

Buzz Aldrin Middle School
Reopening Town Hall

September 2nd, 2021

Welcome and Principal's Message

- We are thrilled to be back in school
- Focus on safety, learning, and instruction
- Greater emphasis on SEL
- Making connections before content
- Increasing rigor and focus on engagement and instruction
- Asking for collaborative partnership with parents, staff, and administration for betterment of all students

Tonight's Agenda

- **Review Buzz Aldrin's Road Forward Procedures and Protocols**
- **Health and Safety Guidelines**
- **Instructional Guidelines**
- **Response to questions submitted by the community →**

**** Information is subject to change**



Efforts to Improve Health & Safety

- **Desk Shields**
- **Pooled Testing**
- **Mask requirement**
- **Social distancing to fullest extent possible**
- **Open windows to improve ventilation**
- **Air purifiers**
- **Daily health forms**
- **Repairs of Univents throughout the building**
- **Staff vaccination/weekly testing requirement**



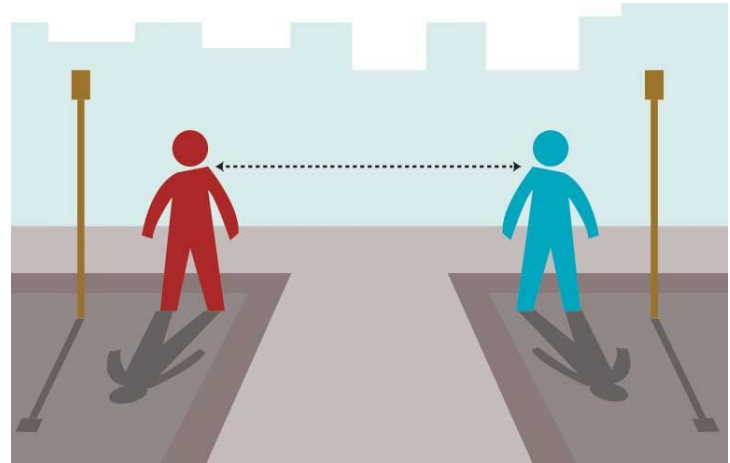
Mask Policy



- All staff and students are required to wear a mask at all times, unless taking a water break, mask break, or eating during designated time.
- Masks must be brought from home and should:
 - Be at least 2-ply or greater
 - Fully cover nose, mouth, and chin
 - NOT be a bandana, gaiter, scarf, or fleece
- Medical approval to wear a shield instead of a mask must be granted via district physician

Social Distancing Policy

- All staff and students are expected to remain 3 feet apart to the greatest extent possible.
- Shields allow for more seating



Daily Staff Health Procedures

- All staff members are required to submit the daily health form by 7 am
- Staff members are required to get vaccinated or receive weekly testing
- We cannot release information about vaccinated vs. unvaccinated staff
- Nurse and administration will keep track of COVID information

Daily Student Health Procedures

- All families are required to submit the daily health form by 7 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Health forms are located on Parent Access through Genesis
- Please do not send your child to school if they have COVID-like symptoms or have a fever
- Collaborative and collective effort for us to stay safe

Student Arrival Procedures

- Doors open at 7:40 am
- Do not drop off students prior to 7:40
- Students should wear masks while on school grounds
- Please use the designated doors given by house
- Do NOT drop off in front of school or in staff parking lot



Designated Arrival Entrances



- **House 1: Rear Parking Lot entrance**
- **House 2: Greenhouse door**
- **House 3: Front/Greenhouse entrance**
- **House 4: Front/Greenhouse entrance**
- **House 5: Rear Parking Lot entrance**

Parent Drop Off & Pick Up Procedures

- Do not drop off or pick up in front of building, in parking lots, or across the street from school in any direction
- All students must use the crosswalks
- Drop offs must occur on Norwood Avenue, Lorraine Avenue, or Bellevue Avenue past the the Greenhouse
- Do not block driveways or parking lot entrances



Attendance Policy

- All students must be in school to be marked as present
- Students are not permitted to stay home for virtual learning unless it is COVID-related and approved by the district's medical team
- Students must be in homeroom by 7:50



Late Arrival & Early Dismissal

- We ask for you not to schedule appointments during the school day
- Students should not leave school early and return the same day
- Early dismissals should be for emergency situations only
- Please ensure your children are on time for school to minimize disruption

Visitors and Dropping Off Items

- Visitors are not permitted in the building
- Parents are not permitted to drop off items/belongings during the school day
- Back to School Night (September 21) will take place virtually this year from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. More information to follow.



Classroom Procedures

- Students are permitted to use lockers.
- No sharing of materials unless they can be cleaned or sanitized between use.
- Teachers can distribute materials, handouts to students.



Food and Drink

- **Students are encouraged and permitted to bring their own water bottles to school.**
 - **Lift mask for quick sips of water (from personal water bottles)**
 - **Maintain social distancing**
- **Water fountains will not be available for use**
 - **Water bottle filling station are available for use with personal water bottles**



Classroom Sanitization

- **Custodial staff will frequently clean the building throughout the day**
 - **Specifically common areas**
- **Desk/Classroom sanitation will be a collaborative effort of wiping down desk prior to entry**

General Guidelines

- **Students will not be permitted to share any equipment or materials at school, unless the materials can be cleaned or sanitized in between classes.**
- **Expectation for Learning:**
 - **Each Student will be issued a Chromebook. We are now a 1:1 district**
 - **Students should bring their district-issued Chromebook to school each day.**
 - **Chromebooks must be charged at home and ready for use**
 - **Outdoor learning is encouraged as much as possible**
- **Attendance will be taken during the first ten minutes of each class period and students are expected to be on time.**

Physical Education/Dance Guidelines

- Encouraged to go outdoors as much as possible
- Physical Education Activities:
 - Individual activities and group activities
 - Use of individual equipment or equipment that requires minimal sharing
- Locker rooms will be used for changing
- Masks must be worn at all times
- Physical Education classes will take place outside
 - Weather permitting and outdoor temperature is 32 degrees or higher
 - Encourage your child to dress appropriately for the weather
- Students should bring their own water bottles to school
- Masks are required during all Dance activities (indoors and outdoors)

Science Guidelines

- **Students are:**
 - **Permitted to watch teacher demonstrations**
 - **Conduct experiments if provided with their own materials or if materials can be cleaned or sanitized between use**



Music/Band Guidelines

- Singing and playing of brass and wind instruments will take place outside as much as possible
- Sharing of instruments and sheet music is not permitted
- School Performances:
 - Virtually or indoors, without an audience present
 - *Subject to change pending guidance from NJDOH



Breakfast & Lunch Procedures

- **Breakfast Served: 7:35 am to 7:50 am**
- **Lunch served during regularly scheduled lunch periods**
- ****Students will eat outdoors as much as possible****
- **Students are encouraged to dress appropriately for outdoor eating**
- **Inclement Weather:**
 - **Eat inside in the cafeteria & in designated classrooms**
 - **Allows for greater social distancing**
- **Students are responsible for bringing their assigned dividers to indoor lunch**

Hallways

- All classroom doors will remain open and in locked position at all times when classes are in session

Elevator Use

- In general, one person permitted at a time
- Immobilized students may use the elevator
 - Possibly with an adult escort
 - Must be arranged ahead of time with the school nurse

Student Bathroom Use

- **Required to follow the rules of cleanliness posted in all bathrooms**
- **Bathrooms with multiple sinks**
 - **Middle sinks will not be used. They will be taped off/covered**
 - **Allows for greater social distancing**
- **Custodial staff will routinely clean restrooms**

Staff Lounge

- Used for restroom or copy machine use only
- Limited to ten occupants at one time
- Staff members:
 - Maintain social distancing (3ft apart), or to the fullest extent possible
 - May eat in staff lounge if necessary
 - Maintain social distancing (3ft apart) or more
- Copy Machines
 - Cleaning wipes & spray located next to machines for cleaning in between use

Main Office

- Staff members: limit use of office at one time
- Maximum of 6 staff members in the office at one time
- Staff will use intercoms, email, and phones to communicate as much as possible

Hand Washing/Hand Sanitizing

- Students encouraged to use hand sanitizer and wash their hands throughout the day
 - 20 seconds with soap and water
- Times for hand washing and hand sanitizing
 - Upon entering the school building
 - After using the restroom, wiping nose, sneezing, or when hands are soiled
 - Hand sanitizer stations are present throughout the building

Fire Drills

- Continue to occur and comply with state guidelines
- Teachers will review fire drill procedures with students while drill is taking place (i.e. evacuation route, remaining calm and quiet)

Security Drills

- Continue to occur monthly and comply with state guidelines
- All drills will be conducted while social distancing to the greatest extent possible

Nurse's Office

- Students with a fever 100.0 Degrees or above will be sent to an isolation space until they leave the building
- Parents/Caregivers: urged to updated child's emergency contacts (in Genesis)
 - Designated person needs to be available to pick up the child within 30 minutes of receiving the call to have the student picked up from school
- During the School Day students/staff without a fever but with any potential COVID-19 symptoms:
 - Assessed by the School Nurse



Nurse's Office...

- School Nurse may choose to isolate and exclude student/staff member based on her medical judgement
- Physical distancing will be maintained in the nurse's office
- Staff may NOT use the bathroom in the nurse's office, unless it is an emergency
- Students/Staff may NOT use the nurse's office for:
 - Phone calls
 - Snacks
 - Naps
- Students/Staff may use the nurse's office for:
 - Medication purposes
 - First-aid
 - Injuries
 - Illness

Plan for Reporting COVID-19 and Response Protocols

- All staff members and families should report a personal COVID-19 positive case to the nurse/principal, who will then report to the district
- Health Department guidelines will be followed and each case will be addressed individually
- Our medical team will address a positive case of COVID-19 of a student, staff member or close contact (generally household) on a case by case basis and contact tracing will then occur

Contact Tracing

- Contact tracing protocols will adhere to recommendations in the Road Forward document provided by the NJDOE.
- Each school has a contact tracing team that will work quickly and efficiently to notify others.



Are we going to test for COVID more often?

- The district is participating in pooled testing, which increases testing for sample population groups.
- Teachers who are not vaccinated will test on a weekly basis.



What is the procedure if students/staff test positive?

- **The school/district's contact tracing team will work quickly and efficiently to notify affected families.**
- **We will follow guidance from our school nurse, the district physician, and the county health department.**



What is the magic number for a schoolwide shut down?

- Each case or cluster of cases will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- Quarantining and closures are determined by several factors including number of people affected, vaccination status, length of exposure, etc.



What are the plans for remote learning?

- **The need for remote learning will be determined by the district/school, which is dependent on the number of cases.**
- **Teachers are working to set up their Google Classroom and class meeting links in the event students or classes need to quarantine.**



Will parents have the option for remote learning?

- **Parents will not have the option to choose remote learning on certain days.**
- **Remote learning is available only for students who need to quarantine due to exposure and for those who have COVID-19.**



Do we anticipate vaccinated kids being able to be mask-free?

- **Currently, we have one-third of our student population who is unable to get vaccinated.**
- **Transmission rates affect this decision**
- **We follow guidance from the Essex County Health Department and our district physician.**



Can SEL be optional this year?

- **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is a state mandate.**
- **We are required to provide students with a well-rounded education, and this includes SEL.**
- **We have a new SEL committee who will work towards creating more engaging and meaningful activities for our students to participate in while in school.**
- **SEL is required and students cannot opt out.**



How will you manage lunch time during inclement weather?

- **Students will eat in the cafeteria and in designated classrooms to allow for social distancing.**



Are you requiring proof of vaccination from all staff?

- We will follow Governor Murphy's Executive Order No. 253 which requires staff to be vaccinated by October 18th or participate in weekly testing.
- The district will provide guidance on how vaccination status will be handled prior to the October 18th deadline.



I'm concerned about the safety procedures the school will take to avoid a mass contagion.

- **The school and district have several safety measures to minimize the impact of COVID-19 in the school building.**
 - **Mask mandate, pooled testing, vaccination requirements for staff, desk shields, frequent cleaning, social distancing to the extent possible**



Are there counselors in the school?

- **Buzz Aldrin has two school counselors and one Academy counselor who will work together to address our student population.**
- **We are working diligently to secure a new counselor in place for when one of our counselors leaves the district.**



With everyone vaccinated, will kids still have to wear masks at school?

- **These are health-related decisions that are made by highly trained and knowledgeable healthcare providers in conjunction with the county and state guidelines.**



Will this presentation be recorded?

- We are not recording this session.
- We will upload our presentation along with our Road Forward Reopening Plan on our school's website.



Can you tell us the percentage of staff that is vaccinated? Or who is vaccinated?

- **No, we are not able to release the vaccination status of staff members or students due to confidentiality.**



*What will happen if a child tests positive and then has to quarantine?
How will they continue learning?*

- **Students will be able to learn remotely if they are approved for a COVID-related absence.**



Is there a point where we would return to hybrid/full remote?

- This decision would be made by the district, upon seeking guidance and directives from the county and state.



Please explain lunch and how students will socially distance outside or in classrooms.

- **Students will sit three feet apart, or to the fullest extent possible.**
- **Adults will supervise students outside to assist them with maintaining distance while eating.**
- **In the classrooms, students will have their shields on the desks while they eat.**



If a student is unable to attend the walkthroughs, is there another date available?

- **Our 6th grade and new student walkthroughs will take place tomorrow at 9 am.**
- **We do not have additional time in the calendar to schedule another tour date.**
- **We will have opportunities during the first two days of school to help students get acclimated to the building.**



Are teachers and staff required to get vaccinated?

- **The Governor signed an executive order requiring staff to get vaccinated or they must participate in weekly testing.**



What is the plan for school buses?

- **Students will be masked in their seats.**
- **Students will be seated three feet apart to the fullest extent possible.**



Will time be allocated for students to remove their masks?

- **Teachers will provide students with mask breaks as needed.**



Will hot lunch be served this year?

- **Yes, we will continue to provide hot lunch for students.**



How many students will be in each classroom?

- There is not a set number of students for any classroom.
- Our scheduling team worked very hard to ensure the classes were as balanced as possible to help with distancing and classroom enrollment.



Has air filtration been put into every classroom?

- **Every Univent in each room has a filter.**
- **The filters were repaired and meet the minimum requirements outlined by the CDC.**



Will windows be opened throughout the year?

- At this time, windows are recommended to be opened 4 inches to allow for greater air circulation and fresh air flow.



How can you seat students three feet apart with 20-25 kids in a classroom?

- We will seat students three feet apart to the greatest extent possible.
- With the use of desk shields, we are able to seat them closer than three feet.



Will students be handling cleaning products?

- **Students are encouraged to wipe down their areas upon arrival to each class.**
- **They are encouraged to wash their hands afterwards.**
- **Cleaning and sanitizing will be a collective effort to ensure safety.**



*Have the bipolar ionization machines
been removed or turned off?*

- Yes, they have.
- **Buzz Aldrin is not using bipolar ionization in the building.**



How will families be informed about exposure and quarantining?

- The building has a contact tracing team in addition to the district's contact tracing team.
- The contact tracing team will communicate with those affected staff members and families.
- Notification will be sent out through the school regarding quarantining of multiple students.



How are students placed into groups this year?

- All secondary schools are operating their regularly scheduled courses.
- Students are not placed into set cohorts at the secondary level, as this would significantly impact school programming, course offerings, and limit student choice.



Will students be required to use their Chromebooks in the classroom?

- **Students will be required to bring their fully charged Chromebooks to school each day.**
- **Teachers will assign a combination of digital and in-person materials in the classroom.**



Will information be shared with 6th grade families regarding what to expect in middle school?

- **Yes, we will have a PTA meeting to help with this topic.**
- **Additionally, we will conduct advisories with our 6th grade students.**



Will there be air purifiers with HEPA filters in the classrooms?

- **Air purifiers have been placed in classrooms that need additional assistance with improving air flow.**
- **The air purifiers that are used by the district have HEPA filters in them.**



Will all teachers be in teaching in person and some remotely?

- **Our teachers will be teaching in person this year.**



Will teachers use online textbooks or traditional textbooks?

- **This is dependent on the subject area.**
- **Many of our district's textbooks are online.**



Will students be allowed or expected to bring their Chromebooks home?

- **Yes, students are required to bring their Chromebooks to and from school.**
- **They are responsible for charging them overnight as well.**



Will students be expected to turn in homework digitally or physically?

- **This is at the discretion of each teacher.**



Will teachers circulate the classroom or teach from their desks?

- Teachers are free to move about their classrooms to the greatest extent possible.
- If a teacher has a student who is learning remotely, this may affect their ability to circulate the room as frequently, as they are teaching two different populations.



Will students be allowed to congregate on the playground after school?

- **Students will be required to leave the premises after school.**
- **They are not permitted to congregate on school grounds without supervision.**
- **The school is not responsible for student activities that occur after school that are not school events.**



Will the PTA or other organization be permitted to the building for programs and meetings?

- We are able to conduct smaller meetings with the PTA in the building.
- We cannot have outside visitors or large group gatherings in the building.



In the event a classroom is shut down due to a COVID spread, what is the protocol?

- **The students will return to remote learning.**



Will all the bathrooms be open and operational?

- All restrooms in the building are open for use except for three, which are currently being repaired.



How will proper ventilation and a reasonable temperature be maintained?

- **The district will work to ensure that the room temperature is closely monitored and more easily regulated at the building level.**



How will the balance of ventilation and adequate heat be achieved during cold winter days?

- **The windows will be cracked open and the boilers will work to obtain a higher temperature for the building.**



What clear guidelines are in place for synchronous teaching?

- **The district will follow similar procedures to last year during hybrid instruction if only certain students are learning remotely.**
- **If the entire class is quarantined, then the whole class will switch to fully remote learning.**



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Thank you so much!!

Please contact us with any questions or concerns.

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