



*Florham Park Public Schools*  
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August 20, 2021

**RE: Ready for September! Guidelines/Operating Procedures**



Dear Florham Park Parents/Guardians and Staff,

While driving through our Florham Park community and neighborhoods this summer, it has been incredibly rewarding to see the children riding their bikes, walking to camp, and enjoying time with their family and friends. This summer has been incredibly busy for the school district. Not only has the district been planning for a return to full-day instruction on the first day of school, but the district successfully operated its Extended School Year (ESY) Summer Program, the Basic Skills Intervention (BSI) Summer Brain Camp, hosted facility use for the [New Horizons Day Camp](#) at the Brooklake School, and continued work on year 2 [referendum capital projects](#) at the Ridgedale Middle School. These capital projects did impact the custodial/maintenance crew's normal summer duties; therefore, I would like to thank the entire custodial/maintenance crew and Mr. Infantolino, the Project Manager/Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, for their efforts.

Though additional guidance is expected from the State/NJDOH regarding operating procedures for the start of the September 2021 school year, below are some final updates as we enter the last few weeks of our summer and officially open to students on Monday, September 13th. We are excited to be opening school with a normal, full-day schedule and offering extra curricular activities and sports. Please note that additional information from the district regarding handbooks, homeroom teachers, specific school operating procedures, etc. will be provided by August 31, 2021 and part of the annual back to school Genesis forms found in the parent portal.

**- GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY OVERVIEW -**

- **Governor Murphy's September 2021 School Mask Mandate**
  - Governor Murphy's recent mandate states that all students in preschool through 12th grade, as well as teachers, staff members and visitors, must wear masks inside all schools in New Jersey to start the 2021 school year. This includes all public, private, parochial, charter, and renaissance schools. Schools are not permitted to opt out of this mandate.
  - The district continues to be prepared to adapt to changing guidance from the state. When the Governor's mask mandate is removed, and made optional, the district will be prepared to offer a less restrictive model and choices for our students, staff, and visitors to the schools.
  - CDC - [How to Wear and Take Off Your Mask](#)
  - ***\*Please note: This current school mask mandate was not made by the staff, administration, local health department or the Board of Education, but implemented by the Governor.***

- Our classrooms and other spaces continue to reflect best practices. Teacher desk/workstations are separated to the extent practicable, markers and signs in hallways indicate traffic flow, hand sanitizer remains readily available, hallway doors are allowed open (as per the FP Fire Dept.) to increase ventilation, as well as additional precautions.
- NJDOH Recommendations - Please continue to follow the recommendations of the Florham Park Health Department and the [New Jersey Department of Health](#). Wear your masks/face covering and adhere to social distancing guidelines when practicable. Practice good hygiene and other safety precautions at school and at home, and remind your children of the importance of these practices. Should your child have a specific medical condition, please contact the school nurse.
- Close Contact Status - As of now, the State has indicated that Contact Tracing in schools must continue to take place for those individuals determined to be a [Close Contact](#), as defined by the NJDOH. Our job as a school district is to also try to avoid as many student quarantine situations as possible as defined under the NJDOH's [Close Contact](#).
- The district will no longer be sending out communication when/if an individual tests positive, as this is no longer a requirement. Instead, the district will be contacting those individuals determined to be a Close Contact and the Florham Park Health Department.
- Governor Murphy released in late June [The Road Forward: Health and Safety Guidance for the 2021-2022 School Year](#). The Florham Park School District is prepared to meet these guidelines.

#### **- INSTRUCTION -**

- **Full-Time, In-Person Instruction**
  - Governor Murphy announced in May 2021 that upon the conclusion of the 2020/21 school year, portions of Executive Order 175 allowing remote learning will be rescinded, meaning that schools will be required to provide full-day, in-person instruction, as they were prior to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. Therefore, as per the Governor, districts in New Jersey **are not permitted** to provide families with an option-based instructional model choice, as done last year.
- **Covid Exclusion - Virtual/Remote Instruction**
  - As permissible in Governor Murphy's [The Road Forward](#), the District is able to provide a virtual component only for students excluded from attending in-person learning at school due to testing COVID positive or students who are required to isolate or quarantine as per NJDOH guidelines. During this Covid exclusionary period, students will be provided the opportunity to attend core subjects virtually "synchronously" and students will be provided with asynchronous assignments for Specials. This will be coordinated by the district should your child meet these COVID exclusions. As shown last year, we appreciate your understanding of this scenario and flexibility with staff as they prepare any materials/supplies needed during this COVID exclusion period.
  - Please understand, as per the Governor's [The Road Forward](#), this virtual and remote model may ONLY be applied to students who meet COVID exclusions and are required to isolate or quarantine.
    - *"If an LEA [local education agency] is required to exclude a student, group of students, a class, or multiple classes as a result of the scenarios listed above, while the school itself remains open for in-person instruction, the LEA should be prepared to offer virtual or remote instruction to those students in a manner commensurate with in-person instruction to the extent possible."* - [The Road Forward](#) (3.3.3 Exclusion)

- **Staff Coverage**

- We are 100% staffed to start the year! This is a credit to our administrative team and staff. Since staff coverage is a concern every year, the district was proactive in hiring additional paraprofessionals for each building to assist, ensured that all of our student teachers have their sub certificates, and the district has already approved staff assistants to receive a stipend for using their substitute certificate. Also included is our substitute pool that will be available, and thank you to the many FP parents and community members who became substitute teachers. If interested in becoming a long term leave teacher, a substitute teacher, a paraprofessional, a substitute paraprofessional, or a substitute secretary for the District, please apply at [ESS.com](http://ESS.com).

**- CO-CURRICULAR/AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS -**

- The district plans to move forward with offering co-curricular activities in all three schools and after-school sports at RMS. Please understand that these activities, particularly after-school sports, may increase the likelihood of your child being identified as a Close Contact and require to be quarantined under current NJDOH guidelines.

**- SUBSCRIPTION BUSING & BOE MEETINGS -**

- The district will continue with [subscription busing](#). Masks/face coverings are required to board the bus and must be worn at all times. Please understand taking the bus may increase the likelihood of your child being identified as a Close Contact and require to be quarantined under current NJDOH guidelines. As a reminder, the district is reverting back to in-person BOE meetings starting in September 2021.

**- FLORHAM PARK SCHOOLS - SAFE OPENING COMPARISON CHART -**

- Please review the 2020 v. 2021 comparison chart created to help answer questions and provide guidance as we enter the new year. This chart was created to display the end of last year's June 2021 procedures and compare them to this year's September 2021 operating procedures.

**- DAILY SCREENER -**

- As done last year, please perform daily individual self-checks with your child(ren) prior to arrival.

All actions and protocols the District has taken regarding COVID-19 have been and continues to be done in consultation with and following the recommendations from our local health department. Actions and protocols are subject to change pending circumstances and adjustments to local, state, and federal guidance.

When guidelines and/or state mandates change, the district is prepared to pivot quickly. Prompt notification with the necessary information will continue to be communicated to you. As the Florham Park School community exemplified last year, we will succeed regardless of the situation since we are a team and a family! I would like to sincerely thank our staff, students, parents, local health department, PTA, Education Foundation, and community members for their cooperation, understanding, and continued support.

Sincerely,

*Steven Caponegro*

Dr. Steven Caponegro

*"No one can whistle a symphony - it takes a whole orchestra to play it." - H.E. Lucecock  
(Teamwork!)*

Attc: School Opening Comparison Chart & Operating Procedures  
cc: Mr. Thomas Cantisano, Florham Park Health Officer

## Florham Park Public Schools

### \*School Opening Comparison Chart & Operating Procedures

Version: August 20, 2021

Topic	June 2021	Sept. 2021 Opening	Topic	June 2021	Sept. 2021 Opening
(1) Masks	Yes <i>(State Mandate)</i>	Yes <i>(State Mandate)</i>	(16) Sports <i>(RMS)</i>	No	Yes <i>(in-person)</i>
(2) Mask Breaks	Yes	Yes	(17) Extracurricular Activities	Virtual	Yes <i>(in-person)</i>
(3) Full Day w/ Lunch and Recess	No	Yes	(18) Small Group Learning	Yes	Yes
(4) Social Distancing <i>(to the maximum extent practicable)</i>	6 Feet <i>(or to the maximum extent practicable)</i>	3 Feet <i>(or to the maximum extent practicable)</i>	(19) Shared Supplies	Yes <i>(Limited)</i>	Yes <i>(Limited)</i>
(5) Field Trips	No	Yes <i>(Limited)</i>	(20) Science Lab Work	No	Yes
(6) Assemblies	Virtual	Yes <i>(Limited)</i>	(21) Emphasis on Ventilation & Air Purification	Yes	Yes
(7) Cohorts	Yes	No	(21) Focus on Handwashing & Hand Sanitizer Stations Available	Yes	Yes
(8) Virtual/Remote Instruction	Yes <i>(parent option as per State)</i>	No <i>(unless emergency closure or meets Covid exclusion as per State)</i>	(22) Electrostatic Cleaning	Yes	Yes
(9) Back-to-School Nights	Virtual	Hybrid/TBD	(23) Use of Google Classroom	Yes	Yes
(10) Open House <i>(BWD &amp; BKL)</i>	No	Yes <i>(in-person)</i>	(24) Seating Charts <i>(Classroom &amp; Bus)</i>	Yes	Yes
(11) Parent Conferences	Virtual	Hybrid	(25) Masks on School Bus	Yes <i>(State Mandate)</i>	Yes <i>(State Mandate)</i>
(12) IEP Parent Meetings	Virtual	Hybrid	(26) Staff/Student Daily Health Screening	Yes <i>(at home daily screening)</i>	Yes <i>(continue at home daily screening)</i>
(13) 504/I&RS Parent Meetings	Virtual	Hybrid	(27) Temperature Screening	Yes	No <i>(part of home daily screening)</i>
(14) Lockers <i>(RMS)</i>	No	Yes	(28) Contact Tracing	Yes	Yes
(15) Locker Rooms <i>(RMS)</i>	No	Yes	(29) Nurse's Office Isolation Area	Yes	Yes
			(30) Band/Chorus	No	Yes

*\*All actions and protocols the District has taken regarding COVID-19 have been and continues to be done in consultation with and following recommendations from our local health department and is subject to change pending evolving circumstances and adjustments to federal and state guidance*