

Plan to Safely Transition to Full Day Instruction

Letter from the Superintendent

Dear East Amwell School Community,

This school year has presented our district with significant challenges. Over the course of the year, we have developed new and innovative ways to provide our students with an exemplary education amid the constraints of a global pandemic. If the current health data trends continue to indicate movement in the right direction, our district has developed a thoughtful plan to transition back to a full day schedule sometime after Spring Break.

With the nice weather approaching and the vaccines deploying this document intends to provide parents and faculty with some updates regarding the next phase of expanding our programs. Our ultimate goal is to bring students back to school full time before the end of the school year. This update will provide information regarding our next steps.

As Superintendent, I would like to thank our dedicated staff and school community for their patience and support as we navigate these challenging times. I recognize that this has not been easy for our staff, students or parents and I continue to be grateful and proud that our school community has come together with open minds and flexibility for the betterment of our children during these extremely challenging conditions.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Edward F. Stoloski
Superintendent

Introduction to this Addendum

The purpose of this addendum to East Amwell School's plan is intended to inform our school community of our plans for reopening school more fully this spring and increase instructional time. In optimistic recognition that the COVID situation will improve as the weather gets nicer and the vaccine is deployed, we believe it to be prudent to make plans for an expanding program. This addendum contains information on the following:

- The updated principles
- Information about the COVID activity reports
- Our phase in transition approach
- Updates to school facility use
- Updates to the school schedule
- Transportation updates and reminders

Principles: A Reminder

Primary Principle: Provide for the health and safety of our staff and students while implementing a cohesive, consistent educational program amid a global pandemic.

Principles Summarized from the NJDOE Restart and Recovery Plan:

Reduce crowds and close contact. Key tools and strategies:

- Masks
- Face Shields
- Social Distancing (6 foot guideline to the extent possible)
- Use of plexi-glass barriers to the extent possible
- Classroom redesigns to maximize distance/remove unnecessary furniture
- Reducing student cohorts in areas such as cafeterias and minimizing mixing student cohorts
- Designate entry and exit points
- Staying home when ill
- Washing hands more frequently and using hand sanitizer when needed
- Open windows when possible

Monitor the prevalence of symptoms and spread in the schools and community. Key tools and strategies:

- Periodic temperature checks
- Educate children (and staff training) about signs and symptoms
- Isolation area
- Monitor and triage signs and symptoms

- Follow most current guidelines for close contact, tracing, isolation, quarantine, and exclusion
- Health office to keep track of local transmission trends, ill students, and staff

Sanitize, disinfect, and enhance cleaning protocols. Key tools and strategies:

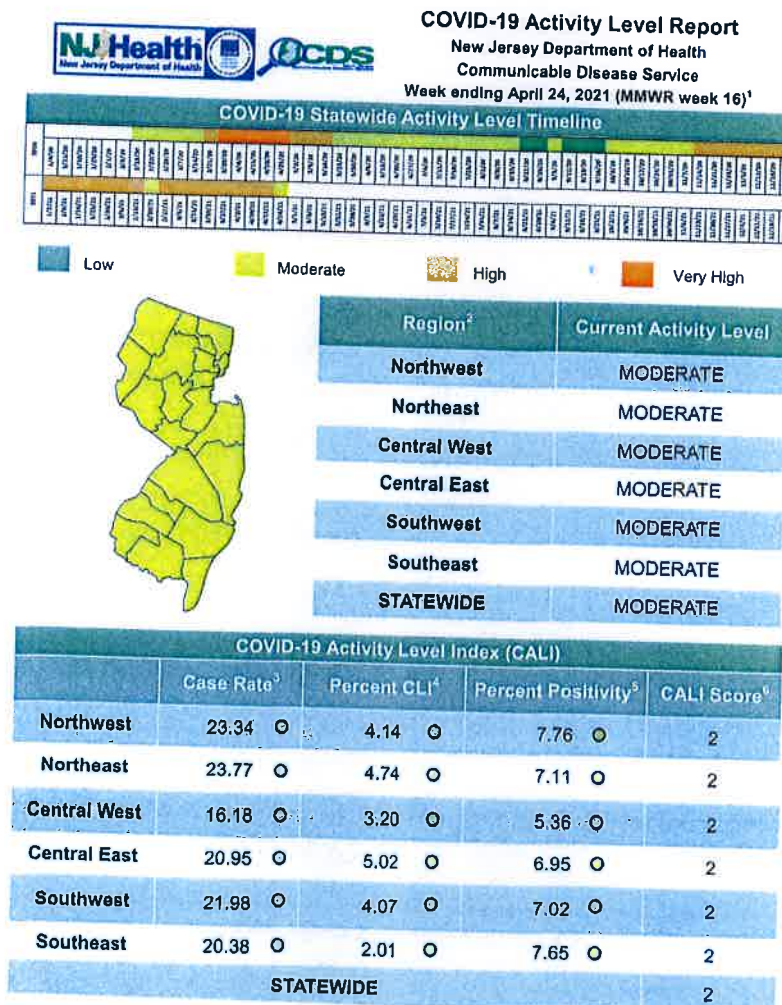
- Personal Hygiene
- Custodial sanitation and new standard protocols
- Wipes, cleaners, sanitizing stations for use by students and staff
- Area audits to reduce problematic surfaces
- Deep clean school during Spring Break

The COVID Activity Report

Hunterdon County Department of Health reports on the regional COVID-19 weekly. They do so with a report that shows the COVID-19 Activity Level Index (CALI) in regions across the state using a color code system: Green, yellow, orange, and red. Hunterdon County is in the “Central West” group. When in green or yellow, we can consider more in-person schooling, orange indicates keeping our current status, an activity level falling in red suggests closing school and moving to all-remote learning. To visit this webpage, navigate to:

<http://www.nj.gov/health/ed/statistics/covid>

This COVID Activity report is the primary metric that will guide our school district through the next phases of reopening. A sample of this report can be found below.



Phase 1 Planning

Lunches –

Our food service provider will prepare individual grab and go lunches to be delivered to students at the designated smaller lunch areas that will promote smaller cohorts of students eating lunch. Additional protocols will be developed during the actual eating of lunches to assure mitigation of risks to the maximum extent possible. Grade level cohort grouping with limited capacity dining in the student cafeteria and classrooms, social distancing to the maximum extent possible, additional barriers when possible, etc. will be implemented. Students will need to be able to open their own lunch materials. Please check that your child is capable of opening what you send on their own. Teachers will be unable to help students open containers during lunches due to safety concerns.

Virtual Instruction –

Fully Virtual Instruction – For those remaining grade levels that have virtual students enrolled, live streaming will be the primary source of instruction. Parents should note that full days of instruction will eliminate office hours, mentoring, and other afternoon contact with the current teachers as the teachers will be engaged in a full day of instruction. Grade level check ins will be arranged as needed by the individual assigned teacher as determined by the classroom teacher.

Virtual Instruction Schedules:

For those families choosing to stay virtual for the remainder of the year, or students who are quarantined due to exposure or travel restrictions, the following outlines the structure of the students' Virtual instruction school day by grade level bands:

- Preschool: Virtual instruction is not available for preK.
- Grades K-8 virtual instruction students will follow the full day schedule to attend livestreamed lessons. Students must arrive on time, use their cameras and only sign off when permitted. Work will be assigned for times not livestreaming.

Parents and students can email questions or concerns directly to teachers anytime during the day. All specials will be livestreamed, except physical education, according to student schedules. Rules for virtual instruction students are the same as the regular classroom rules. Late or non-attendance will affect grades.

Physical Education: a developmentally appropriate daily physically activity will be provided for virtual instruction students.

Directions to Virtual Instruction Students and Families (Choice or quarantined):

Arrive to all livestreams and meeting on time. Class will not be delayed to accommodate your late arrival.

Follow directives for cameras on.

No pets, family members or student distractions in the background or on camera.

Choose a quiet place with a table and chair. Choose appropriate clothing. No snacks or meals during instruction are allowed.

Substitute teachers in the classroom due to a teacher's absence:

In the event of a teacher being absent, substitutes will not be required to livestream that day. For virtual instruction students, all work will be communicated directly from the teacher to the students via teacher websites. Specials will continue to be livestreamed that day.

Phase II: Yellow/Green designation for HC Region for Two Consecutive Prior Weeks

When the activity report demonstrates that our region (Central West) has turned to yellow/green for two consecutive prior weeks, our next phase will be to bring students into school for a full day scheduled sometime after Spring Break.

IF we return to orange, we will not go back to an early dismissal unless there are serious local issues in our community with community spread. If we remain in orange, we may need to consider an alteration to the schedule, but bouncing back and forth between schedules does not allow for a consistent instructional program.

School Facilities

The Six Foot Guideline

The New Jersey Department of Education informs districts that they “must allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable.” The district will remain committed to the guidelines set forth by the County Health Department.

Facility Use

The East Amwell Board will be limiting indoor facility use. The facility will be used by our staff and students for daily instruction. The YMCA remains able to use school facilities during the orange activity level.

Outline

Sometime after Spring Break (specific date to be determined based on health data trends), East Amwell will offer the regular full day schedule five days per week as indicated on the district approved calendar, pending green/yellow designation in the Central West region for two consecutive weeks.

Parent/Student Option for a Fully Virtual Program

The New Jersey Department of Education has announced that parents may opt for their children to attend a fully virtual program. Students and parents opting for a fully virtual program will log into class meetings according to the student's and/or teacher's schedule in order to be counted as present.

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

The district plans to develop similar protocols for possible opening of spring clubs and athletic activities. Further details for students wishing to engage will be forthcoming from the administration.

Transportation

East Amwell recognizes that the safe transportation of students to and from school is a fundamentally important part of our school operations. This section discusses the precautions the district will take with regard to transporting students to school.

All buses will continue to be provided with hand sanitizer, backup masks for students, spray cleaners and wipes. Bus windows shall be opened when practical to increase outside air into the vehicle. Bus drivers shall be provided with added layers of protection, including but not limited to masks, face shields, or other protective equipment to ensure safety. Field trips and other non-mandatory busing shall be kept to a minimum.

Face coverings shall be worn at all times.

Depending on transportation selections, the 6-foot social distancing guideline will not be possible on some buses. Parents must be made aware of this and can opt to drive children to school. We will make attempts at developing bus seating charts to maximize student distance between families to the extent possible.