



The mission of the Berlin Community School, in an active partnership between school and community, is to provide effective and comprehensive educational opportunities in a nurturing environment designed to challenge all students to strive for personal excellence and responsible citizenship.

This will foster the pursuit of life-long learning while achieving proficiency in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and meet the challenges of an evolving global society.

# Mitigation for Education '20-21

The Restart and Recovery Plan for the  
Berlin Borough School District

**Joseph Campisi, Ph.D**

**Berlin Borough School District Superintendent**

**Berlin Borough School District Board of Education Members**

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## Acknowledgments

The Berlin Borough School District would like to express our appreciation to the Berlin Borough School District Reopening Committee. Your input and feedback allowed for a thorough and efficient plan to be developed for the safe return of all students and staff for in-person teaching and learning September.

Name	Stakeholder Group	Experience & Credentials
Joseph Campisi, Ph.D.	Superintendent	Elementary School Teaching Administration at all levels
Phil Silva	ES Principal	Middle School Teaching English Language Learners
Kellilyn Mawson	MS Principal	High School Teaching Special Education Teaching Board Certified Behavior Analyst
Kristin Braidwood	CST Supervisor	School Social Working Licensed Social Worker Special Education Parent Advisory Group
Thomas Pratt	Supervisor of Facilities	Certified Educational Facilities Manager
Joseph Hemphill	Supervisor of Technology	17 Years of Experience with the Berlin Borough School District in Technology
Christina Weber	PALS/CER Manager	Food service, child-care, and facilities experience
John Scavelli	Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary	Teaching Business Administrator Superintendent
Lisa Asare	Board of Education	Assistant Commissioner of Health New Jersey Department of Health
Rebecca Holland	Board of Education	Former Parent of BCS student
Dr. Farah Morgan	Parent of ES & MS children	Medical Doctor
Tim Morgan	Parent of ES & MS children	Engineer
Elizabeth Snuffin	Administrative Assistant	Involved with many daily interactions and logistics with students, staff, and parents
Monica Shallow	School Nurse, RN, BSN	School Health Officer BBEA Member
Chris Ladik	School Nurse, RN	School Health Officer
Nana Asare	Student Representative	Current BCS Middle School Student

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## Foreword

By Superintendent of the Berlin Borough School District, Joseph Campisi, Ph.D.



### BCS Students, Parents, Staff, & Community

In March of 2020, we experienced an event that we never thought would happen, a Governor's Executive Order to stop in-person instruction. This altered the way of life for everyone, not just those of us in the field of education. It was necessary to move to remote or virtual teaching and learning for safety and helping to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. As we prepare to reopen the Berlin Borough School District, we will focus on "Mitigation for Education" since there is no vaccine or viable therapeutics at this time of the pandemic.

On June 26, 2020, the New Jersey Department of Education released The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education. The guidance provided "Anticipated Minimum Standards" as well as "Additional Considerations" to help districts meeting the minimum standards. The Berlin Borough School District Restart and Recovery Plan seeks to go above and beyond any minimum standards and additional considerations to provide the safest possible learning environment for all of the students and staff.

When reviewing the Berlin Borough School District Restart and Reopening plan, some areas may appear to be highly restrictive. However, components that look like restrictions are actually precautions. With time and guidance from the Governor's Office, Department of Education, and Department of Health, the precautions could potentially be scaled back. It would be irresponsible to not put the highest level of precautions in place as we follow our guiding principle of mitigation for education.

The Berlin Borough Restart and Reopening Plan is based on all students returning to school on September 8, 2020, for full in-person, onsite teaching and learning.

## Executive Summary

In accordance with the guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education, this reopening plan addresses the four key subject areas, along with the critical areas of each area:

1. Conditions of Learning
2. Leadership and Planning
3. Policy and Funding
4. Continuity of Learning

There is also an additional component added to the Berlin Borough Plan addressing Future Considerations which contain contingency plans. This is important because, as stated by the Governor on June 26, 2020, we must be ready to move back to virtual learning at any given time.

When examining the four key subject areas set forth by the New Jersey Department of Education, analytics, logistics, schematics, and best practice health precautions were used to develop a reopening plan allowing all students to return for in-person, onsite teaching and learning.

We have also developed videos for a “Day in the Life” of our students and staff to give everyone an idea of what the plan looks like in actuality. In essence, taking the abstract layout of this plan and giving concrete examples to the greatest extent.

It is important to understand that all adults and students must wear masks (except during meals).

The local collective bargaining unit was provided with the Berlin Borough Restart Plan and given the opportunity to provide feedback, input, and suggestions in a consultative manner prior to adoption by the Berlin Borough Board of Education.

# Conditions for Learning Overview

## School District - Camden County Health Department Relationship

The superintendent will respond to any outreach from the Camden County Health Department in order to address positive cases of COVID-19 that impacts the district/school community that may have been reported to them to commence contact tracing and case investigation. Should the district/school report to the health officer about staff, students, or any person with a close relationship to the school that tested positive, that information will be verified by the health department before it commences contact tracing and case investigation.

All positive persons will undergo contact tracing and case investigation whether the information was first passed through the school or came automatically through the health department communicable disease surveillance system. The Camden County Health Department will handle all contact tracing and have staff available to perform contact tracing and case investigation.

The superintendent and any designee(s) will work closely with the Camden County Health Department to support any efforts towards identifying students/staff necessary to facilitate contact tracing for confirmed COVID-19 cases that impact the district/school community.

## Mask/Face Coverings Guidance

- Students and staff should bring and wear the mask/face covering that is most comfortable and to their liking. The school will provide disposable masks in the event a student forgets their mask.
- All staff and students must wear masks/face coverings at all times when on school grounds. This holds true for anyone else (vendors, visitors, etc...) that enter the school grounds.
- Both inside and outside the building.
- Except while eating.
  - Depending on the type of mask/face covering, students should place their mask/face covering in a brown paper bag if possible.
- Failure to comply (in an insubordinate manner) with wearing a mask/face covering will be grounds for sending a student home.

## Staff Arrival Screening Procedures

- All Berlin Borough School District Staff will be required to complete a daily COVID-19 symptom self-screening form prior to entering the school grounds in accordance with policies:
  - [P 3160.1 Teacher Health Screening During Public Health Crisis](#), and
  - [P 4160.1 Support Staff Health Screening During Public Health Crisis](#)
- The daily COVID-19 symptom self-screening form will be set to automatically email each staff member in the building each morning at 5 am.
  - [Confidential Daily COVID-19 symptom self-screening form](#)
  - The Secretary to the Superintendent will check each morning to ensure that all staff have completed the screening prior to entering the school grounds.
- Transportation Requirements:
  - Hillman Transportation will have any staffing they provide (substitutes) conduct a daily self-screening aligned with the district policies.
  - Hillman Transportation will alert the district of any staff/substitutes that cannot work on any particular day or days due to COVID-19 symptoms, confirmation of a case of COVID-19, or quarantine, and
    - will also contact the local Health Department in accordance with local guidelines.
- Substitute Staff Requirements:
  - Kelly Education will have any staffing they provide (substitutes) conduct a daily self-screening aligned with the district policies.
  - Kelly Education will alert the district of any staff/substitutes that cannot work on any particular day or days due to COVID-19 symptoms, confirmation of a case of COVID-19, or quarantine, and
    - will also contact the local Health Department in accordance with local guidelines.
- Food Service Requirements:
  - Nutri-Serve will have any food service staff conduct a daily self-screening aligned with the district policies.
  - Nutri-Serve will alert the district of any food service staff that cannot work on any particular day or days due to COVID-19 symptoms, confirmation of a case of COVID-19, or quarantine, and
    - will also contact the local Health Department in accordance with local guidelines.
- Any and all other outside vendors and visitors must self-screen and follow the requirements of the vendors listed above as well as the screening components listed below.

## Staff Arrival Screening Procedures (continued)

### Screening Components:

For precautionary reasons, personnel will not be permitted to enter the building if they exhibit:

- One (1) or more of the following level 1 symptoms:
  - A fever of 100.4° F or greater
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19
  - Travel to any of the states that New Jersey has listed in any quarantine travel advisory (at the time of the screening)
  
- Two (2) or more of the following level 2 symptoms of COVID-19:
  - Cough
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

*This list of symptoms is subject to change pending notification from the Department of Health.*

Confidentiality will be held to the highest level with the caveat that there are instances where we must report specific information to the local Department of Health.

## Student Arrival: PALS Screening Procedures

- All Berlin Borough School District students will be required to be screened prior to entering the school grounds in accordance with policy:

### [P 5310.1 Student Health Screening During Public Health Crisis](#)

- Screening Procedures:
  - Personnel will use the no-touch thermometers and the screening element form prior to any student entering the building.
  - Parents may not leave the child on the school grounds until the screening is complete.
  - Areas in the cafeteria will be sectioned off for individual students to keep proper social distancing until it is time for class to begin.
  - At the appropriate time, the PM PALS students will be escorted to class by personnel using the designated hallway flow map.
- The cafeteria will be cleaned to prepare for PM Pals.
- The cafeteria will not be used for any other student purpose during the day until PM PALS begins.

#### Screening Components:

For precautionary reasons, students will not be permitted to enter the building if they exhibit:

- One (1) or more of the following level 1 symptoms:
  - A fever of 100.4° F or greater
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19
  - Travel to any of the states that New Jersey has listed in any quarantine travel advisory (at the time of the screening).
- Two (2) or more of the following level 2 symptoms of COVID-19:
  - Cough
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

*This list of symptoms is subject to change pending notification from the Department of Health.*

- Personnel will document any symptoms on the screening elements form.
- All screening forms will be given to the school nurse and kept confidential.
- Confidentiality will be held to the highest level with the caveat that there are instances where we must report specific information to the local Department of Health.

## Student Arrival: Bus Screening Procedures

- All Berlin Borough School District students riding the bus will be required to be screened prior to entering the bus in accordance with policy:  
[P 8600.1 Bus Stop and Transportation Health Screening](#)
- Screening Procedures:
  - Bus Stops
    - All students must be accompanied to the bus stop by their parent.
    - The parent must remain with their child.
    - The parent of a child may not assume responsibility for any other child at the bus stop unless they live in the same domicile.
    - All families at the bus stop must stay 6 feet from each other (proper social distancing).
    - All students and parents must wear a mask while at the bus stop.
      - Except for children under 2 years old.
    - Any child at the bus stop without a parent present will not be screened and will not be permitted to enter the bus.
    - The district reserves the right to call the local police if any parent refuses to comply with the mandates in this policy. The district also reserves the right to call the Department of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P).
    - The district further reserves the right to notify the local Department of Health of non-compliance of the screening procedures which are designed for mitigation in the absence of a vaccine or therapeutic.
  - Bus Arrival Health Screening
    - When the bus arrives at each stop, the bus aide (wearing a mask) will exit the bus and conduct the health screening using the no-touch thermometers and the screening element form prior to students entering the bus.
    - Parents may not leave the child at the bus stop until the screening is complete.
    - When students enter the bus they will sit at the furthest seat from the front to keep distance when other students enter the bus.
    - Drivers, aides, and students must all wear masks on the bus during transportation to school.
    - To the greatest extent possible, the windows on the bus will be open for ventilation.
    - After the Middle School routes are completed (A-Run), all the seats will be wiped down prior to the Elementary School routes (B-Run). This will occur between the PM runs as well.
    - Staff will be at a designated spot to escort the students into the school using the hallway flow map.

## Student Arrival: Bus Screening Procedures (continued)

Screening Components:

For precautionary reasons, students will not be permitted to enter the the bus if they exhibit:

- One (1) or more of the following level 1 symptoms:
  - A fever of 100.4° F or greater
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19
  - Travel to any of the states that New Jersey has listed in any quarantine travel advisory (at the time of the screening)
  
- Two (2) or more of the following level 2 symptoms of COVID-19:
  - Cough
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

*This list of symptoms is subject to change pending notification from the Department of Health.*

- Personnel will document any symptoms on the screening elements form.
- All screening forms will be given to the school nurse and kept confidential.
- Confidentiality will be held to the highest level with the caveat that there are instances where we must report specific information to the local Department of Health.

## Student Arrival: Parent Drop-Off Screening Procedures

- All Berlin Borough School District students will be required to be screened prior to entering the school grounds in accordance with policy:

### [P 5310.1 Student Health Screening During Public Health Crisis](#)

- Screening Procedures:
  - Personnel will be assigned to different areas designated for car drop-off.
  - Personnel will use the no-touch thermometers and the screening element form to conduct the health screening prior to any student exiting the vehicle and entering the building.
  - Parents may not leave the child on the school grounds until the screening is complete.

#### Screening Components:

For precautionary reasons, students will not be permitted to exit the car and enter the the building if they exhibit:

- One (1) or more of the following level 1 symptoms:
  - A fever of 100.4° F or greater
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19
  - Travel to any of the states that New Jersey has listed in any quarantine travel advisory (at the time of the screening)
- Two (2) or more of the following level 2 symptoms of COVID-19:
  - Cough
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

*This list of symptoms is subject to change pending notification from the Department of Health.*

- Personnel will document any symptoms on the screening elements form.
- All screening forms will be given to the school nurse and kept confidential.
- Confidentiality will be held to the highest level with the caveat that there are instances where we must report specific information to the local Department of Health.

## Student Arrival: Walker/Bike Arrival Screening Procedures

- All Berlin Borough School District students will be required to be screened prior to entering the school grounds in accordance with policy:

### [P 5310.1 Student Health Screening During Public Health Crisis](#)

- Screening Procedures:
  - Walkers/Bike Riders must be accompanied by their parent(s).
  - Personnel will be assigned to the bike racks and other areas of walker/bike arrival.
  - The parent must remain with their child.
  - The parent of a child may not assume responsibility for any other child unless they live in the same domicile.
  - All families at the designated health screening area for the walker/bike rack areas must stay 6 feet from each other (proper social distancing).
  - All students and parents must wear a mask while at these screening areas.
    - Except for children under 2 years old.
  - Any child that walks/rides to school without a parent present will not be screened and will not be permitted to enter the building.
  - Personnel will use the no-touch thermometers and the screening element form to conduct the health screening prior to any student at the designated walker/bike rider arrival area.
  - Parents may not leave the child on the school grounds until the screening is complete.

## Student Arrival: Walker/Bike Arrival Screening Procedures (continued)

### Screening Components:

For precautionary reasons, students will not be permitted to enter the the building if they exhibit:

- One (1) or more of the following level 1 symptoms:
  - A fever of 100.4° F or greater
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Contact with someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19
  - Travel to any of the states that New Jersey has listed in any quarantine travel advisory (at the time of the screening)
  
- Two (2) or more of the following level 2 symptoms of COVID-19:
  - Cough
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Fatigue
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

*This list of symptoms is subject to change pending notification from the Department of Health.*

- Personnel will document any symptoms on the screening elements form.
- All screening forms will be given to the school nurse and kept confidential.
- Confidentiality will be held to the highest level with the caveat that there are instances where we must report specific information to the local Department of Health.

## After Arrival: Procedures & Breakfast

- After Clearing the Health Screening Protocols:
  - Students will go directly to their assigned classroom (keeping social distance in the hallway).
  - Staff will be positioned to facilitate the designated hallway flow map.
  - There will be designated areas for any students that want to pick up breakfast.
  - If a student picks up breakfast they will take it to their classroom and eat at their learning area.
    - “Breakfast after the Bell”
  - Extra trash cans will be made available and/or emptied on a more frequent basis.
  - Students in AM PALS will have space provided to eat while keeping social distance.

## Late Arrival

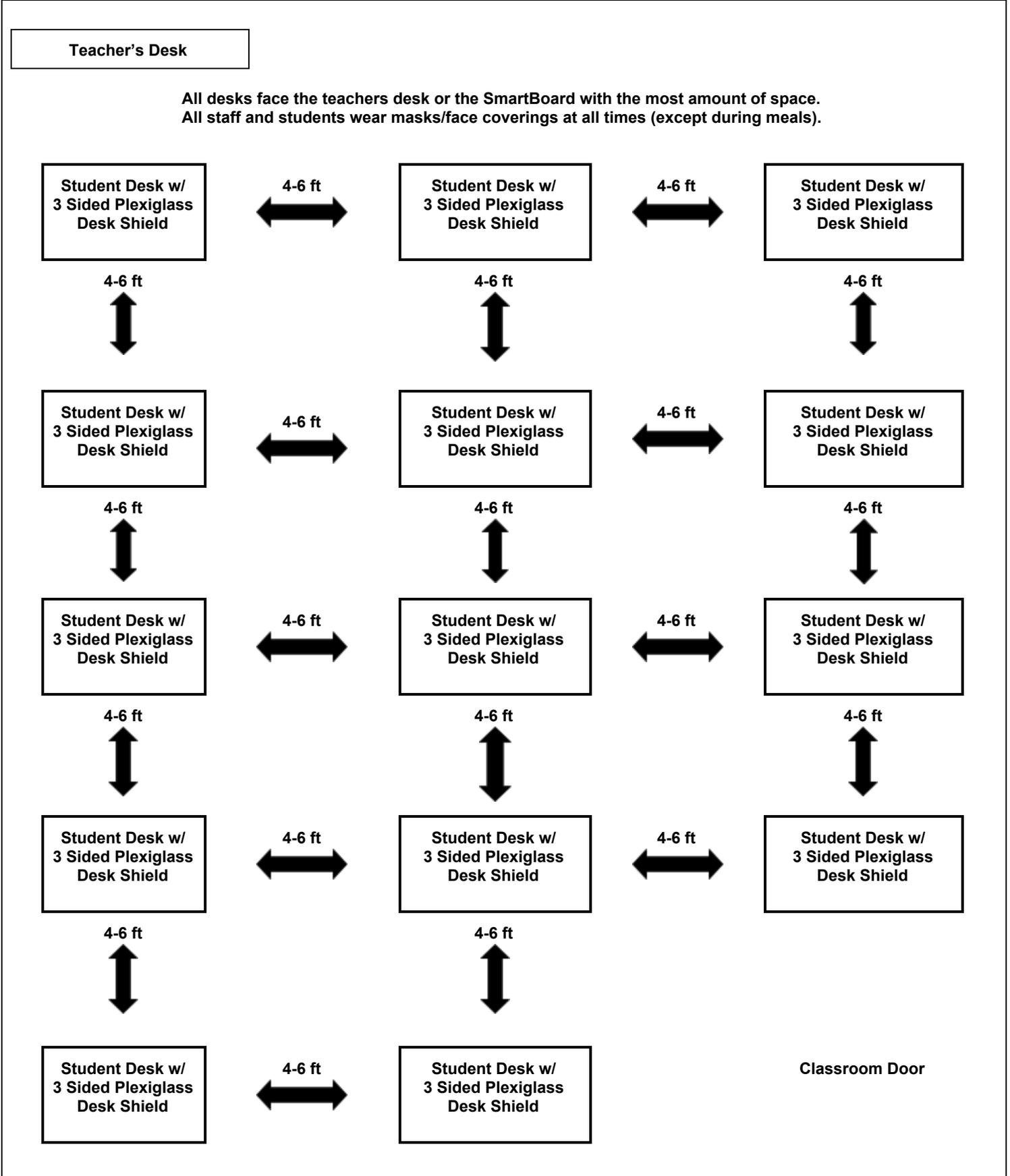
- Any students arriving late to school (after all students have entered) must use the Middle School Entrance.
- The parent must stay outside with the child.
- A designated person will come to conduct the health screening.
- The child and parent must stay outside until the health screening is completed.

## Classroom Configuration

- All rooms in the building that can be used for teaching and learning will be utilized.
  - For the most part, only student desks and the teacher desk will be in the classroom.
  - This will allow for fewer students in each educational setting and allow for social distancing.
- To the greatest extent possible, instruction will be paperless.
- Three (3) sided plexiglass barriers have been affixed to each student desk.
  - With between 4 and 6 feet between the desks.
- Students will be provided with totes where they can keep their lunches, bookbags, and coats.
  - Students should bring a minimum of items to school.
- Students will stay in their assigned class, they will not be switching classes.
  - Teachers will move to the classroom to provide instruction as per their teaching schedule.
- Every fifty (50) minutes, the teacher will give the students the opportunity to stand up (staying in their learning area) with their masks on and stretch or something similar to combat long amounts of time in a sedentary position.
- Each classroom will be assigned a specific bathroom to utilize when the need arises. Universal bathroom passes will not be permitted. Students will fill out their own pass with their name and time, leave it in the “pass box” in the classroom when leaving to use the bathroom.

# Example of Classroom Schematics

*Actual Number of Desks and Configuration will Depend of the Actual Classroom*



## Lunch

- All students will eat in their lunch classrooms at their desk in their learning area.
- Students buying lunch will order their choice in the morning.
- Their lunches will be dropped off into their totes prior to their lunch period.
- The cafeteria will offer “grab and go bag” lunches for students.
- Extra trash cans will be made available and/or emptied on a more frequent basis.

## Early Sign Out

- Other than illness or emergencies, early sign-outs are highly discouraged.
- If a parent needs to sign-out their child(ren).
- They must notify the school in advance.
- A mask must be worn.
- The parents will use the sign-out sheet in the foyer while showing ID to the secretary (from the foyer).

## Visitors

- Visitors will be extremely limited.
- District staff, substitute teachers, police, emergency medical staff, and anyone else deemed as necessary by the Superintendent or Business Administrator.
- There will be no assemblies onsite (by staff or any outside groups/vendors).
- CER activities will not be approved at this time.

## Dismissal

- Students will be dismissed in an extremely orderly and structured way to maintain social distance.
- The students will be dismissed using different doors and while keeping social distance and wearing masks.
- PALS After-Care student participants will be dismissed to the cafeteria first (while keeping social distancing by the designated personnel).

## Hallway Flow of Student Traffic

*All students and staff must walk on the right side of the hallway*

Middle School Bus Drop-Off	
Grade(s)	Entrance/Exit
5 & 6	A3
7 & 8	A1
Middle School Car Drop-Off & Walkers	
5 & 6	D19
7	D18
8	D20
Elementary School Bus Drop Off	
K & 1	A4
2 & 3	A1
4	A3
Elementary School Car Drop-Off & Walkers	
K, 1,& 2	D20
3 & 4	D19

### **After School Activities**

- With the exception of PALS, there will be no after school activities.
- Once the school day has ended, only PALS staff, students in PALS, and staff members may remain in the school. It is imperative that the necessary cleaning begins as soon as possible.

### **Faculty/Staff Meetings**

- Faculty Meetings and PLCs will occur through Google Meets (with staff members staying in their classroom)

### **Continued Remote Instruction**

- A survey will be sent out to parents asking if any family will be requesting their child(ren) stay on remote instruction.
- Under the current educational circumstances, the district will not deny this request.
- The district will not deny this request but the district will ask for a letter/email stating the reasons for the request.
- The request for reasons is only for the purpose of data collection.
- The updated Berlin Borough School District remote learning plan will be addressed in the mandates, policies, procedures, protocols and accountability.

# Conditions for Learning

The Berlin Borough School District will be following the guidance issued by the Department of Education on June 26, 2020 regarding the Conditions of Learning. The Berlin Borough School District plans to carry out the conditions of learning above the “anticipated minimum standards” for our students and staff. The district will continue to focus on “Mitigation for Education” as we prepare to enter the 2020-2021 school year.

## Critical Areas of Operation

### 1. **General Health and Safety Guidelines:**

At all times, we will strive to maintain social distancing (6 feet) and to the highest extent possible, 6 foot markers will be put on the floor on the hallway to assist with social distancing in the hallway. Any time that social distancing cannot be maintained, all students must wear a mask.

School staff and visitors are required to wear masks regardless of age unless the visitor is under 2 years of age. Students must wear face coverings at all times (except when eating). If a student cannot wear a mask because it would inhibit their health, the parent must provide medical documentation and the school district reserves the right to confer with our school physician to verify the validity of any purported health risk posed by a child not wearing a mask.

The district acknowledges that enforcing the use of face coverings may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities. Again, the parent must provide medical documentation and the school district reserves the right to confer with our school physician to verify the validity of any purported health risk posed by a child not wearing a mask.

The district is committed to consistently promoting staying home when appropriate, proper hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and face coverings/masks via verbal reminders and messages.

### 2. **Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms:**

All Classrooms, testing, and therapy rooms will have the same configuration with desk shields, social distancing, wearing of masks, and hand sanitizer. Child Study Team members conducting evaluations and staff providing therapy will be provided with desk shields and the necessary PPE.

Objects will not be shared between students until the object(s) is cleaned.

Classrooms, testing, and therapy rooms will have adequate ventilation controlled by the Director of Facilities while maintaining operational heating and ventilation systems. We will ensure that recirculated air has a fresh air component through the opening of windows and the air conditioning will be running. We have also ordered Merv 13 which is the highest level of filters made that fits in our system. The filters will be changed based on the manufacturers recommendations. The Camden county health department is inspecting our building regarding air conditions (as is done each August).

Students will wash their hands before and after meals (with either soap or an alcohol based hand sanitizer as well as after using the bathroom, blowing of noses/coughing/sneezing).

The district will also place signage to encourage hand washing, in conspicuous places in the building.

3. **Transportation:**

For students using district provided transportation, in addition to following [Policy 8600.1](#) the bus interior will be wiped down between the A-run and B-run. The railing on the entrance of the bus will be wiped down after every stop as well.

4. **Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas:**

Please see the Hallway Flow of Student Traff in the table above.

5. **Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms:**

The district will strictly adhere to policies [5310.1](#), [4160.1](#), [3160.1](#), and [8441.1](#) for screening, PPE, and responding to students and staff presenting symptoms.

6. **Contact Tracing:**

The Administrators and nurses, will be provided with information regarding the role of contact tracing in keeping school communities safe from the spread of contagious disease.

The administrators and nurses will be required to complete the [COVID-19 Contact Tracing Course](#) provided by Rutgers University. The district will also continuously collaborate with the local health department via the school nurses for updates about contact tracing policies and procedures. The school nurses will also provide online sessions to educate the broader school community on the importance of contact tracing.

The superintendent and any designee(s) will work closely with the Camden County Health Department to support any efforts towards identifying students/staff necessary to facilitate contact tracing for confirmed COVID-19 cases that impact the district/school community.

7. **Facilities Cleaning Practices:**

Cleaning will continue as it regularly would using the new products recommended by the CDC to enhance disinfection. We plan to clean the bathrooms every 2 hours and completely disinfect and sanitize the bathrooms at night. The entire building will be disinfected and sanitized, starting at the end of the school day.

There will be increased sanitizing stations following the CDC guidelines and additional sanitizing stations as well. Every classroom will have a disinfectant spray with perforated paper towels for any wipe-down that may be needed in the normal course of the day.

The district is also installing shields between the urinals and sinks in the bathrooms.

8. **Meals:**

The district will utilize a “Breakfast after the Bell” system with areas in the hallway set up with “grab and go” breakfast meals. Students can eat their breakfast in their classrooms at their learning area. The cafeteria will offer “grab and go bag” lunches for students as well. “Grab and go” lunch options will be brought to classrooms for those students purchasing lunch. All students will eat their meals in their classrooms at their learning area. Extra trash cans will be made available and/or emptied on a more frequent basis.

9. **Recess/Physical Education:**

The gymnasiums and lockers will be closed to all students and staff (sans the PE/Health teachers so they can use their offices). Students should wear something comfortable

everyday because there will be physical activities conducted by each student at their learning area every 50 minutes (stretching, yoga, etc...)

Actual physical education class will be conducted outside whenever possible. During inclement weather physical education will be conducted in the classrooms and will include activities that can be conducted without interacting with another student (i.e. yoga, stationary movements, etc...). A rotating and staggered schedule of recess will be developed for classes to go outside. However, the usage of playground equipment will not be permitted because the district does not have the staffing needed to properly sanitize the equipment between classes going outside. The playground equipment will be covered with a tarp and sectioned off. Students are required to wash their hands with soap immediately after outdoor playtime.

#### **10. Extracurricular Activities and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours:**

Until further notice, all extra-curricular activities and use of the facilities outside of school hours will not be permitted.

The Superintendent will re-evaluate extra-curricular activities and use of the facilities outside of school hours on November 11, 2020, and provide an update and any changes on November 18, 2020.

The next re-evaluation of extra-curricular activities and use of the facilities outside of school hours will be on February 17, 2020, and with an update of any changes on February 24, 2020.

The final re-evaluation of extra-curricular activities and use of the facilities outside of school hours re-evaluation by the Superintendent will take place on April 21, 2021. Any adjustments or changes will be on April 28, 2021.

Depending upon further Department of Education guidance and Executive Orders from the Governor of New Jersey, the Superintendent reserves the right to make adjustments and changes to extra-curricular activities and use of the facilities outside of school hours before or after the aforementioned dates.

#### **Social Emotional Learning:**

The school counselors and special education case managers will have a specific schedule to follow and provide social-emotional support. The counselors and special education staff will also be available for staff needs as well. The guidance counselors will also conduct direct SEL instruction to the students in the classroom. The district will also seek out resources for the well-being of the educators.

The district will also implement trauma-informed teaching strategies. We hope to partner with the Traumatic-Loss Coalition (TLC) for the purpose of well-being. The TLC provides self-help and resources for mental health and strategies to de-stress for children and adults.

#### **Wraparound Supports:**

The district will look for resources and a way of facilitating wraparound support for students through a 3rd party vendor or shared-service with another district. The services would be offsite and not during instructional time. These supports include mental health support, primary health and dental care, family engagement, expanded before-school and after-school and summer learning time, and mentoring programs.

#### **Food Service and Distribution:**

In the event of remote learning, we will continue the food distribution in our Remote Learning Plan.

While onsite, all precautions possible will be taken regarding preparation and delivery. There will not be cafeteria use for consumption of meals. Students will order a “Grab and Go” meal if they wish to participate in the district meal program.

### **Quality Child Care:**

Berlin Borough will continue before and after school child care starting the first student day. The district will seek input from parents regarding any schedule adjustments that may need to be made to meet the needs of our students and parents. The district manager of the before and after school care program has served on the district reopening committee.

## **Leadership and Planning**

In accordance with the New Jersey Department of Education Restart Committee met to provide input to the Superintendent to develop the reopening plan for the Berlin Borough School District. The leadership team will continue communication throughout the summer and during the school year as the reopening plan is enacted. The administrators and nurses collaborate and communicate with the local Department of Health as guidance becomes available and/or questions and/or situations arise. As appropriate, when guidance is provided by the local Department of Health, the information will be provided to the students, staff, parents, and community via live stream, mass communication via email/text, and website posting. Guidance provided may call for adjustments to the existing plan to continue mitigation for the education of Berlin Borough School District students.

### **Due to what is known and not known about the COVID-19 virus, the leadership team will plan for the main plan:**

- The full reopening of the district with **all students and staff onsite**.
- The leadership team will also develop the **contingency plans** listed below, with the knowledge and possibility that there could be a need to move to one of the following plans with less than a day’s notice (depending on directives from the Department of Health and Governor’s Office):
  - De facto or mandatory hybrid model (based on capacity percentage)
  - Staff only onsite teaching students virtually
  - Intermittent close (2-5 days) in the event of an increase in COVID-19 cases.
    - The intermittent closing would be for the deep cleaning of the facilities.
    - The return after the intermittent closing is the original plan unless the local Department of Health directs a capacity percentage (this would lead to a hybrid model being instituted).
- Virtual/Remote for students by staff virtually
- The contingency plans are located in the Future Considerations section of this reopening plan.

## **Establishing the Pandemic Response Team**

A Berlin Borough Pandemic Response Team will also be developed as well, with the following stakeholder groups:

- Administrators
- Teachers
- Child Study Team member
- School Counselor or mental health expert
- Subject Area Chairperson/Director
- School Nurse
- Teachers representing each grade band served by the district
- School safety personnel
- Members of the school safety team
- Custodian
- Parents

As much as possible, the reopening team will cross-over with the Pandemic Response Team for the purpose of consistency of message.

- The Pandemic Response Team is responsible for:
  - Overseeing each school's implementation of the district's reopening plan, particularly health and safety measures, and providing safety and crisis leadership.
  - Adjusting or amending school health and safety protocols as needed.
  - Providing staff with needed support and training.
  - Reviewing school level data regarding health and safety measures and the presence of COVID19 and reporting that data to the district as required.
  - Developing and implementing procedures to foster and maintain a safe and supportive school climate as necessitated by the challenges posed by COVID-19.
  - Providing necessary communications to the school community and to the district.
  - Creating pathways for community, family, and student voices to continuously inform the Team's decision-making.

**It is important to note all input, suggestions, and feedback have been taken into consideration by the Superintendent. The Superintendent has the role of making final decisions and final recommendations to the Board regarding time-sensitive matters during a public health crisis.**

## **Scheduling**

- Our schedule development takes into account adjusted times due to extra time needed at the beginning of the day for screening procedures.
- During all instructional models, all teachers will follow their schedules that are set at the beginning of the year.
- Due to the nature of some courses (i.e. the visual performing arts) they may need to be taught either outside and/or virtually. Our schedule takes this into account.
- We will use a cohort model with minimal mixing between groups and maximum social distancing within the guidelines provided by the New Jersey Department of Education.

### **In the event of virtual instruction:**

- All virtual instruction will require all staff to sign in via a google form each morning.
- The district is purchasing the professional version of Zoom and all staff will use this as the virtual platform if virtual instruction becomes necessary.
- Staff will be required to be live (with the staff member's face showing on the screen) providing instruction.
- There are also times when the teacher must share their screen or do a voice-over but the staff member's face must be shown live no less than 90% of the teaching period.
- Students will be required to be present for the instruction as they would if they were onsite.
- Staff will take attendance during each period. In the event a student is unable to log on during the teaching time in the schedule, the parent must write to the teacher and explain the situation.
- The teacher must notify the principal and guidance counselor at that level to determine how the student will receive an equitable education.

### **Access to Technology:**

- The district will have a 1:1 device to student program by the first student day of school.

## **Professional Development:**

Whether onsite or virtually, professional development will be centered on:

- Best practices in online instruction
- Trauma-informed teaching
- Social-emotional learning

## **Feedback Loops (In the Event of Remote Learning):**

- Surveys will be provided by each teacher to the parents of their students regarding the reality of what is working well and what can be improved (in a non-evaluative manner).
- The teachers will share the results with the administration.
- This survey will occur once every four (4) weeks if virtual teaching is necessary.
- The administration will determine the dates the surveys will be sent out by each teacher.
- The principals and teachers will review the information with each teacher.
- The administration will determine the items for feedback for the focus of growing online instruction.

## **Test plans:**

- The administration will test out different versions of the plans to the greatest extent possible during the 3rd week of August.
- The district will also be creating videos of the different scenarios that students, staff, and parents will have to navigate because the opening of school this September is the new normal.

## **School Personnel:**

- Staff contingency plans and alternate schedules have been developed within the different models and policies to address potential shortages in staff.
- The schedules and contingency plans will contain access to support (nurses, counselors, and case managers) during in-person, de-facto or mandatory hybrid, and completely virtual instruction.

### **Class Schedules:**

- The class schedules developed are viable and plausible for in-person, de-facto or mandatory hybrid, and completely virtual instruction.
- In the event of online instruction, guidance for screen time for each grade level will be determined by the administration using data and research.

### **Accommodations (students and staff):**

- Regardless of the model in-place at any given time, paperless instruction will be attempted as much as possible.
- For all remote teaching, the platform used will be Zoom, for the entire district.
- In the event of a student that remains on virtual instruction, the lesson will be streamed via Zoom from the classroom.
- In the event a teacher is medically fragile or has an underlying condition making it a necessity that teaching is conducted from home, Zoom will be used and a substitute/proctor will be in the classroom with the students on site. (This type of situation is addressed in the Policy and Funding section).

### **Staffing**

- The unique needs of each staff member, such as access to technology, social and emotional health, and child care concerns will be taken into consideration by the administration to provide any necessary resources.
- When making staffing scheduling and assignments, the district will comply with all applicable employment laws including but not limited to the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and all applicable state law.

# Policy

The public health crisis has necessitated the need for policy additions and changes. Throughout the restart and reopening guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education, there are many references to policy development and implementation. The list below provides access to the newly developed policies which are also cited in different areas of the Berlin Borough School District reopening plan.

- [P 1649 Families First Coronavirus Response Act \(FFCRA\)](#)
- [P 8600.1 Bus Stop and Transportation Health Screening](#)
- [P 5310.1 Student Health Screening During Public Health Crisis](#)
- [P 4160.1 Support Staff Health Screening During Public Health Crisis](#)
- [P 3160.1 Teacher Health Screening During Public Health Crisis](#)
- [P 8441.1 Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms of a Pandemic](#)
- [P 5755.1 Equity in Educational Programs and Services During a Pandemic \(E-FAPE\)](#)

## Challenges

- The Fiscal Year 2020-2021 has already been adopted by the Board and approved by the County Office of Education.
- The amount of revenue has been determined.
- Appropriations have already been allocated.
- Approximately \$100,000 has been deducted from our original 2019-2020 state aid. However, the district received \$160,000 more in state aid for 2020-2021.
- The potential that more state aid could be deducted as the state further decreases school district aid and other programs.
- PPE and other items to mitigate the COVID-19 are expensive and an unexpected expense.
- Staffing needs to a certain extent will increase to allow for a safe opening and continued learning environment that is safe with a continued focus on mitigation.
- It is yet to be determined how the new Chapter 78 legislation will affect this district at this point regarding employee contributions.
- Operational and fiscal flexibility due to the different instructional models that may be necessary to enact during the 2020-2021 school year (especially in the area of technology and access to the internet).
- The allowances afforded by the Federal Families First Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Act.
- The paid/upgraded version of Zoom for virtual/remote teaching (we purchase this platform now with the proper professional development to ensure we can use the platform with a minimum amount of notice as well as the students/parents that elect to continue receiving virtual/remote instruction).
- Due to there not being a vaccine or an effective therapeutics are not yet available, the district must simultaneously budget for the 2021-2022 school year. This means taking into account that mitigation and PPE could still be a very real component of opening up the 2021-2022 school year.

## Solutions and Potential Solutions

- Encumbrance and reallocation of financial resources within the legal limits of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A, “Fiscal Accountability, Efficiency, and Budgeting Procedures.”
- The guidance for reopening was given prior to the 2020-2021 fiscal year. This allowed for purchasing/orders of items from the F.Y. 2019-2020 fiscal year.
- The district also is receiving an insurance dividend in the form of a credit which translates into revenue. This is from our risk management insurance because our group had a very low amount of claims.
- The district applied for CARES Act funding and was approved.
- The district is applying (as soon as possible) for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance. FEMA’s Public Assistance program will reimburse up to 75% of eligible expenses that are a direct result of the declared emergency (in this case, the COVID-19 outbreak).
- The leadership team will continue to investigate and apply for any other local, state, or federal grants/funds that may become available (and the district meets the eligibility requirements).

## Other Operational and Fiscal Actions

- Need to purchase items not needed in the past (or this extent)
  - Personal protective equipment or
  - Cleaning supplies to sanitize facilities
  - An experience increased demand for previously purchased goods and services
    - such as technology
- Purchase items at best possible cost by
  - Purchasing through a vendor with an established State contract
  - Cooperative purchasing consortium
  - Camden County educational services as a cooperative purchasing partner
- Collaboration to create new arrangements and/or use arrangements that already exist
- The district will carefully explore all available options to ensure that we are able to secure the lowest possible price, highest quality (in accordance with CDC and NJDOH guidance) for the needed goods and services
  - Multiple quotes, bids when applicable, and sharing of services (if possible)

## Use of Reserve Accounts, Transfers, and Cashflow

- The districts' budgetary needs and priorities have shifted
  - Reallocation planned expenditures across different line item appropriations
  - Freeing other funds to be used to meet other needs
- Certain budget actions
  - Such as withdrawing from the emergency reserve or making transfers that cumulatively exceed 10 percent of the amount originally budgeted,
    - require the Commissioner's approval (through the County Office)
- Most requirements are statutory
  - Cannot be waived by the NJDOE
  - Districts should not presume that such approval will be automatic.
- Last resorts (with the proper approval from the Commissioner of Education)
- Drawing from an emergency or reserve account
  - Using the maintenance reserve for required maintenance
    - pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.2,
- Using the auditor, County Office, NJ Office of Fiscal Accountability as resources/guidance

## Costs and Contracting

- The district currently participates in the federal E-rate program (this will continue)
  - E-rate provides schools with funding support for high-speed broadband connectivity and internal connections equipment.
  - Discounts range from 20 to 90 percent
    - Factors include
      - Percentage of economically disadvantaged families as well as
      - Rural areas
- Programs that may exist to assist families without internet in the home (made readily available to the community).
- The District uses the E-rate program to:
  - Help the funding purchases of data and wireless network equipment, firewall equipment, routers, cabling, related installation, training services, as well as other types of equipment.
- When school districts procure devices and connectivity or any technology-related item, the district adheres to all New Jersey State laws and regulations for procurement.
  - As with all purchases, the district considers cooperative contracting when possible or state-contracted vendors.
- For the procuring technology items
  - The district continues to conduct a technology audit
    - Current and projected needs for each learning model
    - Analysis of the age, functionality, and maintenance of devices
- Quotes and orders are already underway due to supply chain delays/shortages for devices and hot spots.

## Continuity of Learning

Regardless of the teaching setting, the district is dedicated to ensuring all services and a high-quality education is provided to all students. There are and will continue to be uncertainties moving forward. However, to the greatest extent possible, this reopening plan serves as the plan for changing to different teaching and learning modalities on little notice. For instance, a mandate to shut down after school is over on a Monday means we start virtual instruction on Tuesday morning. The same holds true for reduced capacity orders or other directives from the Department of Education and/or the Department of Health. It is our responsibility to be constantly evaluating all facets of the district operations in order to be ready to change learning environments as seamlessly as possible.

### Ensuring the Delivery of Special Education and Related Services to Students with Disabilities

- 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.
  - The student has the option of remaining virtual with live-streaming sessions.
  - The case manager will contact the student and parents one (1) time per week.
  - The district will collaborate with the chief medical officer for any and all precautionary measures if the child does return to onsite learning.
- Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)
  - During the summer months and beginning of the school year, the Child Study Team (CST) members will collaborate with the classroom teachers and use any applicable data to determine learning loss and plans for additional services.
  - This will also include a review of the IEP goals for each student and revisions after IEP meetings as necessary.
  - During the months of July and August, overdue and/or incomplete evaluations will be conducted to determine eligibility for special education services.
  - Guidance Counselor and CST Case Managers will continue to hold meetings and communicate the results (of eligibility or ineligibility for special education and related services or a 504 plan) within the timeframes dictated by law and regulations.
  - Extended School Year (ESY) is being carried out remotely through a virtual platform providing the accommodations and therapies to the greatest extent possible.

## Technology and Connectivity

- A technology assessment has been conducted.
  - Another technology audit will be conducted prior to the beginning of the school opening.
  - This is for the purpose of making sure we meet the technology needs of our most vulnerable populations (learning disabilities, assistive technology needs, and language barriers).
- All technology professional development will be set up as well as parent resources being made available.
- The district is in the process of completing a 1:1 device implementation.
  - This will be funded through CARES Act and previously budgeted technology monies.
- The digital divide will be addressed through Xtel Communications via Camden County Educational Services.
- The district has the appropriate amount of connectivity but extra items for connectivity are being purchased in the event of any malfunctions.

## Learning Platform

- The upgraded version of Zoom will be the learning platform for any virtual/remote teaching and learning.
  - The district will purchase all the analytic features as well as the ability for administrative monitoring.
- For onsite teaching, the district uses the Google Suite to implement lessons, using other applications for faster data collection to assess student progress and provide feedback.
  - Seminars (both live and pre-recorded) will be provided for all stakeholders when using Zoom and the Google Suite of educational tools.
- The district is in the process of setting up training and technical assistance to assist teachers, parents (including those parents with limited English proficiency or a disability - such as using closed-captioning) who are not experienced in remote learning methods, through different vendors and educational services.

## Curriculum & Instruction

- All students deserve equitable access to a high-quality education.
  - This will be done via collaboration, sharing of data, diagnostic assessments, curriculum compacting, as well as professional development on closing the achievement gap while incorporating trauma-informed teaching and social-emotional learning.
- We will utilize opportunities for innovation, new approaches to customized learning through smaller class size and more independent learning plans for higher student engagement as well addressing different learning needs and interests.
- Partnerships with family members, caregivers, and community stakeholders will be further forged through teacher to parent and parent to teacher feedback loops.
- Interdisciplinary and effective assessment that are interdependent (i.e. Literacy-Social Studies connection) will be developed and implemented.
- The district will utilize the TNTP Learning Acceleration Guide for the following:
  - Prioritization of the most critical prerequisite skills and knowledge for each subject area and grade level as soon as possible.
  - Training for teachers and leaders to evaluate students' unfinished learning and provide acceleration support.
  - Plan your approach to diagnosing students' unfinished learning in that prerequisite content knowledge and those prerequisite skills.
  - Adjustments to the curriculum scope and sequence for each subject area and grade level to accommodate where teachers might need to provide remedial and acceleration support.
  - Monitoring of student progress on grade-appropriate assignments and adjustments of supports for teachers and leaders based on student results.
- Reducing anxiety will be a critical part of establishing the new normal of teaching and learning.
  - Guidance Counselors will be scheduled to provide direct instruction to different classes throughout the week during the year on a consistent basis.
- Leverage of PLC time as well as shared documents for identification of student needs and trends.

## Assessments

- As educators make efforts to measure “unfinished learning,” it is important to recognize that there are multiple types of assessments, each which serves a different purpose.
  - Assessment will need to occur at a higher level in more of a chunked fashion for the determination of initial and continued instruction.
  - Development of an assessment strategy will be a core part of planning prior to beginning each unit of study per subject per grade span.
    - Pre-assessment: Assesses a student’s strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills prior to instruction of new units.
    - Formative: A planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes and support students to become self-directed learners.
    - Summative: A comparison of the performance of a student or group of students against a set of uniform standards to measure a student’s achievement at the end of instruction.
- Gathering the most possible data (during each instructional opportunity) is critical to determining student levels, needs, and learning styles.

## Professional Development & Professional Learning

- Differentiation of instruction during remote learning (best practices for virtual teaching)
- Addressing learning loss for the most vulnerable populations (students with disabilities, English language learners, students without proper technology or internet access, etc.)
- Preparing and supporting educators in meeting the social emotional, health, and academic needs of all students.
- Trauma-informed teaching
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Creation of School, District, and Individual Professional development plans (PDPs) for teaching staff and administrators, with flexibility and adaptability to the changing needs of the district, school and individual educator, and model of instruction.

## Mentoring, Induction, and Evaluation

- In accordance with the New Jersey Department of Education, induction and mentoring must be provided for all novice provisional teachers and teachers new to the district.
  - Mentoring (as necessary) will take place regardless of the learning environment model.
  - One-to-one mentoring must be provided to novice provisional teachers by qualified mentors.
  - Mentors and mentees will meet either virtually or in-person (depending on the educational model that is necessary throughout the course of the year). If they meet in person, all PPE and necessary social distancing measures will be observed.
  - They will also agree on a mutual agreeable schedule to communicate for the mentoring experience.
- Mentors will communicate to the administration that they can provide sufficient support and guidance to novice provisional teachers if teaching is conducted in a remote environment.
- With regard to staff observation and evaluation, there will be a modification to the annual evaluation training after the New Jersey Department of Education provides guidance on Teacher Evaluations for 20-21 School Year evaluations.
  - A master observation/evaluation schedule for onsite teaching will be developed by the administration.
  - There will be collaboration with the school Improvement Panel's (SciP) role regarding professional learning, mentoring, and other evaluation-related activities which occur in individual schools.
  - The District will seek guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education when considering the requirements and best practices involved with provisional status teachers, nontenured educators and those on Corrective Action Plans including extra observations, extra observers, assuring more frequent feedback and face-to-face.

# Future Considerations

As we look to the uncertainties of the future, the information below provides contingency plans in the event of shut-downs and reduced capacity on-site teaching.

Reopening Plan Scenarios			
Potential NJDOE/NJDOH Directives	Learning Model		
Reopen at full capacity	All students & staff return for onsite learning		All staff on site whether students are onsite or virtual
↓	↘	↙	
Reduce capacity onsite by 20%	PreK-6 onsite	Grades 7-8 virtual	
↓	↘	↙	
Reduce capacity onsite by 40%	PreK-5 onsite	Grades 6-8 virtual	
↓	↘	↙	
Reduce capacity onsite by 60%	PreK-3 onsite	Grades 4-8 virtual	
↓	↘	↙	
Reduce capacity onsite by 80%	PreK-1 onsite	Grades 2-8 virtual	
↓	↘	↙	
Onsite Shutdown	PreK-8 Virtual		All staff teach from onsite if permissible by NJDOE/NHDOH
Reopening after a 2nd shutdown			
Reopen at 20% capacity	PreK-1 onsite	Grades 2-8 virtual	All staff on site whether students are onsite or virtual
↓	↘	↙	
Reopen at 40% capacity	PreK-3 onsite	Grades 4-8 virtual	
↓	↘	↙	
Reopen at 60% capacity	PreK-5 onsite	Grades 6-8 virtual	
↓	↘	↙	
Reopen at 80% capacity	PreK-6 onsite	Grades 7-8 virtual	
↓	↘	↙	
Reopen at full capacity	All students return for onsite learning		