



Safe Reopening Plan  
2021 - 2022

# Safe Reopening Guiding Principles:

- Consider the safety and wellness of students and staff members, first and foremost, by following the guidelines set forth by the NJ Department of Education’s “The Road Forward” plan, Center for Disease Control, American Academy of Pediatrics and state guidelines.
- Maintain the continuity of education and meet the rigorous educational standards of the district and state.
- Respond to the needs of vulnerable and high needs populations.
- Be adaptable and flexible based on public health conditions and the needs of the community.
- Maintain consistent communication with students, families, and employees to ensure respect and success within the evolving situation.

# A Full Return for All



At the onset of school on September 8, 2021, all students in grades 1-8 will return to school for full days every day.

Students in Preschool and Kindergarten will be offered options for half days or full days based on preference.

# Health & Safety Guidelines:

*The health and wellbeing of our students and staff continues to be our top priority. These guidelines are subject to change as we continue to follow the recommendations set forth by the CDC, AAP, and the New Jersey Department of Health as well as all pertinent Executive Orders.*

All parents/guardians of students will be strongly and continually encouraged to assess their children for COVID-compatible symptoms, as well as signs of other infectious illness, including daily at-home temperature checks prior to school. The presence of COVID-compatible symptoms should be shared with the school nurse as soon as possible and appropriate guidance will be provided.

All staff will monitor their health on a daily basis following the 2021 established COVID screening protocols. Any identified COVID-compatible symptoms shall be reported to the school nurse by the individual, as appropriate, and return-to-work guidance will be provided.

# Health & Safety Guidelines (continued):

## **MASKS**

As mandated by Executive Order 251 and reinforced in Executive Order 253, the following requirements will apply in all school buildings until further notice:

All students, staff, and visitors will be required to wear masks while indoors on school premises, and on school buses, at all times with limited exceptions.

Masks must cover an individual's nose and mouth. Multilayer cloth masks are recommended by the CDC and required while in Millstone's school buildings. Face shields, single-layer gaiters, masks with valves, and neck buffs are not acceptable face covers by themselves.

Mask breaks, up to five minutes, will be permitted for any individual experiencing extreme heat, trouble breathing, or general health inhibition. Any individual requiring a longer break will be asked to visit the Health Office or distance themselves six feet away from others.

# Health & Safety Guidelines (continued):

## **MASKS (continued)**

Mask breaks and short-term exceptions to indoor mask-wearing requirements will be permitted while an individual is eating or drinking, participating in high-intensity aerobic, anaerobic, or physical activity, and/or playing a musical instrument. Mask exemptions may also be made for groups of students due to extreme heat indoors if HVAC units are not operating effectively.

Additional exceptions may be permitted at the discretion of district staff members given they are in accordance with Executive Order 251 which is accessible here: [NJ EO 251](#)

As per Executive Order 253, accessible here: [NJ EO 253](#) , individuals seeking a medical exemption from mask wearing must produce written documentation from a medical professional to support the exemption. Self-attestations and parental-attestations are not sufficient for this purpose. All medical exemption requests made in the Millstone Township School District will be reviewed by, and are subject to the approval of, the district's school physician.

# Health & Safety Guidelines (continued):

## **Health Offices:**

All students and staff exhibiting COVID-compatible symptoms in school will be evaluated by the building nurse.

Students and staff exhibiting fever, chills, rigors/shivers, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, congestion, runny nose, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, or new taste disorder will be subject to school exclusion pending a negative COVID-19 PCR test. A “rapid test” will not be accepted for readmission to school.

School exclusion decisions are at the discretion of the school nurse who will assess for differences from the individual’s baseline (or typical) health conditions/status.

All relevant and current NJDOH guidelines for exclusions, isolation, and quarantine will be followed.

# Health & Safety Guidelines (continued):

## **Exclusions/Quarantines:**

Any individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be excluded from school for 10 days from the onset of symptoms or the date of his/her confirmed positive COVID-19 test.

All students and staff living in the same household as a confirmed positive case will be excluded from school for 14 days from the date of the affected individual's positive COVID-19 test.

All individuals who are identified as close contacts (other than a member of the household) will be excluded from school for 14 days while the region's COVID activity level is "high" and for 10 days (or 7 days with a negative PCR test) while the region's COVID activity level is "moderate" or "low". Activity levels will be monitored weekly using the NJ CALI report.

Individuals who are fully vaccinated will not be excluded from school if/when identified as close contacts nor will any students if/when both the infected student and exposed student have been correctly and consistently wearing masks.



# Health & Safety Guidelines (continued):

**Parent/Guardian Pickup from Health Offices:** Students who are identified for school exclusion must be picked up within 30 minutes of receiving a phone call from the nurse. Parents must update their contact information as emergency contacts will be called in the order listed in Genesis.

**Return to School:** Upon their return, students and staff must report directly to the Health Office to obtain clearance from the school nurse before returning to class.

**Notification:** In the event of a confirmed positive COVID-19 case, notification will be sent to the students and staff associated with the infected individual. In the event that close contacts are identified who need to be excluded from school, individualized notification will be made to each affected person.

# Food Services

The cafeterias will be utilized to serve lunches in all buildings. Social distancing will be implemented to the greatest extent possible - though six feet of space between students is unlikely in most lunch periods. Students will be required to wear masks while waiting in line for food service and after they're finished eating to reduce potential for school exclusions.

Meals will continue to be provided by Maschio's Food Services following food-service regulations set forth by the NJDOH.

Food service workers and custodians will be trained and responsible for carrying out all necessary sanitation and disinfecting procedures.

In schools where snack is offered, plans will be implemented to comply with social distancing guidelines, such as staggered snack times within a class and use of additional spaces.

# Transportation:

As per Executive Order 251, all students and staff must wear face masks while on school buses.

Bus windows will be open as long as weather conditions permit.

Bus assignments will be made with distancing implemented to the greatest extent possible.

Students will be separated as much as possible, using assigned seats, and siblings will be seated together.

Routine cleaning of buses will be performed using EPA-approved cleaners and disinfectants.

# Building & Grounds, Facilities, and Operations

Classrooms, common areas, and shared spaces have been redesigned to maximize space for individuals and ensure three feet of space when possible.

Social distancing visual indicators are prominently placed in all hallways establishing direction of traffic and reminding individuals to maintain distance from others whenever possible.

Additional daytime custodians may be assigned to our schools to support the increased cleaning demands required to maintain a safe and healthy environment.

EPA-approved disinfectant and sanitizers will be used in all cleaning processes.

Playsets, playgrounds, and shared materials will be cleaned as per NJDOH and CDC guidelines.

# Building & Grounds, Facilities, and Operations

## **Schedule for cleaning in all buildings:**

**During the School Day:** Touch point surfaces will be sanitized as recommended by the CDC and NJDOH. This includes door handles and other corridor touch points that will be wiped/sprayed with disinfectant as appropriate. Bathrooms will be sanitized at least once during the day shift. This includes sanitizing all bathroom touch points, cleaning visible messes, and checking dispensers.

**In the Evenings:** At night, buildings will be cleaned and disinfected according to the most up-to-date and relevant guidance from the NJDOH and CDC.

# Building & Grounds, Facilities, and Operations

**Hand sanitizer locations and procedures for refilling and maintaining:** The custodians will be responsible for checking and restocking hand sanitizer dispensers and bathroom soap dispensers throughout the day (and overnight). Hand sanitizer stations will be at entrances/exits and easy to access in common areas.

**Cleaning and sanitizing:** Surfaces will be cleaned before being disinfected using a two-step process. Cleaning with soap and water, or EPA-approved cleaner, will remove dirt and germs before surfaces are disinfected with EPA-approved disinfectants.

# Building & Grounds, Facilities, and Operations

**Restrooms:** Students will be instructed on how to monitor their own social distancing when using the restrooms. Staff members may also be utilized to limit access to restrooms. Allowing students to use the restroom during class in a controlled way will minimize the number of students using the restrooms between classes. Restroom doors will be kept open, when possible, to increase air circulation and limit touching of doors and handles.

**Water fountains:** Traditional water fountains may be closed depending on current NJDOH/CDC recommendations. Water bottle filling stations will remain available and will be cleaned and disinfected regularly. All students are encouraged to bring water bottles to school each day.

# Building & Grounds, Facilities, and Operations

**Procedure for building disinfecting if a case of COVID is identified:** Depending on the circumstances, entire school buildings or identified infected rooms may be closed for 24 hours. Cleaning and disinfecting will be performed according to the most recent and relevant NJDOH and CDC guidelines.

**Maintaining proper ventilation and circulation of air:** The maintenance staff will closely monitor the HVAC systems for proper air flow and will continue to replace the air filters as per the manufacturer's recommendations. Dampers will be set to increase the flow of outside air into the building where possible.



# Continuity of Education



In the event of school exclusions, mandatory quarantines, and/or periods of isolation directly related to COVID-19, the Millstone Township School district will provide instructional services to affected students.

These services will include any one, or a combination, of the following: up to two hours of daily home instruction with a certified teacher, access to live-streamed classes through Zoom, asynchronous work, and daily check-ins with classroom teachers.

The method(s) of instruction will be determined by the Director of Curriculum based on the affected students' ages, complexity of material, and the age-appropriateness of the instructional methodology.

# Social Emotional Health and Wellbeing:

We recognize that the challenges caused by this pandemic have taken a tremendous emotional toll on our students and staff. We also acknowledge that a full return to school may not be easy for some. Our administrators have been working alongside our mental health professionals to identify ways to address these concerns and ensure that everyone involved is supported upon their return and continually throughout the school year. Building-specific strategies to assist students and staff and support their social emotional health and wellbeing will be shared at the building level.

# Parent/Community Communication

This plan is based on lessons learned throughout the 2020-2021 school year, feedback from key stakeholders, guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education, New Jersey Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control.

We recognize, and ask you to as well, that modifications to this plan may become necessary as the public health situation evolves.

We encourage all parents, guardians, and community members to monitor our website and digital communications (emails, ListServ alerts, Facebook page, website, and Instagram acct.) for the most up-to-date information.