

The Road Forward

2021-2022 School Year



Instruction

- School will be in session for in-person learning, following our full-day schedule
- Students will be seated three feet apart
- Desk shields will be used at every opportunity
- Cohorts will be used at LPES in class and during lunch
- Cohorts will be used to a lesser extent at LPMS due to the nature of scheduling
- Increased physical distancing will take place whenever possible, including PE classes and recess

Hygiene

- Hand sanitizer will be available in every classroom
- Students will be encouraged to wash hands frequently
- Hand hygiene should take place
 - Before and after eating snack or lunch
 - After using the restroom
 - When hands are visibly soiled
 - Upon arrival and before dismissal
 - After blowing nose, sneezing, etc.
- Teachers will review proper hand washing procedures
- Teachers will review proper mask wearing with students
- Teachers will review proper respiratory etiquette when sneezing and coughing

Lunch & Snack

- LPES students will be seated in cohorts from their classes
- LPMS students will remain in the same seats for periods of time and when granted permission may switch tables
- Some LPES classes will rotate through eating in the classroom
- When possible, students may eat out of doors
- All lunches will be “grab and go” style
- Students at both schools will have an ID card to scan
- Parents are encouraged to use [PayForIt.net](https://payforit.net)
- All students are eligible for free lunch daily

Daily Covid Form

- Parents must continue to submit the Daily Covid Screening Form through Genesis each morning
- Parents must take their child's temperature and answer the necessary questions
- Failing to do so may delay your child from arriving to homeroom on time
- Students who are absent should not fill out the form, but should contact the nurse to notify her of the absence

Quarantine

- Any student who exhibits Covid 19-like symptoms or tests positive for Covid must quarantine for ten days since the symptoms' onset AND be fever-free for at least 24 hours*
- An alternate diagnosis without a negative Covid-19 test must still quarantine
- Students who are a close contact of someone who tested positive for Covid-19 will quarantine for 14 days after being identified as a close contact*
- Individuals who are fully vaccinated do not need to quarantine if they are in close contact with someone who tested positive for Covid-19
- Students who are quarantined as a result of testing positive or being a close contact of someone in school who tested positive, will be given asynchronous learning assignments and will have some contact with a teacher via Zoom
- If an entire class needs to quarantine, the teacher(s) will pivot to remote instruction similar to last year.

*Subject to change based on most up-to-date medical recommendations and/or the region's CALI score

Masks

As per Executive Order 251, masks will be required by ALL students and staff.

- Mask breaks will be required at least once in every period
- Students may bring more than one mask to change if they choose
- Every student should keep a spare in his/her backpack in case it is forgotten
- Teachers will review proper mask wearing with students
- Cloth masks should be washed after each use and disposable masks should be discarded at the end of each day
- Disposable masks will be available should a student's mask break or become soiled

Executive Order 251

An executive order is an enforceable law that must be followed.

1. All public, private and parochial preschool programs and elementary and secondary schools, including charter and renaissance schools, must maintain a policy regarding mandatory use of face masks by staff, students, and visitors in the indoor portion of the school district premises, except in the following circumstances:
 - a. When doing so would inhibit the individual's health, such as when the individual is exposed to extreme heat indoors;
 - b. When the individual has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face mask without assistance;
 - c. 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 mask;
 - d. When the individual is under two years of age;
 - e. When the individual is engaged in activity that cannot physically be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating or drinking, or playing a musical instrument that would be obstructed by a face mask;
 - f. When the individual is engaged in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activity;
 - g. 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
 - h. When wearing a face mask creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

Executive Order 251

Continued

- a. This means we will not require students to wear a mask in a room that is not air conditioned when the outside temperature is above ninety degrees.
- b. If someone says they are having trouble breathing, they can remove the mask until they feel better, when they can put it on again. If they continue to have an issue, they can go to the nurse to evaluate their medical condition.
- c. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that exempts them from wearing a mask will not have to. All doctors' notes submitted will be reviewed by the district physician for his approval. If a necessary medical condition exists, the student will be exempt.
- d. Though we don't have two-year olds, we do have children who are disabled and are unable to wear the mask consistently.
- e. Lunches, snack and band classes will all have the masks removed during the activity.
- f. And g would mean if students are playing hard, they can remove masks. Some indoor activities such as badminton, could mean that students wear masks while playing, if no other circumstances apply.
- h. We do not have any equipment and last year the masks did not create an unsafe condition for completing school work.

Executive Order 251

Continued

2. This order shall not impact the obligation of any school district to comply with requirement issued by the CDC on masking on public transportation conveyances, including school district transportation.

This means that everyone riding a school bus must wear a mask.

3. The State Director of Emergency Management, who is the Superintendent of the State Police, shall have the discretion to make additions, amendments, clarifications, exceptions and exclusions to this order.

Executive Order 251

Continued

4. It shall be the duty of every person or entity in this State or doing business in this State and of the members of the governing body and every official, employee, or agent of every political subdivision in this State and of each member of all other governmental bodies, agencies, and authorities in this State of any nature whatsoever, to cooperate fully in all matters concerning this Order, and to cooperate fully with any Administrative Orders issued pursuant to this order.

This means that I, as a public employee, must put this executive order into practice for our district.

5. No municipality, county or any other agency or political subdivision of this State shall enact or enforce any order, rule, regulation, ordinance, or resolution which will or might in any way conflict with any of the provisions of this Order, or which will or might in any way interfere with or impede its achievement.

This means that the Lincoln Park Board of Education cannot take action that would contradict this executive order.

Executive Order 251

Continued

6. Penalties for violations of this Order may be imposed under, among other statutes, N.J.S.A. App. A:9-49 and -50..

This means that if we fail to comply with this executive order, either by refusing to wear a mask or passing a resolution to circumvent this executive order, we could face up to a \$1000 fine and/or up to six months in prison.

7. This Order shall take effect on Monday, August 9, 2021 and shall remain in effect until revoked or modified by the Governor.

This means that the Lincoln Park Public Schools will require all students, staff and visitors to wear a mask.

Questions

1. What information is the BOE researching that can be presented to the community that will work within the exemptions and the district's ability to allow masks to be optional, thereby giving both the parents/students and staff the opportunity to make their own decision? **We are striving to follow Executive Order 251, as we interpret it, as we do with every other order, directive or code. If a child has a doctor's note and the district physician approves of the accommodation, the accommodation will be provided in school.**
2. "When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task," if a parent determines wearing a mask while executing tasks at school creates unsafe conditions and provides a note to the district, will that be honored? **No. The school would make such determinations at that time. Since we had no unsafe conditions last year, I can't think of any that would exist in a Pre-K - 8 district, but we will be watching out for them.**
3. Will you be providing scientific studies that masks are safe and not harming children socially, emotionally, physically and educationally? **No, that is not within the district's responsibilities to conduct such research. The Board of Education is a policy-making body, ensuring that the policies are implemented according to the law. I can tell you that last year the students responded well to the mask rules and took advantage of the offered mask breaks. We are putting in additional programs to help ensure that our students' social and emotional needs are being met.**

Questions

4. Will Virtual instruction be an option for the 2021-2022 school year? According to the NJDOE, parents may not choose a virtual option for the upcoming school year. This option can be used for quarantine of individuals or groups in this circumstance.
5. Based on the listed exceptions, it is expected that masks will be optional during any and all gym, band, lunch and recess periods. Since they are maskless during these periods then what's the difference if they are maskless during class seated at their desk? During physical education classes the students may remove the mask during high intensity aerobic and anaerobic activity. When not engaged in such activities, students will be wearing their masks. During band classes, only students who are playing an instrument that uses their mouth will need to be maskless. During lunch the students will replace their masks once they have finished eating. During band, PE classes and recess, there should be more than enough room to keep the students socially distanced, whereas in the classroom they will be approximately three feet apart. The more masks are on the students, the more protection is offered.

Questions

6. If a child feels like they are having trouble breathing or feels hot and needs a mask break outside of any classroom wide break, it is expected that they will be allowed to remove their mask without issue and disruption from classroom learning. Please confirm the school will not prohibit the child from removing the mask and be kept free from harassment, bullying or intimidation. **As we did last year, any student who requests a mask break will be granted one. Excessive requests will be sent to the nurse to verify the student is able to continue to safely learn in the classroom. Every effort is continuously made to protect all of our students from harassment, intimidation and bullying. Anyone with knowledge of such behavior or suspected behavior is required to report it to the building principal by the end of the day. All HIB protocols will continue to be followed.**
7. Many parents do not consent to universal mask requirements and consider a mandatory mask requirement to be an impermissible medical intervention. They still expect their child to receive their in person public education. Will the district refuse to educate them? **Policies established by the Board of Education that conform to existing laws supercede a parent's preference. Additionally, parents may choose to write to the Governor's office to express their concerns with Executive Order 251.**

Questions

8. What percentage of the staff is vaccinated? *As we have been on summer break, we have not asked the staff yet, who is or is not vaccinated.*
9. Did staff get surveyed about wearing the masks as well? *No, we did not survey the staff.*
10. What exposure requires quarantining? *Close contact with someone who has tested positive; within six feet for more than fifteen minutes for unvaccinated individuals.*
11. How long will exposed individuals be required to quarantine? *Whatever the guidance from the CDC recommends. Currently, it is two weeks for unvaccinated individuals.*
12. Are students considered absent for days out while quarantining? *Any absences due to quarantine due to exposure of someone who has tested positive will be marked “remote,” not absent.*
13. If they are three feet apart with a mask behind plastic barriers, why would anyone have to quarantine? *In many cases when someone is quarantined in such circumstances, there was no transmission. This is a precautionary measure which is important for unvaccinated individuals and is recommended by health experts.*
14. How will the school ensure the students will be provided a proper education when they are quarantined? What will their learning experience look like during quarantine? *Students will be able to Zoom into a class for most subjects, but at the MS level, it may not be their own class.*

Questions

15. The NJDOH/NJDOE Road Forward Plan instructs school districts to actively promote the vaccine. Please explain in detail how the district plans to promote the vaccine. Will it include conversations with children in the classrooms? Please confirm that parents will be given advance notice to opt out their children from any such discussion. **The district will share any flyers provided by the Department of Health, NJDOE, or other comparable agencies with parents through the electronic backpack. If the subject of vaccines is pertinent to the lesson in class, it may be addressed. Similarly, if a student asks a teacher a question about a vaccine, the teacher will answer. Teachers will be reminded that this has become similar to a political issue and will approach that subject with an unbiased, fact-based approach as they do when political topics arise.**

Questions

16. Please provide the following information:
- Scientific studies and the factors that are being used to determine the mask requirement is necessary - [Executive Order 251 supercedes any decision on the part of the district.](#)
 - The measurement that is being used to determine when a mask would no longer be mandated - [First and foremost, when Executive Order 251 is ended. At that point it would depend on levels of Covid transmission in our area as well as the advice of health experts.](#)
 - Scientific study that these masks make a statistical difference in transmission of Covid-19 - [It is not within the district's responsibilities to conduct or find such research. The Board of Education is a policy-making body, ensuring the district policies are implemented according to the law.](#)

Questions

17. There was a survey sent out by the district. Why were parents told that our opinion wasn't relevant and would not carry any weight on your decision in the "mask survey"? Here is the language I used for the survey: Several parents have expressed concern about students wearing masks in school when we return in September. Lincoln Park has followed all guidelines from the NJDOE and will continue to do so. While you may have heard of districts that have made a decision to make masks optional, the NJDOE has not stated whether or not they will be required. If the NJDOE states that they are mandatory, the Lincoln Park School District will require all children and staff to wear them, as per the direction provided at that time. With the news of the Delta variant, it is a real possibility that they will be required. That being said, a few parents have requested the board to survey parents of the Lincoln Park Community to learn what opinions the community holds on the issue. Please understand that this is not a survey that will determine the decision that we will or will not require masks; it is simply hoping to determine the opinions of the parents of Lincoln Park students. I used the language that would best convey my intentions for surveying the district. I didn't want parents to get the impression this was a popular vote. That's not to say parental opinion wouldn't be considered, but it would not be the driving factor in the decision made.

Questions

18. Why are the individuals whose salaries are paid by our taxes and those elected to the board not advocating alongside us? Asking the district to choose a side for which to advocate means we would be going against a substantial portion of the community. The survey we sent to parents received a response from 338 families.
- 44.7% believe masks should be optional
 - 30.2% believe we should follow the guidance from the Health Department and NJDOE
 - 25.1% believe masks should be required of everyone at this time

Our priority is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all of our students and staff, following district policy and educational laws that govern us. With Executive Order 251 in place, the decision is out of our hands.