



AURA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL THE ROAD FORWARD 2021-2022

CREATED BY THE ELK TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT TO SHARE REOPENING INFORMATION WITH OUR STUDENTS, THEIR FAMILIES AND OUR COMMUNITY

AUGUST 2021

Dear Aura Community,

Once again, we find ourselves in uncertain times. In spite of the ever-changing information and guidance, we have done our best to create a return to school plan that puts in the forefront the singular goal of getting **all** our students back to school for five full days of in-person instruction in as safe a manner as possible.

This newsletter should provide you with the information you need to begin the school year. It is our hope that you will continue to offer your patience and grace as we navigate this year.

Dr. Piera Gravenor

COMMUNICATION

This newsletter serves as the first comprehensive communication with Aura School stakeholders regarding the logistics of the 2021-2022 school year.

The plan will be submitted to the Board of Education for formal approval at the September 9, 2021, regular meeting and subsequently submitted to the County DOE.

The plan will be posted on the District website.

The plan will remain **intentionally** fluid as guidance and mandates may be put in place which will require adjustments as the year progresses.

Positive COVID cases will continue to be posted daily on the website so that community members can track cases within each of the buildings.

All positive cases will continue to be reported to the Gloucester County Department of Health.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

September will be the first time that we have the entire student body in our schools since March of 2020. While the District will physically distance the students to the greatest extent possible, we cannot guarantee that three-feet of distance will always be feasible.

Teachers and bus drivers will be required to create seating charts so that effective contact tracing is possible.

Outdoor space will be used when possible and practical for instruction.

Any non-essential furniture will be removed from the classrooms to allow for increased space.

Additional lunch tables have been purchased and will be used for lunch periods to allow for as much social distancing as possible.

All lunch periods were intentionally scheduled to have the fewest number of students in the all-purpose room as possible.

VACCINATIONS

While the District believes it is the right of every parent to choose what is best for their child with regard to the COVID vaccine, we do support the CDC in its efforts to make the vaccine readily available and easily accessible to anyone who wants it.

The District has served as a resource for staff and community with regard to providing information and assistance for those who wanted a vaccination.

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MASKS

On August 9, 2021, Governor Murphy put into effect Executive Order 251 which requires that masks be worn by all students, staff, and visitors in every school in New Jersey. The District will comply with the mandate in full.

As such, all students are required to report to school every day with a mask. There will be at least two times during the day when they will be permitted to remove their masks: to eat lunch and to participate in any strenuous activity in Physical Education class. During both of those instances, the District will utilize other measures (social distancing, multiple locations, etc.) to the best of our ability as additional layers of protection for the students while they are unmasked.

Teachers are encouraged to provide mask breaks for the students throughout the day when circumstances allow them to safely do so.

The District will maintain a supply of extra masks should they be needed by any student.

The District will continue to reinforce through signage and announcements, the proper way to wear a mask.

No student will be permitted to board a District bus/vehicle without a mask. This is required by federal mandate.

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CLEANING, DISINFECTING, AND AIRFLOW

CLEANING AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY FACILITIES INCLUDING VENTILATION

All classrooms, school buses, and other areas will be cleaned and disinfected daily meeting CDC guidelines and using cleaning products that are EPA approved.

Electrostatic disinfectant mist will be sprayed in all areas of the building on a nightly basis.

The District Facility Manager will maintain a schedule and protocol for all cleaning.

Sanitizing wipes will be available in every classroom.

The District has purchased individual air ionization and purification devices for every classroom.

All ventilation units will be serviced and cleaned. Filters will be replaced with the manufacturers highest recommended MERV rated filters.

Outside air will be recirculated as much as possible based upon the capacity of the HVAC units.

To the extent possible, students and staff should limit the sharing of school supplies.

HAND HYGIENE

Hand sanitizer will be available in every office/classroom/bathroom and will be maintained by custodial services.

Education with regard to hand hygiene will be provided each morning via homeroom announcements.

MEALS

The Aura food service partner, NutriServe, will return to operating full capacity for the 2021-2022 school year.

If schools should have to shut down at any point during the school year, meal deliveries will continue as they did in the prior school year.

A continuation of the USDA Nationwide Waiver to Provide Flexibility for School Meal Programs will once again allow **all** students to receive **free lunch** for the 2021-2022 school year.



TRANSPORTATION

The District will continue transporting students as it has always done.

Due to the fact that the entire student population will be returning, there will not be excessive space available on the buses. When possible bus windows will be open to enhance the flow of air and mitigate the transmission of the virus.

Any after-school bus runs will be decided upon based on need.

Extra masks will be available on every bus should a student forget to bring one.

Buses will be cleaned and sanitized every day.

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SCREENING AND RESPONSE TO SYMPTOMATIC OR COVID POSITIVE STUDENTS/STAFF

DAILY SYMPTOM SCREENING

Parents are required to ensure that their student is feeling well before sending them to school. A one-time “contract” with symptoms to look for will be sent to parents at the beginning of the school year for a signature.

Students who are not feeling well should not come to school. Parents are encouraged to do temperature checks at home and to report symptoms to the school nurse for monitoring.

Students who present as ill (with COVID) symptoms during the day will be isolated and immediately referred to his/her personal family medical provider and may be required to present a note from the medical provider clearing him/her for return to school.

CDC guidelines with respect to contact tracing, exclusion, and quarantine protocols will be followed.

Students and staff who test positive for COVID will be excluded from participating in any part of the educational program and all extra-curricular activities.

School nurse will maintain contact with the Gloucester County Department of Health with all updates of COVID cases within the district.

CONTACT TRACING

Collaboration with Gloucester County Health Department and NJDOH for any disease and symptom monitoring for the school community will be in place at the direction of the local health department.

Assistance with contact tracing for any identified cases in the school population will occur in collaboration with the local health department.

Teachers and bus drivers will be required to provide the school nurse with an up to date seating chart for each class and bus run in order to facilitate timely and efficient contact tracing and exposure notification.

Auxiliary staff are required to record any student meeting(s) on a Google document to be shared with the nurse where social distancing was not possible or that lasted greater than 10 minutes.

District RNs will continue to monitor local, national and global health trends.

District RNs will continue to follow up-to-date communications from the NJ DOH, CDC, Office of the Governor, and Gloucester County Health Department regarding community specific communicable disease concerns, planning, and intervention.

INSTRUCTIONAL & ACADEMIC PLANNING

ACADEMICS

Learning gaps will be assessed through the use of benchmark testing, online individualized learning platforms such as IXL.

Data from those assessments will be fully studied and used to inform instruction.

This year's summer program was expanded to meet the needs of additional students.

PLANS FOR UNEXPECTED CLOSING OF SCHOOL

Should the State officials mandate the closing of all schools, the District will revert to a full or partial remote learning option.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Aura will be using a Multi-Tiered System of Supports MTSS) approach in addressing social-emotional learning (SEL) for students. MTSS is a framework that many schools use to provide targeted support to struggling students. The goal of MTSS is to intervene and proactively provide the necessary resources and support for all students.

Aura has several programs in place for the 2021-2022 school year (The Clayton Model, Acenda) whose sole purpose is to work with our students who may be experiencing trauma, anxiety, etc.



WHO TO CONTACT?

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School Nurse ~ ext. 532

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Child Study Team ~ ext. 530

PLEASE CONTACT THE MAIN OFFICE TO UPDATE ANY PHONE AND ADDRESS CHANGES