



Learning Today. Leading Tomorrow.

Dr. Joseph S. Piccirillo
Superintendent

Mr. Jeffrey Hallenbeck
Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Mrs. Johanna Ross
Assistant Superintendent

August 19, 2021

Dear Hopatcong Families,

In less than two weeks, our schools will open their doors for the 2021-2022 school year. We are excited to be back together this year for in-person learning and for full days. While these are far from normal times -- as the COVID pandemic continues to loom over our lives -- seeing students in school, walking the halls, learning in the classrooms, running on the playground, participating in clubs, and competing in athletics will all serve as hopeful signs of the eventual return to normalcy. We have a lot to be proud of as members of the Hopatcong family. Our students, staff, and families have shown tremendous grit over the past two school years amidst incredibly difficult circumstances. I am optimistic that we will continue to persevere through whatever challenges we may face and I ask for your continued support and patience this school year.

Our administrative team has been working with the nurses, teachers, Department of Health, and custodial staff to ensure that all people entering our building are safe. The following represents some quick bullet points on our 2021-2022 COVID policies, which are in effect for the start of the school year:

- As per Gov. Murphy's Executive Order 251, all students, staff, and visitors will be required to wear a mask in our school while indoors.
- Masks are also required while on the school bus.
- Masks are not required outdoors, such as on the playground.
- Masks are not required while eating in the cafeteria, or when participating in aerobic activities which may make breathing difficult.
- We will make every effort to maintain 3 feet of social distancing where practicable.
- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to quarantine for 10 days. They may return after 10 days if they are symptom free.
- Students and staff who are not vaccinated and who have had close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to quarantine for 10 days and, as per CDC guidance, may test out of quarantine with a negative test if that test was taken on or after day 5 of exposure -- PCR preferred -- in order to exit quarantine as early as day 7.

- Students and staff who are vaccinated, or have a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the past 90 days, will not be required to quarantine.
- Staff members and students eligible for the vaccine (12 or older) are not required to show proof of vaccination, however, they are encouraged to be vaccinated and to share proof of vaccination with the school nurse in their building for ease of contact tracing.

Mrs. Ross and I will be holding a virtual Single Issue Meeting on the reopening of schools on Tuesday, August 24th at 6 pm to answer any questions you may have on the health and safety protocols and procedures listed above or on the Reopening Comparison Chart and F.A.Q.s (attached) which will also be available on our website. If you would like for us to address a question at the meeting, please send your emails to Mrs. Ross at jross@hopatcongschools.org and we will answer as many as we can during the meeting or work to put the questions/answers on our F.A.Q. list. The link to the meeting will be posted on our website.

Thank you for your attention, your patience, your understanding, and your perseverance. Together we will make this a great school year and emerge from this stronger than before. If we receive any additional guidance or directives from the governor or Department of Health we will update you on any changes to the above policies.

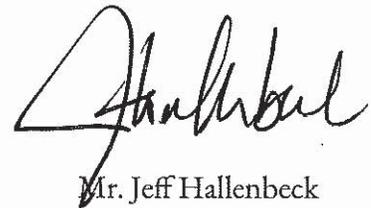
Sincerely,



Dr. Joseph S. Piccirillo
Superintendent of Schools



Mrs. Johanna Ross
Assistant Superintendent



Mr. Jeff Hallenbeck
B.A./Board Secretary

Hopatcong Borough School District Reopening 2021/22 Comparison Chart

The purpose of this comparison chart is to help students, staff, and families quickly see how the plan for starting the 2021-2022 school year will differ from our reopening plan from last year. This is also included on our website.

It is important to note that our plan will be based upon public health metrics and guidance from agencies that make recommendations or determinations for public schools in New Jersey. Therefore, the information in the chart below for 2021-2022 is subject to change. While we are excited and ready for a more typical school year, we are also prepared for any challenges we may face as a school community.

Topic	2020-2021 Opening	2021-2022 Opening
Masks	Required	Required
Social Distancing	6 feet (where practicable)	3 feet (where practicable)
Full Day with Lunch	No	Yes
Field Trips	No	Yes, but limited
Assemblies	Virtual	Virtual and in person
Student Cohorts	Yes	No
Virtual Afternoon Sessions	Yes	No
Full-time Remote Option	Yes	No (as per E.O. 251)
Student Lockers	No	Yes
Locker Rooms (High School)	No	Yes
Emphasis on Ventilation & Air Purification	Yes	Yes and with significant advances

Topic	2020-2021 Opening	2021-2022 Opening
Focus on Handwashing & Hand Sanitizer Available	Yes	Yes
Increased Cleaning and Sanitizing	Yes	Yes
Masks on School Bus	Yes	Yes
Staff/Student Daily Screening	Yes	No (Daily self screening recommended)
Contact Tracing	Yes	Yes
Visitors in the Building	No	Limited
Before and After School Clubs	Virtual	In person
Parent / Teacher Conferences	Virtual	Offered in person on a case-by-case basis, otherwise virtual
IEP, 504, and RTI Meetings	Virtual	Offered in person on a case-by-case basis, otherwise virtual
After School Care	Yes	Yes

1. **Q** - Will the use of masks continue to be required for students/staff indoors regardless of vaccination status?

A - Wearing a mask by both students and adults indoors is required. On August 6, 2021 (E) 251), Governor Murphy announced that *“All public, private, and parochial preschool programs and elementary and secondary schools, including charter and renaissance schools (collectively “school districts”), must maintain a policy regarding mandatory use of face masks by staff, students, and visitors in the indoor portion of the school district premises, except in extenuating circumstances.”*

<https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-251.pdf>

- Mask breaks will be incorporated into the daily schedules as feasible;

Wearing a mask will not be used while eating or while being outdoors, provided appropriate prevention measures are in place.

2. **Q** - Will parents be required to screen their children before they leave the house for full-day, in-person instruction (temperature and symptom checking)?
A - Parents/Guardians will review the [Student Daily Health Check](#) for the 2021-2022 school year; however, it is **not** being collected.

3. **Q** - If my child is ill, what do I do?
A - If your child has TWO OR MORE of the symptoms from column A, or ONE symptom from column B, your child must stay home from school and contact your school's nurse.
 COVID Compatible Symptoms Chart:

Column A	Column B
Chills	Fever of 100.4 F (measured or subjective)
Rigors (Shivers)	Cough
Myalgia (muscle aches)	Shortness of Breath
Persistent Headache	Difficulty Breathing
Sore Throat	New loss of smell
Nausea or Vomiting	New loss of taste
Diarrhea	
Fatigue	
Congestion or runny nose	

4. **Q** - Someone in my house is currently ill, can my child attend school?
A - No. If someone in your home is ill (confirmed positive, COVID compatible symptoms, and/or awaiting COVID test results) refrain from sending any students to school. Be sure to inform your school nurse.
5. **Q** - Will the District allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent possible?
A - When feasible, **3' social distancing** will be implemented. Please note we plan to follow and continue to implement four core mitigation strategies (mask wearing; hand hygiene/respiratory etiquette; cleaning/disinfecting/airflow; and contact tracing).
6. **Q** - Are there COVID-19 vaccination requirements for both staff and students?
A - Hopatcong Schools will not require vaccinations for students and/ or staff. If you would like to voluntarily share vaccination status, you can share this information with your school's nurse.
7. **Q** - What is the length of the quarantine?
A - As per CDC guidelines, you should quarantine for ten days. You may test out of quarantine after day 7, should the student obtain a negative test on or after day 5 of quarantine.
8. **Q** - What circumstances would require my child to quarantine?
A - Any non-vaccinated student would need to quarantine should they have had close contact with an individual who is a confirmed positive. Additionally, and regardless of quarantine status, if you have traveled internationally or are symptomatic you should quarantine.
9. **Q** - For any student who must quarantine, how will they receive instruction?
A - During periods of quarantine, students will receive alternative instruction.