

# ORANGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS' PLAN FOR SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION AND CONTINUITY OF SERVICE

Updated: 1.11.22



New Jersey Department of Education



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



## The Orange Public Schools

### Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

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LEA Name: The Orange Public Schools

Date: 06/15/2021

Date Revised: 01/11/2022

#### 1. Maintaining Health and Safety

##### Introduction and Background

On May 17, 2021, Governor Phil Murphy announced that upon the conclusion of this school year, portions of Executive Order 175 allowing remote learning will be rescinded, thereby requiring schools to provide full-day, in-person instruction, as they were prior to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

Over the past year we have made the health of our students and school staff a top priority and in September 2021, our students, educators, and parents can look forward to the full return to safe in-person instruction. While school districts are required to fully open buildings beginning Fall 2021, remote learning will be permitted **in the event that there is a localized outbreak or other emergency**. If buildings are open for in-person instruction, parents or guardians will not be able to opt-out of in-person instruction.

In the event of a declared public emergency or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure, the Superintendent of Schools will consult with the Board of Education, if practicable, prior to implementing the school district's plan for virtual or remote instruction. This plan would be implemented during a district closure lasting more than three consecutive days. See pages 25 – 27.

**Special Note from Dr. Fitzhugh:** It is important to note that this is the updated version of the plan as mandated by the NJDOE and Governor's Office as it must be revised every six months.

## Mitigation Strategies

The following mitigation strategies describe how the District will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff following safety recommendations established by the CDC. While the CDC recommends schools continue to use the COVID-19 prevention strategies outlined in the current version of CDC's Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools for at least the remainder of the 2020-2021 academic school year, the district will continue with current prevention strategies; acknowledging that all students were not fully vaccinated by Fall 2021. Effective November 2021, youth ages 5 – 11 became eligible for vaccination. Youth between the ages of 12 and 15 were eligible for vaccination as of May 12, 2021. Systems are needed such to ensure the safety of vaccinated and unvaccinated populations. This has allowed for students and staff to become fully vaccinated and provide protection against COVID-19. Daily testing in buildings as well as supports from the County, State, and City Levels re: vaccination drives have been in place since the first submission of this plan (June 16, 2021).

### A. UNIVERSAL AND CORRECT WEARING OF MASKS

**Masks will be required in all classroom and non-classroom settings, including hallways, school offices, restrooms, gyms, auditoriums, etc. and for all students, teachers, staff, and visitors.** All students, educators, staff, and visitors will be required to wear face masks indoors throughout the 2021-2022 school year. The district will continue this mandate The District will ensure that all teachers have PPE 'kits' in each classroom equipped with an additional supply of disposable masks, Lysol wipes, hand sanitizer, disposable gloves (nitrile and powder free), etc. for staff and student use. Mask use will be required on school buses and other public transportation. Visitors permitted in school will be required to wear masks at all times. Younger students must be supervised when wearing a cloth face covering or face shield and will need help putting them on, taking them off, and getting used to wearing them.

*All face coverings (whether disposable or reusable) must:*

- ✓ Be made with at least 2 layers of breathable materials
- ✓ Fully cover the nose and mouth and secure under the chin
- ✓ Fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- ✓ Be secured with ties or ear loops and allow the user to remain hands-free
- ✓ Without exhalation valves or vents

*Cloth face coverings should not be worn by:*

- ✓ When the individual has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance;
- ✓ When a student's documented medical condition or disability, as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Educational Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, precludes use of a face covering;
- ✓ When the individual is under two (2) years of age;
- ✓ When an individual is engaged in an activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating and drinking or playing an instrument that would be obstructed by the face covering;
- ✓ When the individual is engaged in high-intensity aerobic or anaerobic activity;
- ✓ When a student is participating in high-intensity physical activities during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals; or
- ✓ When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

## **B. PHYSICAL DISTANCING (E.G., INCLUDING USE OF COHORTS/PODDING)**

The District will continue to implement structural interventions to promote physical distance between staff and students. Though physical distancing recommendations cannot prevent a school from offering full-day, full-time, in person learning to all students for the 2021-2022 school year, implementing physical distancing measures as an effective COVID-19 prevention strategy to the extent the schools are equipped to do so while still providing regular school operations to all students and staff in-person is key.

### **Space between students in classrooms:**

In pre-k and elementary classrooms, students will be seated at least 3 feet apart.

In middle schools and high classrooms, students will be seated at least 3 feet apart.

### **The District will enforce social distancing of 3 feet of distance in the following settings:**

- ✓ Between adults (teachers and staff), and between adults and students, at all times in the school building as studies have found that transmission between staff is more common than transmission between students and staff, and among students, in schools.
- ✓ When masks cannot be worn, such as when eating.
- ✓ During activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band, or sports and exercise. The District will move these activities outdoors or to large, well-ventilated space, when possible.
- ✓ In common areas such as school lobbies and auditoriums.
- ✓ Between cohorts where possible.

### **Additional Districtwide social distancing measures**

- ✓ Schools will remove nonessential furniture and make other changes to classroom layouts to maximize distance between students.
- ✓ Schools will face desks in the same direction, where possible.
- ✓ Schools will eliminate or decrease nonessential in-person interactions among teachers and staff during meetings, lunches, and other situations that could lead to adult-to-adult transmission.
- ✓ Schools will limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as much as possible; require all visitors to wear masks and physically distance from others.

### **Transportation**

- ✓ Transportation personnel will create 3 or more feet of distance between children on school buses when possible; opening windows to improve ventilation when it does not create a safety hazard.
- ✓ Transportation personnel will seat children one child per row, skipping rows when possible.
- ✓ Masks are required by federal order on school buses.

### C. HANDWASHING AND RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

The District will ensure that students, teachers, and staff use proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette while onsite by teaching proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette, reinforcing behaviors, and providing adequate supplies.

The District will

- ✓ Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students, teachers, and staff.
- ✓ Provide hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol in sanitation station and high contact locations throughout the District
- ✓ Encourage students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue when not wearing a mask and immediately wash their hands after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- ✓ Assist students with disabilities with handwashing and respiratory etiquette behaviors.
- ✓ Post hand washing signs and protocols near sinks and Sanitizing Stations
- ✓ Provide adequate supplies including soap, paper towel dispensers over blowers to dry hands, tissues, face masks (as feasible), and no-touch trash cans.

## D. CLEANING AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY FACILITIES, INCLUDING IMPROVING VENTILATION

**Cleaning and disinfecting** are important defenses against the spread of the Coronavirus, but only if it is done properly. As part of our cleaning and disinfecting protocols, the District will:

- ✓ Continue the increased frequency of facility cleaning schedules that includes cleaning and sanitizing with a particular emphasis on commonly touched surfaces – which shall be no less stringent or frequent than what is required by the Department of Health for PreK–12 schools.
- ✓ Ensure continuous disinfecting of classrooms and therapy rooms that service students with complex disabilities where multiple tools are used for communication, mobility, and instruction.
- ✓ Continue to discourage sharing of common materials.
- ✓ Clean all common areas at the beginning and at the end of each period where students change rooms.
- ✓ Properly clean and disinfect highly used surfaces between uses (fomites).

*List of frequently touched surfaces to be cleaned after use:*

- Tables
- Doorknobs
- Light switches
- Countertops
- Handles
- Desks, laboratory tables
- Phones
- Keyboards
- Toilets
- Faucets and sinks
- Lab equipment and materials
- Engineering controls (fire extinguisher, fume hood, eyewash, shower, etc.)
- Touch screens

## Ventilation/Air Filtration

Ventilation in a classroom, it is vital that there is strong air circulation as social distancing only works when you are in the vicinity of a coronavirus carrier for short periods of time. When weather allows, windows will be opened to allow for greater air circulation and if air conditioning isn't available. Note: The need for strong air circulation has to be balanced with the needs of those students and staff who suffer from seasonal allergies. Opening windows during the fall semester can place those with allergies at higher risks of being affected by the environment. Also, asthma can be triggered in students and staff when doors are left open.

The District will continue to ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors. The District will not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms) to children using the facility.

- ✓ Recirculated air must have a fresh air component
- ✓ Purchased Filter(s) for A/C units
- ✓ Purchased Air Filtration systems as needed
- ✓ Inventory students with seasonal allergies

The District will ensure:

- ✓ The HVAC systems Districtwide have a 30% fresh air component to their operation.
- ✓ Filters for the HVAC systems are maintained as per manufacturers' recommendations based on the type of equipment.
- ✓ Sanitizing stations are located in all high traffic areas and main entrances/exits.
- ✓ The district utilizes a minimum of 60% alcohol sanitizer in all upright sanitizing stations.
- ✓ Each classroom is also equipped with pump hand sanitizer as well as disinfecting wipes. The district utilizes a minimum of 60% alcohol sanitizer in all classrooms.
- ✓ Classrooms with existing handwashing stations are supplied with soap and sanitizer.
- ✓ Sanitizing cleaning products approved to kill COVID-19 virus, will be used to clean and disinfect rooms and surfaces.
- ✓ Classrooms, bathrooms, floors, touch points, and common areas are cleaned daily by the custodial staff to include:
  - classroom desks/chairs
  - door handles and push plates
  - handrails
  - light switches
  - desktops
  - telephones
  - computer stations
- ✓ District will limit and control traffic to areas such as bathrooms to assist custodial efforts and maintain social distancing.
- ✓ Playground equipment will be sanitized at the beginning of the day and after each use.

- ✓ Increased routine cleaning and disinfection of touchpoints and high traffic areas will occur throughout the day.
- ✓ Custodians will be on call for any concerns as they arise throughout the school day.
- ✓ If a positive case is identified, the custodial staff will be responsible for disinfecting all areas of the building that may have been affected, utilizing all appropriate PPE. Whenever possible the classroom and work areas where the student or staff member was located should be closed off for at least 24 hours (if possible) prior to being cleaned and disinfected. In some events the district may have to engage in an emergency school closure to properly and thoroughly sanitize the facility.

#### **Air Conditioning**

When school starts at the end of the summer (August or September), the temperature inside the school building may necessitate the use of air conditioners. Air filters will be cleaned or replaced according to a regular schedule based on the number of people who occupy the room or building.

#### **Post Hand Washing Protocols Near Sinks and Sanitizing Stations**

#### **Water Systems**

To minimize the risk of Legionnaire's disease and other diseases associated with water, the District will take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (e.g., sink faucets, drinking fountains, and decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown. Drinking fountains will be cleaned and sanitized, however staff and students will be encouraged to bring their own water to minimize use and touching of water fountains.

#### **Communal Spaces**

The District will closely monitor communal use of shared spaces such as dining halls and playgrounds with shared playground equipment if possible; otherwise, stagger use and clean and disinfect between use.

The District will hold any activities that encourage social gathering outdoors or in a large well-ventilated space and with fewer people than usual to allow even greater physical distance between students. Keep students outside more, as weather and space permit.



## E. CONTACT TRACING IN COMBINATION WITH ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE STATE, LOCAL, TERRITORIAL, OR TRIBAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

### I. Protocols for Symptomatic Students and Staff

- There shall be an adequate amount of personal protective equipment (PPE) available, accessible, and provided for use.
- The school principal or his or her designee shall establish an isolation space.
- Individuals exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19 shall be immediately, safely, and respectfully taken to the designated isolation space by the school nurse and isolated from others.
- The school nurse will examine the individual and may refer them for testing and treatment.
- Symptomatic staff and other individuals will be sent home and advised to follow, What to Do if You are Sick at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
- Students will remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult.
- Individuals in isolation will have their symptoms continuously monitored by the school nurse.
- A student exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 may be required to submit to a COVID-19 test.
- The school nurse shall require the certification of a physician that the student is contagion free before readmitting a student to school.
- The school nurse attending the ill individual must wear a face covering and try to maintain social distancing within the care area.
- The current Communicable Disease Service guidance at <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/> for illness reporting will be followed.
- Re-admittance to school shall be consistent with New Jersey Department of Health guidance and information for schools found at [https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/covid2019\\_schools.shtml](https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/covid2019_schools.shtml) and the New Jersey Department of Health/Communicable Disease Service's Quick Reference Guidance on Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Home Isolation for Persons Diagnosed with COVID-19 found at [https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID-QuickRef\\_Discont\\_Isolation\\_and\\_TBP.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID-QuickRef_Discont_Isolation_and_TBP.pdf)
- Students and staff may be asked to leave or not come into school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 set forth above, or as may be amended by the CDC, that is not otherwise explained.
- If a staff member becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in a district facility tests positive for COVID-19, the staff member shall notify the building principal and the school nurse.
- The school nurse shall immediately notify the local health official, building principal, and the Superintendent of Schools of a confirmed case when a COVID-19 test is positive. The local health department shall conduct contact tracing. The school nurse and the building principal are the designated staff liaisons responsible for providing notifications and carrying out other components of the board's contact tracing policy.
- **Contact tracing** will be initiated including records of groups/cohorts, assigned staff, and daily attendance.

## II: Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is the process used to identify those who have come into contact with people who have tested positive for many contagious diseases, including COVID-19. It is a long-standing practice and is an integral function of local health departments to prevent the spread of infectious disease. All procedures will adhere to applicable federal and state law and regulations regarding privacy and the confidentiality of records.

- ✓ The school nurse and the building principal are the designated staff liaisons responsible for providing notifications and carrying out other components of the Board's contact tracing policy/protocols.
- ✓ The District will collaborate with the local health department and engage our school nurses to educate the broader school community on the importance of contact tracing. All contact tracing will be conducted by the local Health Department in collaboration with our school nurse and district administration.
- ✓ The District procedure for reporting a positive case of COVID-19 for anyone who has come in contact with or has themselves tested positive for COVID-19 will be as follows:
  - Contact the school nurse and/or principal to report the situation.
  - Make the Superintendent aware of the situation as well as the District COVID Manager (Ms. Jones, Human Resources Executive Director)
  - District Administration will contact the NJDOE County Office and the local Health Department and consult with them for the next steps to take about informing the school and community.
  - The school nurse and the school administrators will assist the Health Department with their contact tracing procedures by providing any necessary information such as student/staff schedules, bus lists, seating charts, daily attendance, and other information as needed.
  - District Administration will alert the head custodian if there was exposure within the school building and enable the district emergency cleaning process to ensure proper and effective sanitation of the school facility. The extent of cleaning/sanitization will be determined on the severity of the exposure and may be isolated to only certain locations in the buildings based on the risk of exposure. Whenever possible the classroom and work areas where the student or staff member was located should be closed off for at least 24 hours (if possible) prior to being cleaned and disinfected. In some events the District may have to engage in an emergency school closure to properly and thoroughly sanitize the facility as determined by the school Superintendent in collaboration with the Health Department.
  - If necessary, the school community will be alerted as determined appropriate by the Health Department.
  - Adequate information and training will be provided to District staff as necessary to enable staff to carry out responsibilities assigned to them under the Board's contract tracing policy/protocols.

## F. DIAGNOSTIC AND SCREENING TESTING

Since Fall 2021 through the Winter 2021-2022, the District continues to select screening procedures for students and staff in accordance with guidance from the CDC and our local health agencies. Screening procedures shall take into account students and staff with disabilities and accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students and staff.

The following District screening protocols will continue, in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations:

- ✓ Staff, students, and visitors shall be screened for entry into the school building.
- ✓ Designated staff will have completed screening training and will be assigned to do screenings at designated entrances
- ✓ Designated entrances and/or designated entrance time will be instituted to discourage crowding
- ✓ At the designated entrances, the screeners must screen students and staff for signs of COVID-19 illness prior to being permitted to enter the school
  - A fever of 100° F or greater
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea
- ✓ Students, staff, or individuals displaying symptoms related to COVID-19 will be isolated and removed.
- ✓ Parents/guardians and staff will complete a daily questionnaire prior to arriving at the school building to confirm students and staff are free of COVID-19 symptoms. This daily questionnaire will also be used by the District to screen for a history of exposure to COVID-19.
- ✓ Parents/guardians are encouraged to be on alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick.
- ✓ Staff are encouraged to self-screen prior to coming to work and not to attempt to enter the school building/District facility if they have any COVID-19 symptoms.

## G. EFFORTS TO PROVIDE VACCINATIONS TO EDUCATORS, OTHER STAFF, AND STUDENTS, IF ELIGIBLE

Keeping school buildings open depends upon awareness of and immediate action on any COVID-19 concerns in our buildings. To do this, we need students and staff in our buildings to get tested. The District has instituted voluntary weekly testing in all school buildings effective May 24, 2021 to present. Our testing partners come to district schools each week and test in-person staff and students from grades K-12. This testing initiative is organized by our partners JL Hudson Holdings, LLC. The test is easy, quick, and safe. Instead of the “long swab” that goes in the back of the nose, this test is a short, small swab (like a Q-Tip) that goes just in the front of the nose. If a participant tests positive while in the presence of JLHH, a JLHH staff member will remove the participant to an isolated location and contact designated school personnel who will implement the districts positive COVID- 19 action plan. If a participant tests positive after a specimen is observed and processed, JLHH will contact the designated school personnel who will implement the district's positive COVID-19 action plan. Beyond testing, the district hosts virtual COVID-19 Information sessions and Vaccine Clinics, facilitated by physicians from local medical institutions including Barnabas Medical Center, Newark Beth Israel Medical Center and JLH Holdings, LLC. Updates are provided on COVID-19 pandemic trends, treatment options, the district’s weekly testing program and vaccine clinics. The district also partnered with the Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit and the City of Orange Township Health Department to host vaccines clinics for students 5yrs-18yrs.

### List of District COVID-19 Programs for Families

Date	Collaborating Medical Partner	Event	Location
9/9/21	JL Hudson Holdings, LLC (Dr. Sampson Davis)	Virtual COVID-19 Information Session	Zoom
9/13/21	JL Hudson Holdings, LLC (Dr. Sampson Davis)	Launch of District Weekly COVID-19 Testing Program in all district schools	All district school buildings
9/14/21	Saint Barnabas Medical Center	Vaccine Clinic	Lincoln Avenue School
10/5/21	Saint Barnabas Medical Center	Vaccine Clinic	Lincoln Avenue School
10/15/21	JL Hudson Holdings, LLC (Dr. Sampson Davis)	Virtual COVID-19 Information Session	Zoom
11/11/21	JL Hudson Holdings, LLC (Dr. Sampson Davis) / Dr. Rosario Zambrano	Virtual COVID-19 Information Session	Zoom
11/11/21	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Park Avenue School

11/19/21	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Rosa Parks Community School
12/3/21	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Parks Avenue School
12/6/21	JL Hudson Holdings, LLC (Dr. Sampson Davis)	COVID-19 PCR Testing	Orange Preparatory Academy
12/7/21	JL Hudson Holdings, LLC (Dr. Sampson Davis)	COVID-19 PCR Testing	Orange Preparatory Academy
12/10/21	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Rosa Parks Community School
12/16/21	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Lincoln Avenue School
1/5/22	JL Hudson Holdings, LLC (Dr. Sampson Davis) / Newark Beth Israel Medical Center	Virtual COVID-19 Information Session	Zoom
1/6/22	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Lincoln Avenue School
1/7/22	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Rosa Parks Community School
1/7/22	Newark Beth Israel Medical Center	Vaccine Clinic	Orange Preparatory Academy
1/10/22	Newark Beth Israel Medical Center	Vaccine Clinic	Oakwood Avenue Community School
1/12/22	JL Hudson Holdings, LLC (Dr. Sampson Davis)	COVID-19 PCR Testing	Rosa Parks Community School
1/13/22	JL Hudson Holdings, LLC (Dr. Sampson Davis)	COVID-19 PCR Testing	Lincoln Avenue School
1/13/22	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Heywood Avenue School

1/14/22	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Park Avenue School
1/27/22	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Lincoln Avenue School
1/28/22	Newark Beth Israel Medical Center	Vaccine Clinic ( <i>scheduled</i> )	Orange Preparatory Academy
1/31/22	Newark Beth Israel Medical Center	Vaccine Clinic ( <i>scheduled</i> )	Oakwood Avenue Community School
2/3/22	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic ( <i>scheduled</i> ); (students 5yr -11yrs only)	Heywood Avenue School
2/24/22	Essex County COVID-19 Mobile Unit/ City of Orange Township Health Department	Vaccine Clinic ( <i>scheduled</i> ); (students 5yr - 11yrs only)	Heywood Avenue School

## **Exclusion**

Parents should not send students to school when sick. Students with the following symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school:

At least two of the following symptoms: fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose; OR At least one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, or new taste disorder.

### **Exclusion Criteria for Persons Who Have COVID-19 Compatible Symptoms or Who Test Positive for COVID-19:**

Ill individuals with COVID-19 compatible symptoms who have not been tested or individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 should stay home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and at least 24 hours have passed after resolution of fever without fever reducing medications and improvement in symptoms.

Persons who test positive for COVID-19 but who are asymptomatic should stay home for 10 days from the positive test result.

**Note:** The District is continuing to update quarantine protocols with respect to the updated CDC guidelines described below:

Given what we currently know about COVID-19 and the Omicron variant, CDC is shortening the recommended time for isolation for the public. People with COVID-19 should isolate for 5 days and if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are resolving (without fever for 24 hours), follow that by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others to minimize the risk of infecting people they encounter. The change is motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after.

Additionally, CDC is updating the recommended quarantine period for anyone in the general public who is exposed to COVID-19. For people who are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days. Alternatively, if a 5-day quarantine is not feasible, it is imperative that an exposed person wear a well-fitting mask at all times when around others for 10 days after exposure. Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure. For all those exposed, best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day 5 after exposure. If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

Isolation relates to behavior after a confirmed infection. Isolation for 5 days followed by wearing a well-fitting mask will minimize the risk of spreading the virus to others. Quarantine refers to the time following exposure to the virus or close contact with someone known to have COVID-19. Both updates come as the Omicron variant continues to spread throughout the U.S. and reflects the current science on when and for how long a person is maximally infectious. These recommendations do not supersede state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations.

Confirmed person  
with COVID-19 in  
building?

**ASSESS RISK**

Students and staff must be safely and respectfully isolated from others AND cannot return to campus until the school system's reentry criteria are met.

Institute a short building dismissal for cleaning, disinfecting, contact tracing in consultation with local health officials; Potential 2 – 5 days of closure.

**CONTACT**

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
(Apprise Board of Education and Board  
Attorney of Action Steps)

**CONTACT**

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

*To communicate dismissal decisions and possible COVID-19 exposure to staff and families; to initiate contact tracing; to determine when staff and students should return to school*

**CONTACT**  
FACILITIES

*To close off areas used by individual with COVID-19; to open windows and doors; to clean and disinfect after standard 24-hour waiting period*

**DETERMINE CONTINUITY OF  
SERVICES w/**

**EXECUTIVE STAFF &  
BUILDING ADMIN**

- Meal Distribution
- Instructional Supports
- Social/Emotional and Related Services, etc.



#### **H. APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES WITH RESPECT TO THE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

Consistent with guidance from the United States Department of Education, districts must continue to meet their obligations to students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible. The NJDOE will continue to update school districts and receiving schools with any additional guidance from the USDE on implementation of IDEA. Specific strategies and considerations for students with disabilities must be critical points of discussion for every return-to-school scenario. The NJDOE recommends that school districts consider the following when addressing the education of students with disabilities for the 2021-2022 school year:

Procedures to address the return to school of medically fragile students and students with physical or health impairments who may require accommodations and modifications as part of a 504 Plan. School districts should communicate frequently with the families of students with significant medical risk factors to determine if additional precautions or unique measures are necessary prior to a student's return to school.

Therefore,

IEP teams will review student data/student progress to determine whether critical skills were lost during the period in which remote instruction was being provided to students and determine the need for additional services to address learning loss.

IEP teams will consider the impact of missed services on student progress towards meeting IEP goals and objectives and determine if additional or compensatory services are needed to address regression and recoupment of skills within a reasonable length of time.

IEP teams will develop procedures to complete overdue and/or incomplete evaluations to determine eligibility for special education services.

The District will make use of school guidance department staff and child study team personnel to identify students whose postsecondary plans may have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and provide support, resources, and assistance, which may include facilitating connection to community organizations, scholarship programs, county, state, and federal opportunities to access support.

The District will provide clear communication to parents/guardians of the procedures for student referrals and evaluations to determine the eligibility for special education and related services or a 504 Plan as required by federal and state law.

- I. WHEN ILLNESS OCCURS IN THE SCHOOL SETTING** Children and staff with COVID-19 symptoms should be separated away from others until they can be sent home. Students who are sick and not already wearing a mask should be provided one to wear unless the student has a contraindication to doing so. If a mask is not tolerated by the ill student or staff member, other staff should be masked and follow maximum physical distancing guidelines (at least 6 feet away). Individuals will be sent home and referred to a healthcare provider. Persons with COVID-19-compatible symptoms will be required to undergo COVID-19 testing

- II. Ill individuals who test positive will be reported to the Local Health Department and contact tracing should begin. The District be prepared to provide the following information when consulting with the LHD: } Contact information for the ill persons; The date the ill person developed symptoms, tested positive for COVID-19 (if known), and was last in the building; } Types of interactions (close contacts, length of contact) the person may have had with other persons in the building or in other locations; } Names, addresses, and telephone numbers for ill person's close contacts in the school; } Vaccination status if known } Any other information to assist with the determination of next steps. Regardless of vaccination status, if a student or staff experiences COVID-compatible symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, and tested for SARS-CoV-2.

## 2. Ensuring Continuity of Services

A. Describe how the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff's social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services. (1000-character limit).

### Academic Needs

Within its Safe Return to In-Person Instruction plan, the Orange Public Schools will ensure the delivery of rigorous and relevant curricula and instruction through the implementation of the following strategies.

### **Continue to identify, develop, and implement inclusive, evidence-based, and college and career ready standards-aligned pre-K through grade 12 instructional materials and curricula for all learners and subgroups, and across all disciplines.**

- Establish and maintain an articulated, comprehensive, and current pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade educational programs for all curricula areas through the development, implementation, and evaluation of courses of study, curricular guides, and instructional services.
- Advance the consistent implementation of developmentally appropriate, evidence-based instructional materials and strategies, appropriate to support each special education and bilingual/ESL service, informed by students' individualized plans (ex: IEPs, transition) or ACCESS level (post-secondary education, employment, and independent living skills.)
- Realign curricula and pacing calendars to improve access and depth of knowledge.
- Promote opportunities for acceleration in lieu of remediation to ensure that all students have access for high-quality, standards-aligned, grade level instruction.
- Introduce intermediary course offerings prior to students' taking high-failure courses (ex: Algebra II).
- Audit all existing courses (middle school through high school) to ensure alignment and that all students are prepared for rigorous academic honors-, AP-, and dual enrollment level courses by their junior and senior years.
- Identify and offer a wider range of high-level course options across all content areas to increase students' chances for academic success, expanding the number, levels, and variety of courses available to students while eliminating the most basic courses.
- Provide English Language Learners (ELLs) with ample early, opportunities to exit from or be identified for ELL status to empower the district to better support their needs.
- Improve the alignment of District-level assessment content, priorities, calendars, and windows with Statewide testing windows to improve the student assessment experience, gain a better understanding of assessment data, and improve overall curriculum articulation instruments (curriculum guides, lesson plans, pacing calendars, etc.)
- Redesign assessments to improve curriculum alignment, integrate multiple measures, and monitor academic progress.

**Continue to identify, develop, and leverage digital design formats and capabilities that can support learning in person, remotely, or in hybrid formats, enabling improved and continuous access to and engagement with instructional content.**

- Develop an instructional technology strategy that assesses and maps the current uses of instructional technology across the district in order to identify ways to leverage technology (a) as an improved tool for learning, (b) to maximize and improve student schedules, (c) to build community for staff and students, (d) to expand academic experiences and access, and e) to deliver related services through various assistive technology programs.

**Research, identify, and integrate evidence-based pre-K through grade 12 social-emotional learning (SEL)-aligned resources and practices throughout curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development designs.**

- Embed SEL practices through explicit instruction as an integral part of core instruction.
- Ensure the balance between the social-emotional needs of students and their academics matters such to inform student workload, testing calendars, schedules, and homework
- Support school leaders to implement effective, research-based processes that address the critical components of positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS), restorative practices, equitable practices, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to increase the conditions for learning for all students.
- Provide professional development for instructional and support staff to implement social-emotional learning practices in all schools in order to engage all students.
- Facilitate the professional development of adult social-emotional learning and skills through training and coaching to support student learning.

The District is using Cares Act, ESSER, ESSER II, Digital Divide, Addressing Student Learning Loss, and the upcoming American Recovery Plan grants' funding to support its efforts towards a safe return to in-person instruction. To accurately measure academic growth and determine how to best address instructional needs, the Hanover Group and norm-referenced assessments were allotted funding. Programs that have demonstrated the ability to increase proficiency for subgroups and successful pilot programs are funded through the grants. Additionally, the district recognized the need to provide Pre-K through Grade 12 students with 1:1 devices and connectivity so funding was used to purchase tablets and laptops for instruction. Upgrades to Google Enterprise provide enhanced remote and hybrid instruction. Additionally, stipends and positions were added to provide intervention services and supports, extended year programs, extended day programs and social emotional supports.

## **SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL/MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS**

Social Workers, School Counselors, and Child Study Teams will be tasked with providing support students and staff in feeling safe, connected, and adjusted. Social workers and mental health agencies will be available for to assist children in crisis and traumatic events. The District will continue to develop protocols for identifying and supporting students who may be experiencing social emotional, behavioral, and mental health challenges via weekly check-in from Guidance Department and School Administrators, SEL resources on staff, school and district websites, and through partnerships with outside entities and agencies.

Additional Supports include:

- ✓ A strong focus on Social Emotional Learning and appropriate behavioral skills will be included in the instructional day.
- ✓ School counselors, social worker and Child Study Team members will provide individualized student services as necessary
- ✓ Staff members will receive continued professional development and support with addressing SEL needs
- ✓ The school counselors, social worker and school psychologist will collaborate with teachers and assist with providing mindfulness activities and brain breaks for students.
- ✓ Orange staff will be encouraged to reach out to the school social worker or school psychologist with any concern for their own or a student's mental health.
- ✓ Parent virtual meetings will offer support and information regarding self-care and mental health topics.
- ✓ Extra-Curricular activities for groups of students will be held virtually, as appropriate, for students to engage with peers outside of their classroom.
- ✓ A variety of behavioral supports are available throughout the district. This includes a contracted BCBA, school counselors, school psychologist, and school social worker.
- ✓ Referral to outside agencies for additional support will be made as appropriate to student or staff needs.
- ✓ Parent information and support will be provided as appropriate.

### 3. Public Comment

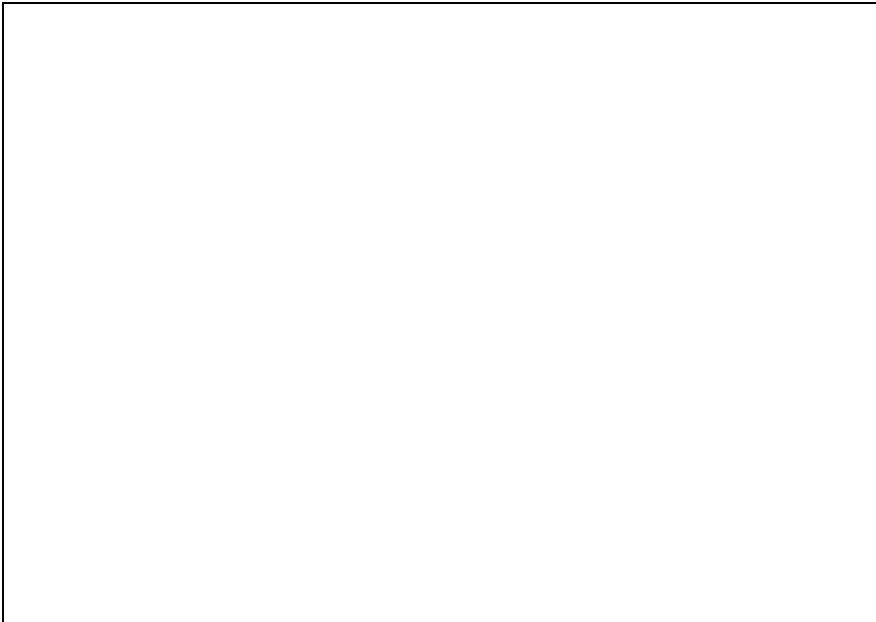
A. Describe how the LEA sought public comment on its plan, and how it took those public comment into account in the development of its plan. Note, the ARP requires that LEAs seek public comment for each 60-day revision to the plan.

The District generated user-friendly tailored surveys such to elicit public comment from various stakeholder groups in the development of the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan. The surveys incorporated a range of questions such to capture stakeholder insights on topics such as health and safety, social emotional well-being, academic performance, etc. The survey also included multiple choice and multiple selection questions to quickly capture trends as well as open response items to give stakeholders the opportunity to share their perspectives.

Public comment was incorporated into our considerations for mitigation strategies, our planning for academic supports, our communication strategy, and our overall emphasis on social emotional supports for both staff, students, and families.

**Based on over 600 responses, public comment reflected the following trends:**

<p><b>Student Readiness for Return</b></p> <p>Staff recommended introducing a Transition/Re-acclimation Plan for the return to a Safe Reopening; teaching hygiene &amp; safety practices.</p> <p>Overall, parents communicated that students were excited about the return to school; though this was mixed with some degree of apprehension about their own safety</p> <p>Parents and teachers expressed concerns about students making sufficient progress during the last 15 months.</p>	<p><b>Teachers Readiness for Return</b></p> <p>While the majority of teachers feel confident about their ability to teach in an in-person setting, roughly 35% of teacher expressed that they may not be as prepared to re-engage learners and provide adequate support post-pandemic given the learning loss.</p> <p>Teachers expressed their top 3 Professional Development needs as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Instructional Strategies</li><li>- Technology-related Supports</li><li>- SEL Strategies</li></ul>
<p><b>Recommendations for Academic Programming</b></p> <p>Staff recommended beginning the 2021-2022 SY with a focus on SEL-informed instruction.</p> <p>Overwhelmingly, teachers and parents expressed the desire to continue with 1:1 devices both at home and in school.</p> <p>Overwhelmingly, teachers and parents expressed the desire to continue with a Learning Management System to manages student instruction even while in person.</p>	<p><b>Health, Safety, &amp; Wellness</b></p> <p>Staff and parents recommended that the District’s COVID testing program continues into SY2021-2022</p> <p>Staff expressed the need for the District to have documented vaccinations for staff and students</p> <p>Staff and parents expressed concerns about “little ones” staying safe and wearing masks properly throughout the school day.</p>



Staff and parents expressed concerns about proper classroom ventilation, class size, the proportion of staff and students who are not fully-vaccinated

While the majority of staff and parents recognized the District’s overall 2020-2021 Return to School plan as effective in keeping staff and students safe, staff recommended that the following measures continue

- cleaning and sanitizing protocols
- Social distancing protocols
- Wearing of masks
- Temperature checks
- Staggered scheduling to reduce class size

Parents liked the flexible timelines for submission of student assignments

Staff and parents expressed the need for therapies and counseling services to be continued by school counselors

In SY2021-2022, staff and parents recommended “immediate” notification of outbreaks

General Recommendations
<p>Should we ever have to return to Remote Instruction, continue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wellness/Asynchronous Wednesdays</li> <li>- 1:1 Devices</li> <li>- Synchronous Formats</li> <li>- ½ Day Schedules</li> <li>- Office Hours</li> <li>- Set Schedules</li> <li>- Supplies and Materials</li> </ul> <p>Remote Instruction Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mandating that cameras remain on</li> <li>- Structured office hours</li> <li>- Laptops for teachers</li> <li>- Parent presence and supports while online</li> <li>- Attendance/No Shows/Student Engagement</li> <li>- Synchronous half days preferred full days</li> <li>- Tech Issues</li> </ul>

Recommendations for Continuation
<p>A larger proportion of staff recommended continuation of the following 2020-2021 protocols:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PPE, Sanitizing Stations, and Cleaning/Disinfecting Protocols</li> <li>- Responsive protocol for sick students</li> <li>- Wellness Wednesdays</li> <li>- Asynchronous Wednesdays</li> <li>- Office Hours</li> <li>- Parent/Staff Communications</li> <li>- Online/Remote instruction as an option during school closings</li> <li>- Supplements to instruction that support independent learning (ex: instructional videos)</li> </ul>

The parent/student survey as well as the faculty/staff survey contained roughly 20 questions written in user-friendly language. The surveys are translated in both Spanish and Haitian-Creole to serve our large body of non-English speaking families. Our surveys are available on multiple media outlets including the District website, as well as our Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter feeds to encourage participation.

Likert scales were used to establish uniformity as they are easy to understand and communicate results. Multiple choice items were used in most cases to communicate preference, and open response items were used to give stakeholders the opportunity to share their perspectives without constraint. Upon request, parents with a disability as defined by the ADA or other special need were provided an alternative and more accessible survey format.

**Sample Survey Questions:**

Once in-person learning resumes in the fall, how important is accessing personal protective equipment (masks, desk shields, etc.) for classrooms?

- Very important
- Important
- Somewhat important
- Not important

Once in-person learning resumes in the fall, how important is accessing cleaning materials for classrooms?

- Very important
- Important
- Somewhat important
- Not important

How confident are you that your child made sufficient academic progress this spring?

- Very confident
- Confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not confident

During distance learning in the spring, typically how engaged were your children?

- Very engaged
- Engaged
- Somewhat engaged
- Not engaged



How concerned are you about your child's social-emotional well-being?

- Very concerned
- concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Not concerned

How concerned are you about your child's peer relationships because of social distancing?

- Very concerned
- concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Not concerned

B. Describe how the LEA ensured that the plan is in an understandable and uniform format; is to the extent practicable written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, will be orally translated for such a parent; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, will be provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent.

The Safe Reopening is written in a manner that is easily understood. The revised plan will be shared publicly. All questions and/or comments will be addressed during typical district communication protocols.

C. Briefly describe any guidance professional learning and technical assistance opportunities the LEA will make available to its schools. The Orange Public Schools offers professional development for blended and personalized instruction formats. Instructional leads (coaches, supervisors, school and district administrators, etc.) provide coaching and instructional support throughout the year, for teachers, and give feedback on how to improve classroom instruction. The district has also designated days for professional development learning opportunities throughout the year and incorporates online training to help reinforce professional development in a wide range of topics. Summer is also used as a vehicle for professional development offering a multitude of delivery formats.

### 3. LEA Guidance for Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan

- A. Describe how the plan outlines how virtual or remote instruction will be provided to students who may not have access to sufficient broadband, or to any technology required for virtual or remote instruction.

#### District Device Support, Deployment, and Connectivity

Parent surveys assessing at-home access to tablets/devices, desktop computers, Chromebooks, and laptops will indicate need. The District will use device sign out forms and procedures ready at the child's home school. Parents sign them out using a valid Government ID. Technology coordinators will be included in the distribution process. Chromebook sign out is for students in grades K – 12 with Kajeets for lower grade students. We provide tablets for our students in pre-kindergarten.

The distribution times for all district schools: 9:00 AM-11:00 AM and 1:15 PM to 3:15 PM.

#### Connectivity

The following companies have shared support via WiFi/Internet during the pandemic; information will be shared via phone blast, website, as well as our social media handles (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram): Comcast and Spectrum. The schools and administration will continue to push Comcast as this is the provider for Orange Township. Schools will provide information through Class Dojo, Remind, and phone conversations with families.

B. Describe how the plan addresses the impact of virtual or remote on the school lunch and breakfast programs.

The District continues to provide packaged 'Grab-and-Go' breakfast and lunch, during all virtual/remote phases at no cost to families, at multiple locations for pick up. The selected locations are

- OECC (includes students from Cleveland Street School), located 397 Park Avenue
- Scholars Academy, located at 268 Capuchin Way
- Forest Street School, located 651 Forest Street
- Heywood Avenue School, located at 421 Heywood Avenue
- Lincoln Avenue School, 216 Lincoln Avenue
- Oakwood Avenue School, located at 135 Oakwood Avenue
- Park Avenue School, located at 231 Park Avenue
- Rosa Parks Community School, located at 369 Main Street
  
- The times for grab and go are as follows: 7:00 AM-8:30 AM, 11:00 AM-12:00 PM, and 12:15PM-1:15PM

**Please be reminded of the importance of social distancing when reporting to all locations. It is important to note, once students receive their breakfast/lunch grab and go bags it is the expectation to return to their respective homes.** Breakfast & Lunch adjustments can only be made for medical reasons (ex.; food allergies, intolerance) w/note from doctor.

C. Describe how the plan addressed the required length of the virtual or remote instructional day.

According to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3, a school day shall consist of not less than four hours, except that one continuous session of two and one-half hours may be considered a full day in kindergarten. District and school policies for attendance and instructional contact time will need to accommodate opportunities for both synchronous and asynchronous instruction, while ensuring the requirements for a 180-day school year are met.

Note: Hours of instructional time are not defined as a student's time spent in front of a teacher or in front of a screen, but time engaged in standards-based learning under the guidance and direction of a teacher. The NJDOE recommends districts prioritize flexibility and creative planning to maximize opportunities to learn with considerations for what is developmentally appropriate for a student's grade level and accommodate the varying levels of parent or guardian support during at-home instruction.

During virtual or remote instructional days, all teaching/learning is done virtually/remotely from home and in a scheduled and synchronous format. During this time, the district is establishing best practices in virtual education. Teachers will use platforms such as Google Classroom and/or ClassDojo and Remind to disseminate assignments while interacting in Synchronous lessons during scheduled times via Zoom or Google Meet.

**Schedule**

- 8:30am – 12:30pm PM – Mandatory Synchronous Instruction
- Rotational/AB Schedule
- 100% Synchronous Focus

**During the PM:**

- Office Hours
- Additional Instruction in Synchronous and/or Asynchronous formats
- Intervention/Extensions
- Prep Periods
- Common Planning
- Instructional Offerings beyond the AM schedule (S2S, Scholars, etc.); Special Ed related services provided to our students occur after 1 pm