

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Flyers:

The RWJ Barnabas Institute for Prevention and Recovery has announced their Hope and Healing Program that offers emotional support services, education, and community based resources for individuals and families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Focused services provided for Children and Families, Seniors, Healthcare workers, First Responders, and individuals with Substance Use Disorder. Flyer [here](#).

Why can't you test out of quarantine? This flyer from the NJ Department of Health explains why. Flyer [here](#).

When the district transitions to in-school hybrid learning on Monday, December 14th, those students attending Freehold Learning Center for in-person instruction may have child care needs. The district is again partnering with the Freehold YMCA to provide these child care services in school, before and after, for those families that need them. Flyer [here](#).

The Freehold Borough Y Community Center will host the Annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner *grab and go* style. This year, the dinner has been modified to meet all health and safety regulations and requirements by offering a ready to heat and eat Thanksgiving Dinner. No reservations required, distribution will begin promptly at 5:30pm from the center's rear door adjacent to the senior entrance of the Continental apartment building. Flyer [here](#).

Contacts:

Social/Emotional Hotline: 732-810-3146.

District technology issues: techstaff@freeholdboro.k12.nj.us

Restart and Reentry for 2020-2021:

The Freehold Borough Board of Education has approved an updated district Restart and Reentry Plan. The pdf documents are available on the district website. In English [here](#). In Spanish [here](#).

As we head into the winter months, the question has been raised about what we will do if we have snow to the level that we would normally close schools. We have a new law in New Jersey that gives districts some new options in this regard (N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9, P.L.2020, c.27 (A3904)). We can continue to close for snow as we have done in the past, but remember, in the end we must have 180 days of school in a school year.

But the new law allows districts to shift to remote learning and have the remote days count towards the 180-day requirement, provided that schools have first been closed for three continuous days. This means we have to have a pretty big snow storm to use this option. But for our current situation right now, the Department of Education has

told districts that under the current state of emergency because of COVID-19, school were already closed for three days last Spring, and since the current state of emergency continues uninterrupted, then if we had snow such that we would close, that we could shift to virtual learning immediately and have the day count as a day of school. Of course once we come out of the current state of emergency, then the requirement to close for three days first would be in force.

With all this said, I want to let you know that while we stay in our current state of emergency in NJ (which doesn't seem like it's going to be lifted anytime soon), if we get a snow storm that would normally close schools, you should anticipate instead that we will just shift to virtual learning on those days. The only exception to this would be if the storm resulted in widespread electrical power outages.

We are preparing for the transition of our students to in-school hybrid learning. Five special education classes of younger students at Freehold Learning Center will start next Monday, November 16th. The rest of the district will start on Monday, December 14th.

We have completed our resurvey of parents to see how many want their students in-school and how many want to remain on 100% virtual. When we did this survey in late August our stats were 69% hybrid, 31% virtual. On our resurvey just completed, our new stats are 63% hybrid, 37% virtual. So our Principals are now engaged in juggling the master schedules to get the classes balanced again. They are working hard to make sure none of those who changed their preferences from August have to switch a teacher, but that might not be possible in all cases. The principals will be reaching out to individual parents if this is the case.

While we work to make a smooth transition to in-school hybrid learning, we remain capable and ready to return to full virtual if the local or statewide public health situation demands. In this regard we are in constant communication with the Freehold Health Officer. We have been cleared to reopen the five classes at FLC next Monday.

With the rise of COVID cases in NJ, we have seen a rise in the number of staff and students placed in quarantine because they were a close contact to someone who is COVID positive. Close contact is defined as within 6ft for 15 minutes cumulatively over a 24 hour period. Once we return to in-person hybrid learning, we may have some students or staff who are found to be COVID positive in the school. In those cases we will work with the Health Officer and determine an appropriate response as far as any temporary closures or reverting to virtual. Other districts have also had challenges that too many staff are on quarantine to viably run in-school learning. We will all need to remain flexible as such situations arise and we react to them.

While we work in transitioning to our in-school hybrid plan (Level 4 - 50%), we are also staffing out other options for consideration that may become an option in the future. The Reentry Plan outlines the various ways we may be able to move back to 100%

operation, and our district has set a goal to point us in this direction. While we are currently implementing one plan, we are simultaneously planning the next possible moves. As always, any moves will be thoroughly discussed with the school community and we will fully assess school community feedback before making any final decisions.

The A Day/B Day schedule for Level 4 is on the district website calendar for ready reference. The pattern over a two week period will be:

<u>Week</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>F</u>
1	A	A	B	A	B
2	B	A	B	A	B

Students remaining fully virtual will follow this same schedule as those on in-school hybrid.

We have made extensive preparations to ready our schools for in-person learning. We believe we have lowered the risk to a known and acceptable level, consistent with guidance from the Department of Education and the Department of Health. Parents have been able to assess that risk for themselves versus the benefits to their students physically attending school. Full choice has been offered. By opening schools to in-person learning we are meeting the needs of the 63% of students that want to attend in-person classes, and for the 37% who want to remain fully virtual. No student is being forced one way or the other. We will continue with this approach as we investigate future options.

My sincere thanks to our parents, students, teachers and staff for working through these many difficulties and under such unusual circumstances.

Upcoming Events:

Mon, Nov 16: Food distribution rear of PAC, 8am-12pm

Mon, Nov 16: Five FLC classes start in-school hybrid (A Day)

Mon, Nov 16: Early Dismissal (Parent/Teacher Conferences in evening)

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Tue, Nov 17: Early Dismissal (Parent/Teacher Conferences in evening)

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Wed, Nov 18: Food distribution rear of PAC, 8am-12pm

Wed, Nov 18: Five FLC classes start in-school hybrid (B Day)

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Fri, Nov 20: Food distribution rear of PAC, 8am-12pm

Fri, Nov 20: MP1 report cards available on Genesis Parent Portal

Mon, Nov 23: Food distribution rear of PAC, 8am-12pm

Mon, Nov 23: BOE meeting 7pm (virtual)

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Wed, Nov 25: Food distribution rear of PAC, 8am-12pm

Wed, Nov 25: Early dismissal

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Thu, Nov 26: Thanksgiving, schools closed

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Fri, Nov 27: Thanksgiving break, schools closed

Mon, Nov 30: Food distribution rear of PAC, 8am-12pm

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Wed, Dec 2: Food distribution rear of PAC, 8am-12pm

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Fri, Dec 4: Food distribution rear of PAC, 8am-12pm

Thank you.

Rocco Tomazic
Superintendent

