

THE ROAD FORWARD

Appendices

The Road Forward

Netcong Elementary School

Netcong Board of Education

Note:

As of August 10, 2021, the only mandatory requirements are included in Appendix C – Mask Wearing Protocol and Appendix G – Transportation Protocols. The school district should anticipate potential updates to The Road Forward Guidance as additional guidance becomes available.

Fall 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education in the State of New Jersey has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, school districts will be required to provide full-day, full-time, in-person instruction and operations for the 2021-22 school year. The guidelines outlined in this document have been developed following the guidance of the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), specifically from the guidance document titled, “The Road Forward: Health and Safety Guidance for the 2021-2022 School Year.”

While the State and our District is committed to a resumption of normalcy for the upcoming school year, current data will be continuously monitored and decisions will be guided by science to ensure that we maintain safe and healthy school communities. Parents, staff and community members should anticipate potential updates to this guidance throughout the school year, as additional federal recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) become available.

Appendix A

Vaccination

All school staff are mandated to have the COVID-19 vaccine by October 18, 2021 or submit to weekly COVID-19 testing per Governor Murphy’s Executive Order 253. Vaccinated individuals are encouraged to provide proof of vaccination to the school’s health office, however this is not required. Any individual that does not provide proof of vaccination will be considered ‘unvaccinated’ for the purposes of contact tracing and exclusion.

The district will partner with the Stanhope School District on a vaccine clinic to be held at Valley Road School on Tuesday, October 5, 2021 from 3pm-5pm. Both the Influenza and COVID-19 vaccines will be available at the clinic. If you are interested in receiving one or both of the vaccines, please follow this link to complete and submit the Google form.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BLqs1c1b6657zINhQQILa67MM1BM7V-FyYiVFm2KWA4/viewform?edit_requested=true

The Mount Olive Department of Health will begin offering the COVID-19 vaccine at the Netcong Community Food Bank beginning in September. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

The district will partner with LabQ to test unvaccinated staff weekly and students who are displaying COVID-19 symptoms or who have been determined to be a close contact.

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Testing will be in compliance with the information outlined by the NJDOH in the document, “Public Health Recommendations for Implementing COVID-19 Screening Testing in K-12 Schools Updated August 30, 2021.” Follow the attached link for more information.

https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/K-12_screening_testing_guidelines.pdf

Questions about the vaccine clinic, or any other general questions, should be directed to the school’s health office.

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Appendix B

Communication with the Local Health Department

District and school administration will maintain close communication with local health departments and the Department of Education (DOE) regarding information and resources on COVID-19 transmission, prevention, and control measures and to establish procedures for local health department notification and response to COVID-19 illness in school settings.

School officials will maintain frequent communication with parents and community members on the local impact of COVID-19 and school-related updates and changes to protocol. These communications will come via emails from the school and emergency alerts.

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Appendix C

Mask Wearing Protocol

As outlined in the Governor's Executive Order 251, issued on August 6, 2021, all students, educators, staff and visitors will be required to wear face masks indoors for the start of the 2021-22 school year. This is the case for all public, private, and parochial preschool, elementary, and secondary school buildings, with limited exceptions:

- When doing so would inhibit the individual's health, such as when the individual is exposed to extreme heat indoors;
- 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.

Opportunities will be provided throughout the day for students to briefly remove masks, in addition to snack time, lunch, physical education and outdoor recess. Students that arrive at school without a mask will be provided with a disposable mask by the school nurse. A student refusing to properly wear a mask while in the school, with the exception of reasons outlined above, will be considered in violation of this Policy and the State mandate. Teaching staff will refer students to building administration for such situations and the student will be removed from class. Parents will be contacted and will be required to remove their child from school without receiving attendance credit for the day. Continued non-compliance with the mask mandate may result in code of conduct violations and continued absences due to non-compliance will result in truancy charges being filed with the municipal court.

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Appendix D

Physical Distancing and Cohorting Protocols

The Netcong School District will encourage social distancing to the greatest extent possible in classrooms, however, an inability to maintain 3 feet of social distance between students will not preclude the full-time opening of the school. Student desks will be arranged in classrooms to avoid face-to-face interactions in close proximity. Grouped seating arrangements will be avoided when group collaboration is not intended or required.

Standard criteria has been set for classroom setup to maximize the amount of space in each classroom to maintain the greatest opportunity for social distancing and to assist with efficiency in daily cleaning and disinfection. Shared resources and student manipulatives will be permitted in the classroom setting, however students will be required to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after using such resources.

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Appendix E

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette Protocols

Students and staff will be encouraged to wash their hands frequently and make use of hand sanitizer whenever possible. Hand sanitizing stations have been placed in every classroom, the cafeteria, and at the main entrance of the building. Hand hygiene should take place:

- Upon arrival to school
- Before and after meals and snacks
- After using the restroom
- Before leaving for the day
- After blowing nose, sneezing, or coughing
- Before and after using shared resources/materials
- When hands are visibly soiled

Upon the reopening of the school for students in September, the school nurse will provide a handwashing and general hygiene demonstration for all students. In addition, students will be reminded and encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or into their elbow.

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Appendix F

Provision of Meals

Students in K-8 will eat lunch in the school cafeteria each day with reduced capacity at each lunch table. While the current mask mandate is in place, masks will be required at all times students are not seated at a designated cafeteria table. This includes entering and exiting the cafeteria, waiting on line for lunch/snack, and when disposing of items in the garbage. Students will eat in shifts to allow for recess and cleaning in between meals. While the weather is nice, picnic lunching outside will be encouraged.

The Netcong School District will participate in the Seamless Summer Lunch Program for the 2021-22 school year, which will provide a FREE school breakfast and lunch for any interested student. Additional information on this program will be forthcoming.

Should the district need to pivot to an all remote learning platform due to an outbreak of COVID-19 or due to a public health emergency, meals will be available for pickup by all students twice per week. Breakfast and lunch will be available for pick up on Mondays and Thursdays between 9:00am-11:00am in front of the school. Please come to the double doors and wait by the bollards. Your meals will be placed on a table outside the double doors. As the Netcong School District is participating in the Seamless Summer Lunch Program, all students are eligible for free meals during the 2021-2022 school year. Should the district need to picot to an all remote learning platform, more information on the breakfast and lunch program will be shared with stakeholders.

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Appendix G

Transportation Protocols

Any students riding a bus while the mask mandate is in place shall be required to wear a mask when riding school funded transportation to activities and/or events.

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Appendix H

Cleaning, Disinfection, and Airflow

The Netcong Elementary School facilities team will continue to utilize a schedule for increased cleaning and disinfection. This will include routinely cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched with an EPA-registered product for use against SARS-CoV-2. If a person exhibits COVID-19 compatible symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19 within 24 hours of being in the school building, facilities staff will use an electrostatic sprayer to apply disinfectant to all surfaces in rooms occupied by the symptomatic individual, in addition to their daily cleaning and disinfection procedures.

All indoor facilities have adequate ventilation systems that have been checked by qualified professionals. Filters have been cleaned and replaced, where needed, and air flow will be monitored throughout the school year. All classrooms and office spaces have been equipped with air sanitizing units. Teachers and school staff will be encouraged to open windows when safe to do so, and when the weather is appropriate.

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Appendix I

Screening, Exclusion, and Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff Members

Parents and Guardians are strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of illness everyday as they are the front line for assessing illness in their children. Staff are also expected to monitor themselves for symptoms and consult with the school nurse or other medical professional to determine if they should be excluded from campus. School staff will not screen students and staff before entering the building, rather, it is the expectation that symptomatic individuals will not attend school. Students and staff who are sick should not attend school. Consistent procedures are in place to identify and respond to students or staff who become ill with or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms. If a student is identified as exhibiting symptoms associated with COVID-19, they will be directed to a designated space in the health office to isolate them from other individuals, where they can be examined by the school nurse. If the school nurse finds that the symptoms may be indicative of COVID-19, the student will remain in the health office isolated from others until they are picked up from school by a parent or guardian.

The Netcong Elementary School will continue to implement exclusion protocols as recommended by the NJDOH. Students and staff with the following symptoms will be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school:

- At least **two** of the following symptoms: fever, 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.

In the event that a student, staff member, or school guest tests positive for COVID-19, the school's nurse will notify the Mount Olive Department of Health who will then engage in, with the help and support of the school nurse, contact tracing at the Netcong Elementary School and any other area deemed appropriate. If the Department of Health is not available, the contact tracing will be performed by the school nurse. If as a result of contact tracing, NES students are required to quarantine, accommodations will be provided to support the student academically during their quarantine period.

In the event that contact tracing must be completed, all stakeholders (including parents and staff) will be contacted and supplied with any pertinent information while maintaining complete confidentiality for the persons infected and exposed.

Although remote learning is not an option for the 2021/22 school year, it may become necessary for individual students, groups of students, or even the entire school to pivot to

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a virtual learning platform. The Netcong Elementary School will do everything possible to be prepared for such a pivot.

If individual students are forced to quarantine for any reason, parents must notify the school nurse as soon as possible. If it is determined that a student must quarantine due to a legitimate COVID-19 related illness or exposure, accommodations will be determined to provide virtual instruction to the student within 24 hours. With this timeline, the student may be considered “absent” for the first day of their quarantine, with accommodations being provided after this time period. The purpose of this 24 hour period is to provide time for teachers to best prepare to support the student virtually. If a large group or classroom is forced to quarantine, every attempt will be made to provide virtual instruction as soon as possible.

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Appendix J

Contact Tracing

In the event that a student, staff member, or school guest tests positive for COVID-19, the school's nurse will notify the Mount Olive Department of Health who will then engage in, with the help and support of the school nurse, contact tracing at the Netcong Elementary School and any other area deemed appropriate. If the Department of Health is not available, the contact tracing will be performed by the school nurse. If as a result of contact tracing, NES students are required to quarantine, accommodations will be provided to support the student academically during their quarantine period.

In the event that contact tracing must be completed, all stakeholders (including parents and staff) will be contacted and supplied with any pertinent information while maintaining complete confidentiality for the persons infected and exposed.

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Appendix K

Technology Required for Virtual Instruction

Although remote learning is not an **option** for the 2021/22 school year, it may become necessary for individual students, groups of students, or even the entire school to pivot to a virtual learning platform. If individual students are forced to quarantine for any reason, parents must notify the school nurse as soon as possible.

If it is determined that a student must quarantine due to a legitimate COVID-19 related illness or exposure, accommodations will be determined to provide virtual instruction to the student within 24 hours. Teachers will make parents aware of live streaming options and classwork will be shared using Google Classroom.

Students will continue to utilize electronic learning devices (Chromebooks) during the school day, and the platform that teachers use each day will be consistent with what would be used in the case of a pivot to virtual instruction.

A technology survey was distributed to families to determine the needs of each family. Any child needing to sign out a Chromebook will have the ability to do so. If you need wifi access at home, the district can provide your family with a mobile hotspot to ensure you have access to the internet. Please contact the main office for more information.

As currently outlined in “The Road Forward” document issued by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), days of virtual or remote instruction will count towards the 180-day requirement if the District is forced to close for more than three consecutive days of school. Currently, the first three days WOULD NOT count towards the 180-day requirement. Should the district need to pivot to an all remote platform, four hours of instruction, exclusive of lunch and recess, are needed for the day to count towards the 180 day statutory requirement after the first three days of closure.