

The Pirate Path Forward
Opening Schools for the 2021-2022 School Year



Introduction

The plan to reopen Cinnaminson Township Public Schools for the 2021-2022 school year was developed to ensure a safe return for all students and staff to in-person learning. Working together, stakeholders prepared this document based on current and evolving recommendations and requirements from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), Executive Orders from the New Jersey Governor's office, and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). At all times, the health and safety of students and staff were considered in adopting practices and developing protocols.

Reopening Committee

Thank you to the members of the school district's Reopening Task Force who helped put together the draft of this framework which will serve as the guidelines for the opening of schools for the 2021-2022 school year.

- Mrs. Laura Fitzwater, President, Cinnaminson Board of Education
- Mrs. Tamara Beatty, CEA President/CHS Teacher
- Mr. Brian Belsky, CEA Vice-President/CMS Teacher
- Mr. Richard Calabrese, Cinnaminson Chief of Police
- Mr. Steve Creel, Director of Technology
- Mrs. Kerry DiSimone, Principal - Eleanor Rush School
- Mr. Tom Egan, Business Administrator/Board Secretary
- Mrs. Yogita Fratto, CHS Teacher, District Parent
- Mr. Ryan Gorman, Principal - Cinnaminson High School
- Dr. Frank Goulburn, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
- Mrs. Valerie Jones, Principal - New Albany Elementary School
- Mrs. Nancy Kenny, NAS Paraprofessional
- Mrs. Darlene Llewellyn, Director of Special Services
- Ms. Deb Knisely, Cinnaminson High School Teacher
- Ms. Kaitlin McCann, Asst. Principal - Cinnaminson High School
- Mr. Jay Meile, Athletic Dir./Asst. Principal - Cinnaminson High School
- Mrs. Kristin Melcher, Principal - Cinnaminson Middle School
- Mrs. Kelly Palma - School Nurse, Eleanor Rush School, District Parent
- Mr. Ed Palmer, CHS Science Dept. Supervisor
- Mr. Jesus Powers, District Social Worker
- Mrs. Michelle Reissman, Eleanor Rush School Teacher
- Mrs. Sherry Spier, Dist. Coord. of Inst. Tech. & Library Services
- Mr. Mark Tindall, Director of Operations
- Ms. Joanne Tomkiewicz, Transportation Coordinator

1. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

1.1 Vaccination

- The district believes that vaccination is the key to uninterrupted education and extra-curricular participation. As such, the district encourages all eligible individuals to become [fully vaccinated](#).
- In mid-March, the district partnered with Rite Aid to provide vaccinations to interested staff members. On May 27th and June 18th, the district offered an optional vaccination clinic for students aged 12 and older. On August 3rd and August 24th, vaccination clinics were held at Cinnaminson Middle School. An additional in-district vaccination clinic is scheduled for September 1, 2021.
- On August 23, 2021, Governor Murphy announced that **all employees** in public schools must be vaccinated for COVID-19 by October 18, 2021. Absent vaccination, staff must be tested on a regular basis in accordance with [Executive Order 253](#).

1.2 Communication

- Communication of the Pirate Path Forward
 - The Superintendent of Schools will communicate this document, the district's DRAFT reopening plan (The Pirate Path Forward) to families via email, social media, and the district website ahead of the start of school.
 - The Pirate Path Forward will be formally presented to the Cinnaminson Board of Education at their regular meeting on August 31, 2021.
 - This plan will remain a fluid document. If changes are recommended and adopted, revisions will be posted on the district website.
- Communication of Positive COVID-19 Cases
 - Positive cases of COVID-19 will be reported on the COVID-19 dashboard which is located on the [district website](#).
 - The district will report weekly student and staff case counts to the NJDOH through the Surveillance for Influenza and COVID-19 (SIC) Module in the Communicable Disease Reporting and Surveillance System.
 - All cases will be reported to the Burlington County Department of Health and the Cinnaminson Board of Education.

1.3 Masks

- [Executive Order 251](#) went into effect on August 9, 2021. As such, Cinnaminson Schools will begin the school year with mandatory mask usage for all students, staff and visitors except where outlined removal of masks is permissible within the language of the order including:
 - When doing so would inhibit the individual's health, such as when the individual is exposed to extreme heat indoors;
 - When the individual has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face masks without assistance;
 - When a student's documented medical condition or disability, as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Educational Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, precludes use of a face mask;
 - When the individual is under two (2) years of age;
 - When the individual is engaged in activity that cannot physically be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating or drinking, or playing a musical instrument that would be obstructed by a face mask;
 - When the individual is engaged in high-intensity aerobic or anaerobic activity;
 - When a student is participating in high-intensity physical activities during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals; or
 - When wearing a face mask creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.
- Masks and PPE will be made available to students and staff in the school office, as well as the nurses offices in each building. Each school bus will be equipped with masks.
- Students will not be permitted to board district vehicles without a mask.
- At the beginning of the school year, the school nurse will offer instruction to students and staff on the proper use, removal and maintenance of masks.
- Student and staff mask breaks will be encouraged when possible and practical.

1.4 Maintain Physical Distancing and Cohorting

- The District will promote social distancing in classrooms, hallways, offices and other congregate spaces to the maximum extent practical.
- When practical, outdoor spaces will be utilized. Each school will have at least one covered space adjacent to the building to provide shade and weather protection.
- In select classroom settings, acrylic barriers will be utilized as an added layer of protection.
- The District will adhere to the current distancing requirements from the Governor's Office, NJDOE and the NJDOH.

1.5 Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette

- The district will continue to reinforce proper handwashing techniques for students, as well as “covering” coughs and sneezes.
- Signage will be posted illustrating best practices for handwashing.
- Hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) will be available in all classrooms, offices, and hallways.
- To minimize risk to the school community, students and staff will be required to stay home when they are displaying COVID symptoms.

1.6 Meals

- All district schools will be operating full-day schedules with lunches during the 2021-22 school year.
- Cinnaminson High School is modifying the daily lunch schedule to provide a universal lunch period. This will be helpful should the district need to transition back to classroom-based lunches.
- If a school closure were to occur, the district would reinstitute the meal pick-up program that was used in the 2020-21 school year.
- Students who are subject to quarantine restrictions would have access to a school-provided meal via pick-up at Cinnaminson High School.
- Seating charts will be maintained in congregate settings wherever possible to assist in contact tracing.

1.7 Transportation

- According to guidelines established by the New Jersey Department of Education and in accordance with Executive Order No. 251, students and staff will wear masks on busses.
- The Transportation Department will encourage open windows on buses to promote air circulation.
- The district will operate its full fleet of vehicles for transportation to and from school as well as extra-curricular activities.
- The district will continue to offer transportation support to neighboring districts based on existing interlocal agreements.

2. CLEANING, DISINFECTING, AND AIRFLOW

2.1 Limited Use of Shared Supplies and Equipment

- Students will be encouraged to maintain a personal supply of all school items including personal headphones.
- Cleaning supplies will be available for students to “wipe down” any shared surfaces including desks, chairs, table-tops, technology, cameras, etc. and any personal educational items such as calculators, cell phones, chromebooks, or other devices/equipment.
- Use of shared physical education equipment will be discouraged to begin the 2021-2022 school year.

2.2 Cleaning and Disinfecting

- School personnel and vendors charged with cleaning schools and buses will be required to utilize approved materials and processes designated by the DOH and the Director of Operations.
- A daily schedule of cleaning, methodologies, cleaning checklists, product lists and related documentation will be maintained by the Director of Operations and each building's main office/head custodian.
- All classrooms, school buses, cafeterias, gymnasiums, locker rooms (if utilized), etc., will be cleaned daily and where necessary, enhanced cleaning protocols will be utilized throughout the day.

2.3 Improving Airflow

- Classroom ventilation systems will be maintained and operated as per NJ guidelines; windows, where applicable, can be opened to facilitate additional air flow and classroom teachers may hold classes in outdoor spaces.
- All indoor facilities will have adequate ventilation, including operational heating and ventilation systems where appropriate. Recirculated air must have a fresh air component. Windows will be opened, if practical, if air conditioning is not provided, and filter(s) for A/C units will be maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations.
- The district has procured approximately 100 air purifying units, many with ionization, that are in place in classrooms and offices throughout the district.
- Bipolar ionization units were installed in select locations at CHS and CMS as a part of the existing HVAC system.

3. SCREENING, EXCLUSION, AND RESPONSE TO SYMPTOMATIC STUDENTS & STAFF

3.1 Parent/Staff Screening

- The district will provide a “universal screen” through the [Genesis](#) Student Information System, requiring parents/guardians to certify their understanding of self-reporting/screening. This will take place ahead of the school year.
- The district will provide a “universal screen” through the Genesis Staff Portal, requiring all staff members to certify their understanding of self-reporting/screening. This will take place ahead of the school year.
- Parental screening will include a list of symptoms for parents to screen their children before they attend school.

3.2 Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff

- Students and staff who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 will be isolated from the school population under the direction of the school nurse.
- Isolation spaces will be identified ahead of time in each of the school buildings.
- Once identified, communication will be made to appropriate parties and COVID-19 testing and contact tracing can begin, if deemed necessary.
- Students will remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
- Once the isolation space is cleared, it will be cleaned and disinfected as per district protocols.

3.3 Exclusion

- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 will be excluded from participating in school and any extracurricular activities until they have been cleared by the school nurse.
- Students and staff who have been designated as “close contacts” will also be excluded from school and extracurricular activities.
- The district will refer to the state and county health officials and the Centers for Disease Control (“CDC”) in defining a “[close contact](#).”
- Excluded individuals who are found to be close contacts of staff or students who tested positive for COVID-19 may be considered for a reduced exclusion period based on community transmission levels as follows:

- High (orange) exposed close contacts should be excluded from school for 14 days.
- Moderate or Low (yellow or green) exposed close contacts should be excluded from school for 10 days (or 7 days with negative test results collected at 5-7 days).
- Exposed close contacts who are fully vaccinated and have no COVID-like symptoms:
 - Do not need to quarantine, be excluded from school, or be tested following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
 - Should still monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following an exposure.
 - If they experience symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 testing and inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care.

3.3.A - COVID-19 Compatible Symptoms

- The CDC identifies a variety of symptoms associated with COVID-19. Parents/guardians should refer to the universal screener for a list of these symptoms and evaluate their child against this list on a regular basis.
- Students or staff presenting any symptoms of illness after being evaluated by the school nurse based on the Daily COVID-19 Checklist for the following symptoms:
 - 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: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, or new taste disorder.

3.3.B - Protocols When Illness Is Identified in the School Setting

- Should a positive case be reported while a student or staff member is present in school, they will immediately be placed in the isolation setting. Upon parent/guardian contact, the student will be sent home and referred to a health care provider for testing and follow-up care.
- The school nurse will contact the Burlington County Department of Health and the contact tracing protocols will begin. The school district will consult and provide information to the local health department regarding the ill persons to include:
 - Date of onset of symptoms
 - Test results
 - Date/Time of exposure
 - Date/Time last in school building

- Close contacts and duration
- Name, address and phone number for the ill person's close contacts
- Vaccination status
- Any other pertinent information
- Individuals who come in contact with the identified individual will wear proper PPE at all times.
- All facilities utilized by the individual will be subject to enhanced cleaning.

3.3.C - Continuity of Instruction During Quarantine

- Students will continue to have access to the educational program during the day when they are required to miss school due to a documented quarantine.
- The district will offer modified live streaming experiences with supplemental support for students who are unable to attend in person because of a documented quarantine.
 - Learning supports will be put in place to assist students who are on mandatory quarantine.
 - Students who demonstrate a need will qualify for 1:1 tutoring or supplemental small group instruction during their period of mandatory quarantine.
 - For students at New Albany School and Eleanor Rush School, online learning support with a certified teacher will be made available to complement the synchronous classroom instruction.
- Only students who have been placed on the district quarantine list will have access to synchronous learning.
- District-issued chromebooks will be made available to students who need technology access at home.

4. CONTACT TRACING

- As positive cases are identified, contact tracing will begin immediately. The district will follow all guidelines developed by the CDC and adopted by the New Jersey Department of Health related to contact tracing and quarantines.
- District nurses will communicate with staff at the Burlington County DOH as part of contact tracing activities, reporting any necessary information which may include information about the staff member or student including their schedule, attendance information, and person-to-person proximity for 15 minutes within a 24 hour period.
- Nurses, along with school staff, will communicate with families as part of this process.
- Notifications from the district and/or school level will be disseminated when there is an unusual increase in the number of persons who are ill (over normal limits) which might indicate an outbreak, without providing information that would lead to identification.

5. TESTING

5.1 Diagnostic Testing

- As was the case during the 2020-2021 school year, school nurses will play a critical role in connecting families with options for obtaining COVID-19 testing.
- The district is working with local vendors to determine the viability of offering testing on-site in each school building.
- Testing will continue to be recommended in cases of exposure in coordination with the Burlington County Department of Health.
- The district will continue to educate the community about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
- District nursing staff will make referrals to local agencies that offer COVID testing.

5.2 Screening Testing

- To minimize risk to the school community, students and staff will be encouraged to stay home when they are displaying COVID-19 symptoms. Families will be encouraged to report symptoms to the school nurse for monitoring.

6. ADDITIONAL LOCAL PLANNING

6.1 Addressing Academic Needs

- The district will offer learning acceleration opportunities for students throughout the 2021-22 school year.
- Small group acceleration sessions will be offered for students who meet criteria for the program.
- 1:1 tutoring sessions will be offered for students who demonstrate a need for remediation or who are subject to mandatory quarantine.
- Expanded summer acceleration opportunities will be made available for students in Summer 2022 for students who have exhibited learning loss.
- The district will continue to use benchmark assessments to monitor student achievement and to identify students who may need additional support.

6.2 SEL and Mental Health Needs

- The district is hiring a “lead teacher” in the school counseling department, who will be tasked with the management of the districtwide social and emotional learning program.
- The district aims to hire additional counseling staff to assist in SEL lessons that will be delivered in all grades K-12.
- Professional development opportunities for staff will be included in school in-service schedules in the 2021-22 school year.
 - Summer offerings related to mindfulness and self-care
 - September 8th In-Service Day Keynote on SEL, self care, trauma, and relationship building
 - November In-service day wellness event
- School counselors will work with building staff to identify students in need of support. These students will be supported by district staff or referred for outside services.
- Students who were fully remote in the 2020-21 school year will be included in all orientation activities for new students.

6.3 Child Study Team/Accommodations

- The Child Study Team will continually assess the needs of our students with disabilities, with a focus on their transition back to the classroom.
- Annual Reviews and IEP meetings will continue to be held in person and online to meet statutory guidelines.

- Professional development will be provided for staff to best utilize features and accommodation tools made available through technology-based formats.
- The district will continue in-person evaluations and related services where appropriate.
- The Director of Special Services will meet routinely with SEPAG to review concerns related to COVID-19.