



Olga Hugelmeyer  
Superintendent of Schools

July 28, 2020

Elizabeth Public Schools maintains its pledge to open schools responsibly, guided by its pledge and principles of the following:

- exceeding minimum expectations to place health and safety first for our students and team members,
- providing high-quality instruction to all students,
- ensuring families have flexibility and choice in the instructional models offered to our students, and
- delivering accurate and timely communication to team members and families as needed and keep all stakeholders informed throughout the school year.

The district has worked diligently to gather as much information and feedback as possible from parents, employees, community stakeholders, administrators, state leaders, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), and medical professionals via surveys, committees, and a task force in order to develop plans and protocols that will keep students and staff safe, while creating a nurturing and productive learning environment.

We have been meeting regularly with our medical advisory group, including a pediatrician, internist, and pulmonologist from Trinitas Hospital, along with the Elizabeth Health Department and other health professionals pertaining to health and safety protocols that will be put in place for the reopening schools.

We have been consulting our families, recognizing the importance of involving their feedback throughout the process of developing our reopening plan. Over 17,500 families completed our *Parent Survey*, sharing their preferences on learning models, bus transportation and more. We also received hundreds of questions and public comments delivered via our Facebook Live sessions and our virtual School Board meetings. I thank you and extend my appreciation to you for participating in this process and for taking an important role in your child's education.

**Office of the Superintendent of Schools**

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Administrators and department leaders have been planning for increased safety procedures that can be taken at every location based on the guidance we have received from medical and health care professionals.

Based on the extended process of gathering information from our learning community, advisory committees, and taskforces while taking into account the guidelines provided by the NJDOE, Elizabeth Public Schools is pleased to introduce our two instructional options:

**Option 1. Grades PreK-12 Hybrid/Virtual Plan-** The hybrid/virtual plan would be a combination of distance and face-to-face instruction with increased safety and disinfecting measures:

- 2 days of in-person learning at school (4 hour half-day schedule for students)
  - Group A (50% capacity of students in each classroom) at school Monday and Tuesday, at home Wednesday through Friday
  - Group B (50% capacity of students in each classroom) at home Monday through Wednesday, at school Thursday and Friday
- 3 days of remote learning at home

Students	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group A	Learning at School	Learning at School	Learning at Home Student Support Services provided	Learning at Home	Learning at Home
Group B	Learning at Home	Learning at Home	Learning at Home Student Support Services provided	Learning at School	Learning at School

**OR**

**Option 2. Full Distance Learning Plan-** All students in the full distance learning plan would participate in the learning of new material, continued standard pacing, interactive lessons, graded assignments, and assessments.

It is important for EPS families to know that the reopening recommendations may change based on a number of factors including:

- Changing health and safety guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH);
- Updated guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and Governor Phil Murphy;
- Agreements with the District's labor union partners;

District families, students, and staff can expect to receive more information this summer as it becomes available. The Elizabeth Public Schools is committed to making the best decisions that balance the need to provide meaningful instruction to students with the need to protect the health and safety of our staff, students, and community. We understand that our current schooling options create a burden on families. We are working through a pandemic and all options right now are poor choices compared to our normal school schedule. Regardless of what our reopening plan looks like, it is our sincerest hope that it will be temporary and that our goal is to resume normal scheduling as soon as it is safely possible to do so.

We ask you to make your selection no later than 5 p.m. on August 1. Your prompt attention will give the district time to schedule students and staff accordingly. We know school will look different in the fall, and we appreciate your partnership and cooperation as we work to make the 2020-2021 school year successful for all!

Sincerely,



Olga Hugelmeyer  
Superintendent of Schools