



Orange Township Public Schools

Gerald Fitzhugh, II, Ed.D.
Office of the Superintendent



June 24, 2021

Good Day Orange Township Public School District Community,

As I sit here trying to find the perfect words to culminate this year I am overwhelmed with many moving thoughts– the adjectives that come to my mind are as follows: elated, accomplished, exhausted, sad, triumphant, nervous, and proud. WE did it. All of us together. I am so proud that we came together as a community to ensure that our students were the focus. We were able to return to a five day in person instructional model. I do know there were some closures due to COVID-19 but even with those challenges, we worked in tandem to provide optimal experiences for the children that we service.

This year, our nation was faced with school violence and unrest. As a school district, we entered into conversations about student perceptions of safety but more importantly providing a safe space for them to share information to keep everyone within our school district safe. I cannot stress enough the importance holding our children so tight. The Superintendent's Trauma Informed Team researched sites that can assist families and staff when handling traumatic events.

<https://childmind.org/guide/helping-children-cope-after-a-traumatic-event/>
<https://www.apa.org/topics/gun-violence-crime/shooting-aftermath>
<https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/violence/>
<https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/59143/war-crisis-tragedy-how-to-talk-with-kids-when-the-news-is-scary>
<https://www.common Sense Media.org/articles/kids-mental-health-apps-and-websites-for-anxiety-depression-coping-skills-and-professional-support>
<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/school-violence-resources/talking-to-children-about-violence-tips-for-parents-and-teachers>

Faculty, staff, and administrators – “You came, you saw, you conquered.” You trusted, you took risks, and you persevered. You continued to be strong and positive influences for our students as well as our families even when you were uncertain. You continued to motivate and move them academically despite masks, shields, social distancing, constant hand washing breaks, and altered classroom environments. Most importantly, you continued to push through and be unequivocally resilient all while silently managing your own personal struggles and stories.

Families – “Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.” Never has there been a truer statement. Your constant support, contributions, and trust allowed us to provide an amazing school year for our children. Thank you for the positive difference you make in the lives of our students. In addition, we cannot thank you enough for being present at Parent Teacher Organization as well as the Orange Preparatory Academy Redesign Conversations. We opened our doors for performances and academic nights. Thank you for being present.

Students – “You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.” You have worked tirelessly and fiercely. You proved that an Orange School District student can BE resilient, BE adaptive, and BE positive. I continue to marvel at your strength and positivity. I am so proud of how you showed us that every day, even the toughest days, are great days to be an Orange Tornado!

To our retirees, on behalf of the Board of Education and my administration, I would be remiss, if I did not thank you for your many years of service to the Orange Township Public School District. Your dedication and love that you gave to the students as well as one another is breathtaking. Community, join me in congratulating our retirees!

Mask Mandate Update: Effective Tuesday, July 5, 2022, the mask mandate will turn to optional for our district school and administrative buildings. If there is an uptick in cases within the school district, I will reserve the option to return to mandatory masks for an unspecified period.

School Year 2022-2023

As we close the door on the 2021-2022 school year and open the doors to summer, we are diligently working on the 2022-2023 school year. Next year, the following times by school level will take place.

School Level	Arrival Time for Students	Arrival Time for Staff	End Time for Students	End Time for Staff
Elementary Level (Including Pre-Kindergarten)	8:30 AM	8:20 AM	3:00 PM	3:10 PM
Orange High School	8:20 AM	8:05 AM	2:40 PM	2:55 PM
Orange Preparatory Academy of Inquiry and Innovation	8:25 AM	8:15 AM	2:50 PM	3:05 PM
STEM Innovation Academy of the Oranges	8:20 AM	8:15 AM	Mondays 2:20 PM for Teacher Professional Development Tues – Fri 3:30 PM	4PM* *includes stipend
Twilight Program	3:30 PM* *3:00 PM - lunch	3:00 PM	7:30 PM	7:30 PM

Please be advised that times are staggered from the previous school year. Thank you for your suggestions accordingly.

District Goals and the Strategic Plan Reminders

The district goals and strategic plan are the guiding force in the development of the Orange Public School District. You are encouraged to review each plan and ask questions related to development of the whole child as well as the district’s partnership with families.

The following link is for the District Goals: <https://www.orange.k12.nj.us/Page/30018>.

The following link is for the Strategic Plan: <https://www.orange.k12.nj.us/domain/3344>.

I remain humbled and honored to serve this wonderful community as your Superintendent. I am so proud to lead this great district. Our stakeholders have seat at the table. From our student and parent councils to our PTO/PTA meetings, listening to your commendations as well as questions for improvement are well received and appreciated. Your continued trust in the work is refreshing.

In closing, I wish you and your family a safe, fun, and healthy summer. Please remember to check our website www.orange.k12.nj.us, under latest news and information, the Orange App, and our social media handles (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), as they will continue to be updated throughout the summer months.

In Partnership,

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Superintendent of Schools