

August 13, 2021

Dear T/E Families,

I hope you are enjoying these final weeks of summer break before school starts on August 30. As we prepare for the start of full, in-person instruction for our students, I would like to share information about the District's Health and Safety Plan and details on COVID-19 protocols that will be in place for the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

TESD has been closely monitoring guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), and we have been in ongoing consultation with the [Chester County Health Department](#) (CCHD) throughout the summer. During the 2021-2022 school year, we will continue working with the CCHD to respond to COVID-19 cases in our schools, including contact tracing and quarantining as needed.

On July 30, TESD posted the latest version of the [District's Health and Safety Plan](#) on the TESD website. This plan provides a framework for establishing specific COVID-19 mitigation strategies in our schools and may change depending on local pandemic conditions and new guidance. The District's [updated COVID-19 mitigation strategies](#) will go into effect on Monday, August 16 and will remain in effect until further notice. Families are encouraged to review the [COVID-19 mitigation strategies](#) in detail prior to the start of the school year. A summary of the COVID-19 mitigation strategies is listed below.

COVID-19 Mitigation Protocol effective August 16, 2021:

- **Masking.** Individuals aged two and over are required to wear a face covering while indoors in any District building and on school buses regardless of vaccination status. [Click here for CDC information on proper mask-wearing](#). Masking is optional but welcome during outdoor activities such as recess, activity or PE. Although quarantines may still be required, universal indoor masking will greatly reduce the necessity for educational interruption for all students and staff.
- **Physical Distancing.** TESD will work to maintain at least 3 feet of physical distancing between students whenever possible. Physical distancing of less than 3 feet may occur in classroom activities, building transitions, transportation, lunch, or other times during the day. The CDC has indicated that the inability to maintain 3 feet of physical distancing should not be a barrier to full, in-person instruction, provided the District implements other prevention strategies such as mask wearing.
- **Symptom Screening.** By sending their child to school, families are affirming that their child does not have any COVID-19 symptoms (see full COVID-19 mitigation strategies), has not been directed to quarantine, and is not otherwise sick or ill. A daily symptom screener submission in PowerSchool will no longer be required.
- **COVID-19 Testing** - Pending the provision of testing supplies from the CCHD and CHOP, the District anticipates being able to conduct rapid antigen testing, both in response to COVID-19 cases and as a screening measure. Weekly screening antigen testing will be available to all unvaccinated individuals (students and staff). A survey will be provided prior to the start of the school year to identify those who wish to participate.

In addition to the measures described above, TESD will continue to support proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette, as well as enhanced cleaning and appropriate ventilation. TESD will also maintain our ongoing promotion of vaccines for those who are eligible. We remain willing to serve as a host site for vaccinations as those opportunities arise.

Alternate Learning Options

Earlier this spring, we distributed a virtual instruction program interest survey followed by a commitment form for the 2021-2022 school year. At the time, there was not enough interest from TESD families for the District to pursue a virtual instruction program. We have since received inquiries from TESD families regarding a virtual instructional option for this school year. We are exploring options for alternate learning programs for TESD families who are interested, and we will share details next week.

Parent Feedback

I thank those of you who have been writing and calling to share ideas and vision about the upcoming school year. As you can imagine, there is a wide range of opinions in our community, and many of those thoughts are in direct conflict with each other. We do not wish to diminish any particular point of view. We continue to follow guidance from health authorities with the goal of uninterrupted, in-person instruction during the 2021-2022 school year.

One year ago, our conversation was very different, with discussions about when in-person instruction could begin and for how many days per week. This school year we begin with daily in-person instruction and all sports and activities in effect. To keep this in place as long as possible, we need everyone's support and cooperation with the health and safety protocols that remain, including masking in indoor areas.

We look forward to welcoming your children back to our school buildings on August 30. In the meantime, please enjoy these last few weeks of summer.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Gusick
Superintendent of Schools