of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing with specific focus placed on developing speaking skills

The district's website will continue to offer parents relevant resources/tools to support students at home. Information on the webpage is made available in multiple languages to meet the needs of our ELL population.

Special Education

Appropriate educational programs and related services will be provided for students with disabilities. Teachers, support staff, and IEP teams will work with families to collaboratively identify the services for students. The special education department will provide training, resources, and tools to support IEP teams in determining the needed services for all students.

Special education services for students will occur full-time in-person based on collaboration with families and as per the students' IEP. General education/special education teachers and related service providers will work with families to discuss students' individual needs and access to the curriculum and progress toward IEP goals. General education and special education teachers will meet in-person using the tools/resources provided by the district.

The special education department will work with families to conduct IEP meetings. The case managers and IEP team members will continue to contact parents and monitor special education services to determine progress toward a student's IEP goals.

Physical Education / Recess

The Irvington Public Schools will adhere to the following protocols:

- Stagger recess if needed
- If two or more groups are participating in recess at the same time, there will be at least six feet of open space between the two groups
- The use of cones, flags, tape, or other signs to create boundaries between groups.
- Require that all staff and students wash hands immediately after outdoor play
- Stagger the use of playground equipment and establish a frequent disinfecting protocol for all playground equipment used by students
- Complete an inventory of outdoor spaces (athletic fields, track, green spaces, open space, and local parks) and designate zones, use stations, mark off areas, floor markers, floor tape, poly spots, etc., to ensure separation among students (six feet apart for social distancing)
- Students may be encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and safe footwear to school that allows for safe movement and is appropriate for the weather in order to participate in physical education without the use of a locker room
- The school district will mitigate risk, limit and/or eliminate direct contact with equipment (lessons with no equipment), and will not allow sharing of equipment. Per NJDOH guidelines, all equipment must be sanitized after use. The school district will designate specific areas for each class during recess to avoid mixing of students.
- Plans for storage of backpacks during physical education class shall be developed by the building principal due to the ban of locker rooms.

Athletics Department Management Protocols

- It is the athletic department's expectation that the entire athletic community be responsible for the health and wellbeing of every stakeholder-staff, students and their families. With that expectation comes the responsibility of Student-Athletes, Coaches, Athletic Trainers, Screeners, Administrations, and within the continuum of resocialization
- If the requirements as set by New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA), the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), and the New Jersey Department of Health are not complied, the student-athlete will lose the privilege of being able to participate in the session and not be allowed to return until the official start date of their season
- The program that violates the guidelines will not be allowed to practice for the remainder of the session
- Direct any student-athlete, coach or staff member with a temperature over 100.4° F to go home or to the designated area to wait, to call parents for a pick up, and further instructions
- Screenings shall be conducted prior to each practice/game. A screening shall consist of a temperature check and a daily health questionnaire for all players and coaches prior to the start of practice/games. These screenings will begin thirty minutes before practice begins, and shall stop ten minutes after practice starts. No party shall be admitted to practice ten minutes after the session begins without making prior arrangements with the coaching staff and/or athletic director
- All parents, athletes and coaches must sign the district's COVID-19 waiver prior to participating in athletic activities
- All parents and athletes must sign and submit the NJSIAA's updated health history form prior to participating in athletic activities
- Administration is responsible for communicating with parents, students, staff, and the Irvington Township Department of Health in the event someone tests positive for COVID-19
- The Athletics Department oversees the screening process and procedures associated with the resocialization of sports in Irvington High School Athletics.
- Parents must pick up their child if they are contacted regarding any indications that their child might have symptoms of COVID-19
- Parents must get medical clearance for their child to continue participating in any of the Athletics program
- Any student-athlete, coach or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19 must self- quarantine for a minimum of 7 – 10 days and must provide a medical clearance in order to return. Coaches who fail the COVID-19 screening will not be allowed to attend activity and must obtain a medical clearance
- The Director of Athletics will be notified of any student-athlete or coach who fails the screening and further plans will be developed at that time if necessary

- Stakeholders will be informed of potential exposure in a timely manner as information becomes available
- The Director of Athletics will work with the Irvington Township Department of Health for adequate contact tracing
- In the event a student-athlete, coach or staff member does not comply with the NJSIAA protocols, they will no longer participate in any of the programs.
- Coaches must comply with all NJ executive orders regarding indoor limits. Coaches must also maintain a high level of awareness of possible COVID-19 exposure throughout all practices.
- Coaches must ensure social distancing practices are maintained to the maximum extent practicable during all practices.
- All school personnel must maintain a high level of awareness of possible COVID-19 exposure throughout all phases of the game.
- Coaches are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the coach's health.
- Students are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the student's health or the student is engaged in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activities.
- Schools must ensure social distancing practices are maintained to the maximum extent practicable during the game.
- Team benches must be limited to essential personnel. Coaches must limit the number of players at each game.
- Post-game handshakes and celebrations are prohibited.

Limitations on Gatherings

Executive Orders 241, 175, and 196, further set guidelines for indoor sporting events only.

- If the number of individuals who are necessary for the practice or competition, such as players, coaches, and referees, is greater than 10 persons, the practice or competition may proceed.
- If the above exception applies, the number of individuals still may not exceed 25 percent of the capacity of the room in which it takes place, or 150 persons, whichever is less.
- Any changes or updates to Executive Orders will necessitate updates to these guidelines.

Facilities Cleaning

- All facilities shall be cleaned and sanitized thirty minutes prior to the start of each practice, and every 30 minutes after practice begins
- Prior to any person entering the facilities, wipe down and sanitize hard surfaces
- Individuals should wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with warm water and soap before touching any surfaces or participating in workouts
- Hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes will be available for individual use when transitioning from one place to another
- Weight room equipment should be wiped down thoroughly before and after an individual's use of equipment
- Moderate risk sports practices and competition may resume
- Hand sanitizer will be available at all practices and games

Face Coverings

- Student-athletes who are engaged in high-intensity aerobic activity, e.g., running, sprinting, etc., do not need to wear face coverings during the period of the aerobic activity. Once the aerobic activity is over, student-athletes shall wear face coverings
- Student-athletes who are not engaged in high-intensity aerobic activity, e.g., sitting on the bench, reviewing plays, watching videos, waiting in line, etc., are encouraged to wear face coverings
- Coaches and district personnel must wear face coverings at all times unless engaged in cardiovascular activity with the players
- Face Masks are part of the entrance requirement for practices and games.
- Every student-athlete, coach or staff member is required to provide their own facemask
- If anyone does not have a facemask with them when they arrive for temperature checks, they will be asked to leave and return when they have acquired a facemask

Training Room

- Social distancing and face coverings are required for all staff and students while inside the training room unless it would inhibit the individual's health.
- All areas must be cleaned and sanitized in accordance with CDC and EPA guidelines.
- No other individuals should be present in the training room except for the athletic trainer, the student receiving treatment, and one medical witness.

Equipment/Storage Rooms

- The amount of time spent in the storage rooms should be minimized.
- Social distancing and face coverings are required for all staff and students while inside the equipment storage room unless it would inhibit the individual's health.
- All areas must be cleaned and sanitized in accordance with CDC and EPA guidelines.

Social and Emotional Learning

A component of the New Jersey Department of Education's proposal for the return to school, included essential social and emotional learning components. The district is

focused on the well-being of all students, staff, and families. These unprecedented times require changes on how instruction will be delivered to support all students' social and emotional learning needs. The following strategies will be practiced for school year 2021-2022:

- Meditation and Mindfulness exercises, when possible
- Integrated Social and Emotional classroom lessons (shared ideas for the counseling department)
- Daily check-ins by school social workers and school counselors
- Individual and Group counseling sessions facilitated by school counselors
- Counseling and mental health resources provided to families, as needed
- Professional development for staff on topics such as grief and loss, depression, anxiety, motivation techniques, social and emotional curriculum, and promoting mental wellness
- Teachers prepare and plan a series of student academies that will provide a platform for students to share their experiences; thus, providing support staff with the opportunity to respond appropriately
- Schools will continue to create a Zen Den/Reset Room/Mindfulness space for students who are dealing with overwhelming emotion in the moment, and need the opportunity to decompress. The idea is to provide a safe space for students who need time to regroup. There will be follow up from a school counselor to every student who visits the room, to ensure that students feel supported and are safe

Academic, Social and Behavior Supports

Multi-tiered Support Systems - All schools will provide the following support systems for students' academic development and social growth: RTI, I&RS, PBSIS, Counseling Support Services; as well as universal screenings if needed. To support all students' academic, social, emotional, and behaviors, teachers will use positive dialogue starters to elicit students' responses and provide appropriate dialogue to support and engage students in the process of learning content and class discussions (identify students in need and provide support).

- Developmental expectations: Language abilities of students based on age, Non-verbal communication (drawing versus writing)
- Engage trusted staff in the school community as per students and families request to support students' social and emotional needs
- Build capacity of staff to recognize students' needs, and seek support for them (professional development training)

Provide for the social, behavioral, emotional, and mental health needs of the students and families in the community. This will include flexibility to accommodate the needs and different circumstances of families and students.

Developmental Needs

The Intervention Committee is convened for students identified as potentially at risk of harm to self or others. Parents/Families are immediately notified of any concerns. The district's Suicide and Prevention and Crisis Intervention policy will remain the same for the school year 2021- 2022. The following teams are in operation in every school to support students, teachers, and families:

- School Safety Team
- PBSIS Team
- SCIP Team

Restorative Practice: Restorative justice in schools will be practiced. Building administrators will continue to receive professional development training. The goal is to build and maintain positive and respectful relationships within the entire school community. This is a district-wide initiative to enhance communication throughout the schools, and to establish a pro-social school environment during the school year.

Mental Health Supports

Counselors are preparing for students' return to school with a variety of wellness initiatives and mindfulness programs to support initiatives are already in place within our schools. We recognize the importance of relationships and safe spaces for our students and staff. For the 2021-2022 school year, procedures will be implemented for students to access services without undue attention to self. Check-ins for students identified at higher levels of risk; proactive efforts by all staff to identify students in need of intervention. The Intervention Committee is convened for students identified as potentially at risk of harm to self or others. Parents are immediately notified of any concerns. Levels of risk are assessed, and if a student is found in need, mental health clearance is required for re-entry to school.

Safety Response Teams

- School-based Safety Response Teams will be responsible to centralize, expedite, and implement COVID-19 related decision-making
- Each school team will have a liaison that reports to district-level administrators to ensure coordinated actions across the district
- Members of the school teams should include a cross section of administrators, teachers, staff, and parents

- Safety Response Teams should represent a cross-section of the school and district, including its gender and racial diversity, as decision-making and communication will be more effective if decision-makers reflect the make-up of the community
- If a school has an existing Crisis Response Team, that Team may serve as the Safety Response Team
- Safety Response Team should be comprised of, at a minimum, the following members, if applicable:
 - School Principal or Lead Person
 - Teachers
 - Child Study Team member
 - School Counselor or mental health expert
 - Director/Supervisor
 - School Nurse
 - Teachers representing each grade level band served by the school
 - School safety personnel
 - Custodian
 - Parent

The Safety Response Team is responsible for:

- Overseeing each school's implementation of the Plan, particularly health and safety measures, and providing safety and crisis leadership
- Adjusting or amending school health and safety protocols as needed
- Providing staff with needed support and training
- Reviewing school level data regarding health and safety measures and the presence of COVID-19 and reporting that data to the district as required
- Developing and implementing procedures to foster and maintain safe and supportive school climates as necessitated by the challenges posed by COVID-19
- Providing necessary communications to the school community and to the school district
- Creating pathways for community, family, and student voices to continuously inform the team's decision-making

Technology

Technology

- Assistance and information were provided on how to make free internet connectivity accessible to students and teachers in need
- For the school year 2021-2022, all students in grades K - 12 will be provided with a technology device through the district's 1:1 initiative. In addition, the Irvington Public Schools will collaborate with local and state governments, as

well as local service providers to facilitate connectivity for the 2021-2022 school year

- Videos that provide systematic procedures on using technology are available on the District website
- Help-line is available for Technical assistance to students, teachers, and parents at 1-973-399-6800 ext. 1800
- Technology will continue to be addressed on an ongoing basis

Assessment

Early Childhood Assessment

- Students will be assessed during in-class and live instruction to identify their knowledge, skills, and abilities and to plan for instructional decisions using Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment
- Multiple sources of student data will be used to evaluate student performance, such as class anecdotes, work samples, students' portfolios, photos of virtual activities, parents' photos or videos of home activities, etc.
- Regardless of whether a lesson is administered live or remotely, accommodations must be made for ELLs and Special Education students

K-12 Schools

- Students will be tested at the beginning of the school year in ELA and Math using the i-Ready diagnostic. The selected diagnostic will be the end of year diagnostic from the student's previous course/grade for informing instruction during the majority of the first cycle
- All schools will follow the Board approved testing schedule as outlined in the 2021-2022 Assessment Handbook
- Online assessments include those developed by teachers using the G-suite, products available through the District, and approved vendor platforms (ex. Pearson Realize, and edConnect)

Social Distancing in Schools

Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)

The district will continue to follow the applicable Federal, State and Local Government and Health Department guidance with regard to physical distancing. The district will use a modified version of the physical distancing requirements described in the IPS Restart and Recovery Plan to Reopen Schools which governed the return to in-person learning in the 2021-2022 school year. More specifically, per the Governor's current directive, all students will return to in-person instruction every day. The district will return to a full day schedule for all students. The district will continue to ensure that all instructional and non-instructional rooms in schools and district facilities comply with physical distancing standards to the maximum extent practicable. Currently those standards recommend a three-foot physical distance in an elementary classroom and a six-foot physical distance in secondary classrooms and other areas of all school buildings. Within the school day, students will be kept in the same group (cohort) as much as possible. Students within a cohort will eat meals together following all applicable physical distance requirements to the maximum extent practicable.

Meals and physical education classes will take place outdoors whenever feasible. Physical distance will be maintained in the classroom whenever possible and when space limitations prevent the recommended physical distance in the classroom, physical barriers will be utilized. A limited number of off campus field trips may take place in the 2021-2022 schools year. Schools will continue to use markers, arrows and other diagrams depicting the preferred physical distance in various areas including the entrance to the building and in the hallways. Staff and students will be reminded of the physical distance requirements and the Positive Behavior Support in Schools framework will be used to reinforce compliance with this requirement.

Entering the Building

- Utilize tape or diagrams to mark off appropriate social distancing spaces on gym or cafeteria floors, playgrounds or utilize auditoriums seating children in the same direction in every other seat
- Students report to their respective homeroom/classrooms rather than gyms, cafeterias or other meeting places
- Conspicuously post signs on the walls for messaging traffic flow and emphasizing social distancing

Students

- Students will enter the building through their designated grade level entrance
- Students will report to their grade level floor following directional signs in the hallways
- Students will flow in one direction in the hallway

Teachers/Staff

- All teachers will enter the building through the designated teacher entrance
- The use of common space will be determined by building/central office administration

Visitors

- All visitors will be deterred from entering the building unless they are essential to the operation of the building
- Visitors will enter the school building only through the main entrance
- Visitors will announce their business before being allowed into the building. Once a visitor enters the building, he/she must wait for the security guard's direction to sign-in; and gets further direction
- All visitors must wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Parents cannot sign out children unless it is an extreme emergency. Otherwise, parents must make prior arrangements and security will assist with the identification, sign-out and release of the child

Social Distancing in the Classroom (Early Childhood Only)

- Appropriate number of students per class will follow the State guidelines
- During group times students will be seated facing the same direction and spaced to ensure appropriate social distancing

Rest Time (Early Childhood Only)

- Masks are prohibited for students to use during rest time
- During rest time, students' cots are to be spaced appropriately in a head to toe placement
- Students' bedding for rest time must be stored separately and labeled in bins, cubbies, or bags and sent home weekly for washing

Breakfast/Lunch (Early Childhood Only)

- Meals will be served in the classroom using individually wrapped and/or plated meals discontinuing family-style eating practices
- Students will use proper hand washing before and after eating meals/snacks, and all tables/surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected between before and after meals

Social Distance in the Classroom (K-12 Only)

- Appropriate number of students per class in accordance to the State

regulations/guidelines

- Desks will be arranged in rows and spaced to the extent possible as required by the Department of Public Health
- Students will face in the same direction to avoid face-to-face exposure. No group settings
- Students will travel class to class, following revised hallway directions (arrow directions will be placed on corridor floors, floor administrator and security will monitor, teacher will stand outside their classroom door)

Breakfast/Lunch

Elementary/Middle:

- Breakfast will take place in the classroom as “grab & go” or delivery to classroom.
- Lunch will be pre-packaged and served daily in the cafeteria. Students within a cohort will eat meals together following all applicable physical distance requirements to the maximum extent practicable

High School:

- Breakfast will take place in the classroom as “grab & go”.
- Lunch will be pre-packaged and served daily in the cafeteria. Students within a cohort will eat meals together following all applicable physical distance requirements to the maximum extent practicable

Bathroom Procedures

- Students should only be released from classroom one at a time
- Students must sign-in with a security guard to utilize the restroom
- No more than two (2) students in the bathroom at a time

Elementary:

- Depending on the size of the bathroom. Only half the capacity based on stalls determine the number of students in a given bathroom. If students enter a bathroom filled to capacity, they must wait until someone leaves before proceeding
- All students must follow the Health & Safety guidelines

Lockers

- Students will be allowed to use their lockers.

Dismissal Procedures

Elementary/Middle:

- Students will have a staggered dismissal by grade level
- Students will exit the building by using a designated location
- Teachers and security guards will ensure the proper movement through the building and off school grounds
- All students waiting to be picked up should either walk to a designated location with supervision to meet parent; or students must wait in the front of the building; socially distanced for pick-up
- Parents with cars must line up on a designated side of the building in an orderly manner

High School:

- Students will have a staggered dismissal
- Teachers, staff and security will ensure the proper movement through the building and off school grounds

Social Distancing Outside School Building

- Stagger arrival and/or departure times to reduce the number of students coming or leaving the school at one time
- Designate entry/exit flow paths by grade level allowing students in the same grade level to enter and exit through the same doors without compromising established security protocols
- Mark doors with numbers and/or letters that are easily identifiable from the outside of the building
- Ensure outside social distancing protocols are established for handicap persons and persons requiring accommodations
- Prop doors open to minimize touch (upon school entry only with school security presence)
- Utilize physical guides such as cones or ropes to structurally create one-way walk routes
- Set-up maze type walk patterns in larger areas to maximize space
- Establish walk flow and line-up routes off the street ensuring that the lines are clear of driveways and parking lots. If parking lots are utilized, use barricades to close off driveways and parking lots, post a security guard in the lot and advise the school's staff of the parking lots closure times prior to the school's re-opening
- Erect awnings along the walkways so the same social distancing protocols can be used during inclement weather
- Utilize a staggered dismissal for students and escort them out of the classroom to a predetermined dismissal area to minimize congregating and co-mingling of students
- Broadcast regular announcements on reducing the spread of COVID-19 and social distancing protocols on the Public Address system and during morning announcements
- Restrict visitors during arrival and departure times
- Provide public service announcements (PSA) using video, social media and written communication as it relates to social distancing protocols, such as, new walk patterns, entry and exit points and arrival and departure times to assist them in planning their schedule

Fire/Emergency Drills

- Drills will continue to be practiced every month (1 Fire/1 Emergency)
- Lockdown procedures require students to gather in a safe, non-visible location. Masks must be worn at all times
- Refer to each school's individual Emergency Manual

School Closure

The District will also ensure that contact tracing is carried out if a staff/student is likely to have been infected with the virus or even come in contact with someone who has tested positive.

- The Superintendent of Schools in collaboration with the Irvington Township Health Department, will determine the school closure and length of time

Transportation of Students to and from School

- The safety and welfare of pupils shall be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to transportation
- The Special-Services Department will communicate transportation protocols with families prior to the start of the school year. Parents will be encouraged to transport their students to school if possible, thereby allowing more room on buses for those without other means of transportation. Therefore, schools should prepare for an increased number of parent pickups, drop-offs, and delays in student arrivals and departures. The following procedures will be implemented to reduce the spread of contagion
- All students will be required to wear a mask/face covering while on the bus regardless of vaccination status
- Open windows to increase the airflow in buses and other transportation, if possible
- Regularly clean high touch surfaces on the school buses daily

Prior to Boarding the Bus

- Parents should assist their child in following bus safety guidelines
- Parents are strongly encouraged to check students' temperature before leaving home. Students with temperatures above 100.4° F or who exhibit the following symptoms should not proceed to the assigned bus stop: *fever, cough, shortness of breath, rapid breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, fatigue, body aches, runny nose, flushed cheeks, extreme fussiness, vomiting or diarrhea.*

Seating on the Bus

- Bus companies must adhere to all current and updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and NJDOE
- To the maximum extent possible, bus drivers will ensure that students and adults comply with appropriate social distancing practices between riders while on the school bus. Hand sanitizer will be made available at the school bus entrance for use when boarding
- Drivers should practice all safety actions and protocols as indicated for other staff, including hand hygiene and face coverings
- Students must wear face coverings while riding on the bus if social distancing or physical barriers cannot be maintained. Accommodations for students who are unable to wear face coverings should be consistent with the student's IEP
- Bus drivers will be reminded to implement certain personal hygiene actions (e.g., frequent hand washing)
- Contracted transportation providers shall be required to clean and sanitize seats, rails and highly touched surfaces before each run. The district shall collaborate with the contracted service provider to develop these procedures and ensure that they are consistently followed. The contracted service provider shall collaborate with the district in establishing cleaning/sanitation protocols that are consistent with social distancing practices

- Allow siblings from the same household to sit together in the same seat
- Assigned seating will be utilized to ensure the same students sit together each day
- Students must remain in their seats, facing forward, and clear of the center aisle at all times while on the bus

School Bus Safety:

- All school buses must be inspected according to the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Administration Regulations relating to school vehicle standards and follow all CDC and NJDOE safety measures prior to transporting students
- Thorough school vehicle cleaning must become routine and areas of “high-touch” must be cleaned and disinfected after the bus drops off students at home or school (every trip); and at the completion of its morning or afternoon run respectively
- In addition to the daily cleaning processes, if a bus has been exposed to COVID 19 the bus will be taken out of service for 24 hours for a deep cleaning process
- Once cleaned and fogged with an approved disinfectant, the bus can return to service.
- All school bus drivers and staff are required to attend in-service training before transporting students to ensure they understand new policies and procedures; and how to effectively clean and disinfect the school vehicle
- Hand sanitizing stations will be installed on every bus. Students should utilize hand sanitizer when boarding and/or departing the bus
- Bus drivers and monitors onboard must wear personal protective equipment, such as face masks and face shields and/or eye protection
- Windows will be open for ventilation when weather permits
- Restricting any food or eating on the school bus
- Install a clear protective barrier behind or alongside the driver in accordance with applicable safety code
- Temperatures of school vehicle drivers and attendants should be taken before active duty

School Arrival:

- Each school should have a designated area for bus arrival and departure. Signs should be posted outside of the school to maintain order. Principals will designate specific arrival/dismissal times and point of entrance/exit which will be shared with the transportation company for implementation
- Upon arrival at school, students should depart the bus from front to back adhering to social distance. Students should sanitize their hands upon departure from the bus. Students must be met by school personnel prior to entering the building and temperatures should be taken. Students with temperatures above 100.4° F will follow school's isolation procedures while parents are notified
- Upon departure from the school, students will sanitize their hands prior to boarding the bus. Seating plan should be shared with the teacher so students are lined up to board the bus with the last students to be dropped off board first
- School administration should contact Special Services immediately if transportation companies are not adhering to safety protocols
- Be mindful that transportation issues will change based on the evolving nature of the pandemic

Professional Development

The district acknowledges that professional development is key to teachers' professional

growth and positive student outcomes. Continuous professional development to support quality in-person educational instruction will be provided for teachers and support staff throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

- Plan restorative supports and access professional learning offerings around COVID-19 and trauma, equity and implicit bias, Social Emotional Learning, inclusion, and appropriate use of digital and online learning tools and systems
- Provide PD on best practices for resuming classroom teaching and learning for all students; engage in conversation about sensitivities and needs in respect to individualized student plans and needs
- The district should assess the professional needs of educators in order to provide high quality, evidence-based professional learning practices

Faculty & Department Meetings

- Tuesdays from 3:00-4:00 p.m.
- Social distancing and material handling restrictions to be implemented if live meetings are necessary
- Special Services Floating School Psychologist will provide trauma-informed school strategies in response to SEL and Mental health to all Irvington Public Schools. This includes offering information on the physical and emotional well-being of staff, assisting in creating trauma-informed learning environments, and identifying, assessing, and addressing traumatic stress in the school setting including professional development
- Care Plus will be available for trauma informed workshops
- The District has partnered with a Camden County Educational Service Commission to implement a grant that include having more behaviorists in the district for our students

Specialized and After-School PD Services

- Recognizing signs and symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression in staff and in students due to COVID-19. This includes a review of making referrals to HSSCs (Health and Social Services Coordinator)
 - The Department of Special Services and Care Plus will provide resources for

staff to engage online and offer virtual training throughout the year

- Continue use of Restorative Practices and offer refresher training through District trainers at each site
- Provide training for parents, students, and staff related to managing stress, anxiety, depression, trauma, etc. made available through the Floating School Psychologist and Care Plus-- trauma designated staff
- The Department of Special Services will provide training on conducting IEP meetings to discuss Regression/Recoupment/Compensatory Services for all students with Special Needs
- “Social Express” an SEL program for PK-5 students will be available for Special Education staff and students
- Professional development will be provided to new teachers through the District’s Teacher Mentoring program. Activities will include the use of technology and addressing the SEL needs of students.

Health Screening, Vaccination, and Quarantine Procedures

Health Screening

Temperature Taking - All people who enter the school building

- Non-contact Temperature Control is at every school building to take temperature of anyone coming into the building
- No touch thermometers at the main office, nurse, and security desk
- 100.4° F or higher, student is automatically sent to nurse
- Parents/caregivers are strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of illness daily
- Staff/students who are sick should not report to work/school

Mandatory Testing

- Per the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's guidelines, the District may require that employees are tested so long as requiring the test is job-related and consistent with business necessity. Given the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic, COVID-19 poses a direct threat to the health of others in the workplace; therefore, requiring a test is job-related and consistent with business necessity
- While it is not recommended that employees generally be required to submit to testing prior to returning to work, it is recommended that employees submit to such testing in the following circumstances:
 - Following a period of leave to care for a family member or other individual who has tested positive for COVID-19
 - Following any absence as a result of personally experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19
 - Following the conclusion of a mandatory 7-10 days quarantine period resulting from exposure to any individual who has tested positive for COVID-19
 - Following the conclusion of a mandatory 7-10 days quarantine period resulting from travel to any state included on the travel advisory list issued by Governor Murphy, as periodically amended
- Employees may not be required to take antibody tests before returning to work under any circumstances
- All IPS employees are encouraged to be vaccinated. However, if an employee is not vaccinated, he/she will be required to be tested weekly at Irvington High School room 123 or other testing sites as identified on the district website.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Expectation

Universal and Correct Wearing of Mask and Shield

The district will continue to follow the applicable Federal, state and local governmental, educational and health department guidance with regard to the wearing of mask and shield. Until further guidance is obtained by the aforementioned agencies, the district will continue to follow the face-covering requirement as described in the IPS Restart and Recovery Plan to Reopen Schools which governed the return to in-person learning in the 21-22 SY.

More specifically, all staff, students and visitors are required to wear a mask and a shield during the school day unless: doing so would inhibit the individual's health; the individual is in extreme heat outdoors; the individual is in water; an individual's documented medical condition, or disability, as reflected in an IEP (student) or applicable documentation (staff), precludes the use of mask and shield; the individual is under the age of two and could risk suffocation; during the period that an individual is eating or drinking; the mask/shield is on an individual who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, or if the individual is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask/shield without assistance (e.g. mask/shield should not be worn by Pre-K students during nap time); the individual is engaged in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activities; the individual is participating in gym and/or music lessons when individuals are in a well-ventilated location and are able to maintain an appropriate physical distance and wearing a mask/shield creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

Additionally, during the 21-22SY, the district will provide for mask/shield breaks during the school day when social distancing and/or physical barriers are in place. Schools will continue to use diagrams depicting the correct way to wear a mask/shield. Staff and students will be reminded of this requirement and the Positive Behavior Support in Schools framework will be used to reinforce compliance with this requirement.

- School staff is required to wear mask/shield unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health (documentation required)
- All students are required to a mask/shield unless doing so would inhibit the student's health (documentation required)
- Additional PPE may be required for staff that must work closely with students who are unable to tolerate masks and shield
- It is necessary to acknowledge that enforcing the use of mask/shield may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities. Accommodations for students who are unable to wear a mask/shield should be addressed and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations
- Visitors must wear a mask/shield unless doing so would inhibit the visitor's health or they are under the age of two

Quarantine

- Any students presenting symptoms will go to the Nurse
- Nurse will send child to Isolation Room if they feel the symptoms are Covid-19 related
- Isolation Room staff and nurses must have full PPE supplied by the district. This should include, face mask, and face shield, gloves, and gown
- Any student or staff that is quarantined must bring medical documentation showing they are medically fit to return
- Isolation room must be cleaned immediately after each use

Exclusion

Staff/Students should not report to work/school when sick. The NJDOH recommends that staff/students that display the following symptoms be isolated from others and excluded when:

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: coughs, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory (smell), or new taste disorder

Hygiene, Cleaning and Ventilation (Improving Airflow)

Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation - The district will continue to follow the applicable Federal, state and local governmental and health department guidance with regard to maintaining healthy facilities, including guidance regarding ventilation. The district will continue use of the requirements regarding maintenance of healthy facilities as described in the IPS Restart and Recovery Plan to Reopen Schools which governed the return to in-person learning in the 2021-2022 school year, as well as some additional procedures with regard to ventilation in the 2021-2022 school year. The district is

prepared with supplies for the 2021-2022 school year including industrial sanitizing wipes, soap and hand sanitizer. The district will continue use of its established cleaning/disinfecting schedules, targeted areas to be cleaned, and methods and materials to be used, which are contained in a procedure manual posted on the District website. This manual will be reviewed and revised as needed. Irvington Public Schools will sanitize bathrooms daily, or between use as much as possible, using protocols outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The district will follow CDC recommendations on the use of hand dryers when feasible. The district will clean shared surfaces regularly and will investigate ways to reduce the amounts of staff utilizing the same areas by eliminating the use of paper for visitor/staff sign in and utilizing best practices with regard to cleaning shared printers and copiers.

General Sanitation Practice

- Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched. This will include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops). Clean with the cleaners typically used
- To the extent possible shared supplies should be discouraged and must be sanitized between students
- Playground equipment must be cleaned between groups
- Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.)
- Provide EPA-registered disposable wipes to teachers and staff so that commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) can be wiped down before use
- Ensure adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices
- External community organizations that use school facilities should be minimized and/or must follow district guidance on health and safety protocols

Cleaning/Sanitation of Areas with Suspected/Confirmed COVID- 19 Disease

- Close off areas used by the individuals with COVID-19 and wait as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection to minimize potential exposure to respiratory droplets. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area. If possible, wait up to 24 hours before beginning cleaning and disinfection
- Cleaning staff will clean and disinfect all areas (e.g., offices, bathrooms, and common areas) used by the ill persons, focusing

especially on frequently touched surfaces

- If surfaces are dirty, they will be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection
- For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants are effective
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.)

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

The district will continue to follow the applicable Federal, state and local governmental and health department guidance with regard to handwashing and respiratory etiquette. The district will continue use of the hand washing and respiratory etiquette requirements as described in the IPS Restart and Recovery Plan to Reopen Schools which governed the return to in-person learning in the 2021-2022 school year. This part of the Safe Return Plan will cover handwashing procedures and how the district will respond to

situations where students might gather. The district will prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) or other approved sanitizers, when and where appropriate. These stations will be located: in each classroom (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer); at entrances and exits of buildings; near lunchrooms and toilets. Children ages five and younger will be supervised when using hand sanitizer. In classrooms that have existing handwashing stations, stations will be prepared with soap, water, and alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) or other approved sanitizers, when and where appropriate. Students and staff are encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue if not wearing a mask. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash immediately and hand washing procedures should be performed immediately.

Regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds should be done:

- Before eating
- After sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing
- After using the bathroom
- Before handling the food
- After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated
- After using shared equipment like computer keyboards and mice

Respiratory Hygiene

- Covering coughs and sneezes with tissues or the corner of elbow
- Disposing of soiled tissues immediately after use

General Sanitation Practices (Early Childhood Only)

- Materials that cannot be easily disinfected cannot be used by the students (stuffed animals, cloth puppets, clothing items, playdough, sand)
- Toys and/or materials placed in a student’s mouth or that become soiled must be placed in a contaminated bin and cleaned and sanitized before use again

Handwashing (Early Childhood Only)

- Handwashing routines and protocols in preschool remain the same and require staff to supervise and assist students with handwashing procedures
- Students will wash hands for at least 20 seconds at regular intervals, including before/after meals, after using the bathroom, after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing, and at the start of the day when children enter the classroom, and when students come in from outdoor play
- The use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) is acceptable when washing only when soap and water are not available. Student use of hand sanitizer must be supervised and monitored by the staff. If hand sanitizer is in place of soap and water, students must wash with soap and water once the provisions are made available (i.e.: children who are given hand sanitizer for initial health screening must wash hands with soap and water when they arrive in the classroom)

Security Protocols

Visitors:

- Ensure they are wearing a face mask upon entry
- Must have an appointment in order to enter the building except for emergency
- Must pass through the Non-contact Temperature Control
- Must wear disposable name tags

Parent/Teacher/Guidance appointments:

- Should be done virtually or by phone conference as much as possible
- If an in-person meeting is a necessity, an appointment must be made and communicated with security

Deliveries:

- Every effort should be made to coordinate deliveries from vendors to occur before or after school hours
- All deliveries should be made through custodial doors only
- Any out of school meal orders by staff/teachers should be picked up outside of the building

Early Dismissal:

- Parent/Guardian must wait outside if possible, for the child to be escorted out by a staff member
- Parent/Guardian must show ID and initial form with their own pen

Physical Modifications to Buildings:

- A. Signage in the buildings (Principals should coordinate with maintenance as to where and how many)
- Reminders to wash hands, social distance, and wear masks
 - One-way hallways
 - Cover coughs and sneezes
 - Maintain social distance and mask signs/markings in waiting areas
 - Floor markers
 - Visual reminders anywhere the students/staff would need to stand in line
 - Signage on buses and at bus stops
 - Signage at front doors of building regarding need for appointment, drop box, masks, social distancing
- B. Playground lineup, a.m. waiting areas, bus pick up, dismissal needs to

be configured to maintain social distancing

C. Classroom table/desk spacing needs to be configured to maintain social distancing.

- Consider use of plexiglass dividers between students

D. Isolation Room

E. Barriers around Security Desk/Main Office Staff/ Counseling

Department/Nursing Office, Attendance Office-anywhere staff interacts with the public.

- Area between Front Door and Lobbies

Field Trips, Extra-Curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours

Irvington Public Schools will:

- Field trips and Extracurricular activities shall be in-person.
- Virtual field trip experiences will be used to compliment in-person activities when necessary
- Offer afternoon extracurricular activities to students
- Use virtual fundraising by school sponsored groups and clubs

In order to ensure proper cleaning of the district facilities and protect the students and staff from undue exposure to other groups, Irvington Public Schools will host gatherings after school hours in an open space where proper ventilation is not an issue of concern.

- Events that typically draw multiple families such as Back to School Nights, Parent Teacher Conferences will be conducted in-person and in a virtual/remote format
- Student performances that are part of a co-curricular activity may be held in accordance with guidance from Arts Ed NJ. Outdoor performances will be allowed in accordance with regulations governing outdoor activities

In order to ensure proper cleaning of the district facilities and protect the students and staff from undue exposure to other groups, Irvington Public Schools will suspend indoor use of school facilities to outside groups until further notice

- Exceptions to this ban may be considered by the Superintendent for recommendation to the Board of Education for health and safety related events coordinated by the Township or the local, county or state board of health
- Those who are responsible for these events must ensure that all health and safety protocols in place at the time are followed

References

- CDC Considerations for Schools (2020)
- National Association for School Nurses Return to School Guidelines (2020):
- National Transportation Supervisor Task Force
- NJDOH Pandemic Influenza Pandemic Response Plan for influenza/ infectious Disease (2017)
- NJEA COVID-19 Resources
- NJSIAA Protocols
- The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education (2020)
- NJDOE School Reopening Frequently Asked Questions
- NJDOE Reopening Document Checklist for Re-Opening of School 2020-2021
- The Road Forward-Health and Safety Guidance for the 2021-2022 School Year
- CDC Guidance for Covid-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools
- Summary of Executive Order 251 and Executive Order 253

