



# North Shore Schools

*Discovering Your Dreams*

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Dear North Shore School Community,

The start of the school year is upon us, and it is not the opening of school we would have hoped for, or that I predicted only two months ago. A public health crisis still exists, and our plans for opening will need to be modified in order to promote live instruction in a safe and sustainable way. I hope that this is not the plan for the year, but only for the fall season. I assure you that these measures will be regularly re-visited and revised as necessary.

The district has relied on community input gathered at our August 19 meeting of the Board of Education, extensive email communication from the community and guidance offered to us from the Centers for Disease Control, New York State Education Department and the Nassau County Department of Health. They offer only guidance, albeit strongly worded guidance, and as a result our plan might differ from that of other districts, even those close by. It also means that we can modify these plans during the year and meet needs specific to our District.

The key aspects of our plan as we begin the year include:

- Instruction will be offered via live, in-person, full-time instruction for all North Shore students K to 12.
- Masks will be required of all faculty, staff, students, and visitors while indoors and on buses.
  - Regular breaks will be given at the elementary level and we will all work to minimize the discomfort we all experience while wearing masks.
  - Requests for “breaks” will be honored. It may sometimes be necessary to briefly delay a mask break until a lesson is completed.
    - Extended passing time and lunch at the High School will assist in allowing these breaks
    - Team-based plans will be developed at the Middle School, in addition to lunch and recess breaks
    - Teachers will schedule mask breaks at the elementary level, in addition to breaks at lunch, recess and snack.
  - Masks will not be required outdoors, including Physical Education
  - Every opportunity to utilize outdoor spaces will be utilized.
- Consistently wearing appropriate and well-fitting masks will decrease the probability of quarantine, as new guidance indicates that exposed masked students who maintain three feet distances need not be required to quarantine at all. We will follow this practice.
- In accordance with CDC guidelines, the district will make every possible effort to maintain three feet of physical distance between students in all indoor spaces.
- In accordance with CDC guidelines, the district will make every possible effort to maintain six feet of physical distance between students in all outdoor, unmasked spaces
- In accordance with CDC guidelines, the district will make every possible effort to maintain six feet of physical distance between students and teachers/staff in all indoor spaces.

- Student lunch guidelines:
  - At the elementary level students will eat in classrooms and cafeterias, or outdoors (weather permitting) with plans to be developed by building principals.
  - At the secondary level lunch will be eaten outdoors, or in other assigned indoor spaces.
- Guidelines will be established to evaluate weather conditions and apply this knowledge across all buildings. Special care will be extended to ensure students are not exposed to extreme weather conditions, including lunch.
- Elementary and Middle School cohorting will not be necessary provided students are masked and maintain three feet of distance indoors.
- The district will, of course, report positive cases to the County Department of Health, and engage in contact tracing for school-based contacts. Parents and staff will be notified of positive cases.
- The district will explore when and whether to hold events (remotely or in person) outside the school day dependent upon prevailing health and weather conditions. This will include (but not be limited to) such events as concerts, performances, parent teacher conferences and PTA/PTO meetings.
- Masks will be required for all public meetings to be held on school property, including evening meetings.
- Back to School night will be held virtually for all five buildings. Specific instructions from Building Principals will follow shortly.
- Fall social events, including barbecues, circuses and outdoor movie nights will be postponed until spring.
- The district intends to welcome visitors to its buildings, on a limited basis, with prudent health and safety parameters. All visitors will be required to wear masks in all indoor spaces and maintain physical distancing guidelines. All visits must be cleared by the building principal.
- The K-12 Performing Arts Department will continue to provide comprehensive and meaningful arts experiences within SED health and safety guidelines.
- Athletics, including fan attendance at athletic events, will be continued as per Section 8 Guidelines; however, the high school locker room will see limited use for the first month of school. Students will not change for Physical Education at the High School and Middle School pending a review on or about October 1.
- Consistent with SED guidelines, attestations, temperature checks and health screening will no longer be required.
- Social Emotional support is considered to be an integral part of this plan. Towards that end:
  - Additional K-12 Social Workers are being added to enhance student support
  - A new social emotional program (RULER) will be implemented in all elementary buildings
  - Monthly SEL themes will be introduced to add student support

All these efforts are offered, recognizing that there is disagreement on a nation-wide basis on how to confront the health challenges we now face. The district is committed to keeping students healthy and in school. Where our efforts may be perceived to have some negative effect, (e.g. masks) we will continue to make all reasonable efforts to assist students. Contact with principals, building level mental health teams and the central office is expected and welcome.

Everyone hopes that public health conditions will, permit us to re-visit these measures in the coming weeks. It is my hope that we can emerge on the other side of this immediate situation still committed to collectively serving our students and providing them with an exceptional educational experience.

Sincerely,  


Thomas Dolan  
 Interim Superintendent of Schools