

Estell Manor School District

July 2020

Reopening School: Information & Updates

As the Estell Manor School District plans for the start of the 2020-21 school year, we are committed to keeping our families, staff, students, and community members informed. While there are still many uncertainties regarding what the upcoming school year will look like, we are hard at work to ensure our students continue to have access to a high-quality educational experience.

These web pages serve as a hub for updates related to the reopening of our school. Here, you will find information on potential school schedule changes, cleaning protocols in our buildings, health and safety measures, meal service procedures, and how we plan to provide students with access to technology. It also includes information on athletics and activities, along with answers to frequently asked questions.

The situation surrounding COVID-19 is evolving with time. We will regularly update this page as our plans continue to take shape. We encourage you to keep checking back for the latest information.

KEY CONTACTS

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SCHOOL SCHEDULES

We know that the question at the top of our families' minds is whether students will return to the classroom for in-person instruction at the start of the upcoming school year. Although we do not yet have a firm answer to that question, we are currently planning for several scenarios:

Scenario #1: We are able to welcome back all students into our buildings and resume a mostly normal school day schedule. This would involve enhanced cleaning protocols, a degree of physical distancing among students, adjustments to how students enter and exit building, and changes to how we manage transitions between classrooms throughout the day. While all students would be attending school together, the classroom configurations would be changed to spread the students out, and the school day would be abbreviated. To facilitate extra cleaning, students would attend school in person on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Every Wednesday would be a virtual day for all and the school would be deep cleaned.

Scenario #2: Students would spend half their time in school and the other half engaged in remote learning. Under this scenario, we would have A days and B days. Half our students would attend in-person classes on A days (Mondays and Tuesdays), while the other half would learn remotely. The roles would then flip on B days (Thursdays and Fridays). Every Wednesday would be a virtual day for all students. This scenario would also involve enhanced cleaning protocols, physical distancing, adjustments to how students enter and exit buildings, and changes to transitions between classrooms.

Scenario #3: It remains possible that we will need to begin the 2020-21 school year with students engaged in all-remote learning, similar to the final few months of the previous school year. If this is the case, all remote learning would be required. Attendance, grades, assessments, and daily work would all be tracked with an emphasis on teacher instruction through virtual platforms.

Remote-Only Option

The district will offer a remote-only learning option for families who do not yet feel comfortable having their students return to school. We anticipate needing duration commitments on this option and will provide more details soon.

HEALTH & SAFETY MEASURES

In anticipation of having students and staff back in our school building, the district will implement a variety of health and safety measures. These include the following:

Health Screening

All students will be screened daily. This will take one of several forms, either a survey completed by parents/guardians prior to students leaving home, visual screening by staff, and/or have their temperatures taken as they enter our school building. Any individuals determined to have a fever or displaying symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home immediately.

Handwashing

Students and staff will be regularly reminded about the importance of proper handwashing. Teachers may allow for more breaks to give students the opportunity to wash their hands, either at a classroom sink or in a restroom.

In addition, we will place hand sanitizer units throughout our buildings. Students and staff will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer regularly.

Masks and PPE (updated 7/31/20)

The school will be providing each student with two machine washable 3-layer cloth masks. Masks will be required for students to wear on school buses and during the school day, except when they are outside and socially distanced. Students will be given at least 2 “breaks” during the day, not including lunch/recess, where they will go outside to move around and can remove their masks. Staff and all visitors will be required to wear face coverings.

Transitions Between Classes

To help avoid situations in which large groups of students are gathered in one place (such as hallways), we will adjust the way students move between classrooms and other spaces in our school. Instead of the students moving through the school to reach different classes, when possible teachers will exchange rooms to minimize student movement.

Drinking Fountains

Although drinking fountains will continue to function in our school, we will discourage students from using them. Instead, we recommend that all students bring water bottles to school so that they can refill them at a drinking fountain or at the touchless water bottle filling station. Students should not share water bottles with others.

Entering/Exiting Schools

To protect students' safety and provide for more orderly entrance, all students will enter the building at one location (TBD). Parent pick up locations at the end of the school day are still to be determined. Family members should not leave their vehicles when picking up or dropping off students.

CLEANING & DISINFECTING

Our custodial staff will significantly increase the wiping down and disinfecting of public spaces and high-touch surfaces across our building and throughout the school day. We will also provide greater access to cleaning materials for our teachers and staff so that they can clean and disinfect spaces, as needed.

Each evening, our custodial team will conduct a thorough cleaning of our spaces, again disinfecting high-touch surfaces like sinks, drinking fountains, door handles, tables, and desks.

MEAL SERVICES

The district will provide meals to children on a daily basis, even if they are not physically in our school building on a particular day.

In-School Cafeteria Procedures

To avoid situations in which students are gathered in groups, we will adjust our typical breakfast and lunch room service schedule. Students will be eating lunch in their classrooms with the teacher.

Out-of-School Meal Service

We will establish a process to ensure all students receive meals on each weekday, even if they are not in our building. More information will be coming.

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

Due to the high likelihood that all students will need to engage in remote or online learning at some point in the school year, the district will provide chrome books for all students.

We also know that not all families have reliable internet access at home. The district is exploring options for securing Wi-Fi hotspots for some of our students to ensure they have the tools they need to learn remotely.

ATHLETICS & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We are hopeful that we will be able to offer athletics and extracurricular activities in the fall semester. However, activities, practices and schedules may need to be modified to ensure students remain physically distanced and can maintain proper hygiene. Each activity will look a little different, and coaches and advisors will be able to provide you and your students with more information.

It remains possible that some or all of our athletic seasons may be cancelled, restricted, or shortened. These decisions are also subject to change during the season depending on the status of COVID-19 in our state and region.

BUSING & TRANSPORTATION

As one can imagine, ensuring students remain physically distanced on school buses is a significant challenge. To the degree possible, all students will be required to sit with household family members or one to a seat. If social distancing is not possible on a bus, then a face covering will need to be worn. Hand sanitizer will also be available on all buses.

Finally, we are working closely with our contracted transportation coordinator and provider, Greater Egg Harbor Regional School District and Sheppard Bus Company, to ensure all buses are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected on a daily basis.