

Old Bridge Township Public Schools

The Path Forward: A Plan to Reopen Our Schools

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



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100% REMOTE LEARNING

Q. If a family chooses 100% remote learning, do they have the option to change to the hybrid learning platform?

A. *Yes, after the first marking period.*

Q. If a family chooses 100% remote learning, will textbooks and workbooks be available for students?

A. *Yes, students will have access to the district provided materials.*

Q. Will there be live instruction if a student is 100% remote?

A. *Yes, they will have live instruction on Tuesday and Thursday. Exactly how it will work for the full week will be determined when there is a better idea of how many students will be 100% remote.*

HYBRID LEARNING

Q. If a family chooses the hybrid learning option and feels uncomfortable will they be able to move the 100% remote learning option?

A. *Yes, you will be able to move to the remote learning option at any time. Please keep in mind that your child's teacher may change when switching options.*

Q. During remote learning days, will there be a set time frame for students to sign in for class?

A. *This will vary depending on the grade level. Yes, there will be scheduled times throughout the day for live interaction with teachers. For example, at the elementary level, on Tuesdays the teacher may meet with all students from 9 am -10 am and then with small groups of students during scheduled times throughout the day.*

Q. Will students who may have to be with childcare during school hours be penalized for not being online at the time of “live” small group or other activities?

A. *There will be some flexibility, however, students will be responsible for completing assignments and participating in class.*

Q. Why was the ABC cohort option not provided as an option in the family survey?

A. *While this may be frustrating, as additional information became available and it became apparent that we could not reduce our classes to 50% and sustain social distancing and other protective measures, we needed to discuss alternatives that allowed us to maintain student and staff safety. After a review of multiple options our task force determined that this was the most viable option.*

Q. Can my child attend in-school every day instead of remote learning?

A. *No, the CDC guidelines will not allow us to have all students back in the classroom every day.*

Q. What would dictate and allow for more in-school days?

A. *It will be based on several factors, including continued overall flattening of the curve and stability of no/low outbreaks based on the 33% model.*

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Q. If a student is not feeling well and stays home or must quarantine, are they permitted to work remotely?

A. *Yes, if a student is physically able to complete their work remotely, they may do so.*

Q. What PPE will be provided?

A. *Two cloth masks will be provided to each student and staff member.
All staff and students will be required to wear masks when in school and on our buses.*

Q. Are students permitted to wear face shields instead of masks?

A. *No- face shields do not provide the same protection as masks.*

Q. Will students be required to wear masks during PE?

A. *Students participating in aerobic activity will be socially distanced and will remove their masks during the activity. Physical activity will take place outdoors when possible. At 33% capacity, we will be able to maintain social distancing in our all-purpose rooms.*

Q. Are students permitted to bring their own hand sanitizers and Clorox wipes to clean their desks themselves?

A. *Personal hand sanitizers are acceptable. Personal wipes are acceptable.*

Q. Will desks be cleaned between classes for when students must switch classes?

A. *At 33% capacity, we can rotate desk usage, so students do not have to sit in the same seat as the student before them.
Desks will be cleaned throughout the day, where switching takes place as needed.*

Q. Will students be required to have a COVID or antibody test before starting school?

A. *No, unless you have reason to believe you have been exposed or have been advised by your doctor or the health department.*

Q. Will all desks in classrooms be 6 feet apart?

A. *Yes, all classrooms and have been marked for 6 feet distance.*

CLUBS AND SPORTS

Q. What about hot days that will impede the wearing of masks?

A. *If there are extremely hot days that will make it difficult to wear masks or be in the classroom, that day would be a remote day and the schedule will be adjusted accordingly.*

Q. If a student is 100% remote can they still participate in sports if they are available?

A. *Yes, they will need to provide their own transportation if they are not in session.*

Q. Will band at the middle schools be held at the school or would it be just remote? Will they still be able to play instruments like trombones or horns where they are blowing air out?

A. *We will not participate in a competitive season. Students will continue with band practice remotely.*

Q. Will school clubs be held remotely?

A. *Yes, many clubs will run remotely.*

Q. How will High School students meet the graduation requirements and participate in clubs and other activities?

A. *Graduation requirements have not changed and based on the schedule; students will still have their full course offering. It will just look differently, Peer, Project Unify and similar programs will continue to be part of their schedule.*

COHORTS

Q. How are cohorts being identified?

A. *We have used multiple methods to identify student cohorts which vary at each level. Consideration for siblings was a priority.*

Q. Will families have an opportunity to request a specific cohort or provide a preference for the day of the week?

A. *Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate individual preference.*

Q. Are cohorts schedule the same day of the week every week?

A. *During a typical, full week of school the answer is yes. However, the schedule varies to accommodate school closures. For example, if school is closed on a Monday, we have adjusted the groups to equalize the in-person meeting days. We have established a calendar for a full year to assist with personal planning.*

INSTRUCTION METHODS AND TEACHER INTERACTION

Q. Will in-person and remote learning days all be early dismissals?

A. *Students will be expected to work approximately 4 hours daily.*

Q. Will there be live streaming?

A. *Live interaction with students is necessary and will be most effective in small groups using the Teams platform. Live streaming into a classroom would significantly limit a teacher's ability to move freely to work with and differentiate instruction for those students present in the classroom.*

Q. Will prerecorded lessons be accessible at any time?

A. *Yes, prerecorded lessons are being created by our teachers and will be available for students to access as needed.*

Q. Will there be required office hours for staff to be available for student/parent questions?

A. *Yes, staff will have designated times that they will be available for live interaction with students. Parents will be able to communicate with staff via email, the portal, and may request a phone conference as needed.*

Q. What help will be offered to those students who do not know how to navigate a laptop on their own or need help with assignments?

A. *Staff will spend the first two weeks of school working with students to understand the technology and learning platforms. Counselors, Child Study Teams, Interventionists, will also be available to provide assistance.*

Q. Will workbooks be provided for students?

A. *In the first days of September, teachers will bundle student materials to have them ready for distribution so that students may use their workbooks, novels, and other school resources while working remotely. For students who choose 100% remote learning these resources will be available for distribution and use.*

Q. How will the district address student orientations?

A. *Orientations will be prepared and posted on our website. Students who are arriving new to a building will be given special care upon their arrival to help them become acclimated.*

All students will be provided time in the first weeks of September to become reacclimated to school, the changes and the new expectations.

We understand the importance of having our students feel safe and confident in their school and we are preparing to help them become independent learners.

Q. How will one day per week replace a full week of learning?

A. *One day of in-person learning is not expected to replace a full week of school. It is meant to improve upon full remote instruction. The guidance schools have received does NOT allow for a full week of in person instruction. Students will receive instruction remotely with one day of in-person learning to support the remote learning platform. Class sizes will be small, allowing for more personalized learning, reinforcement of skills and assessment of student progress.*

Q. Will there be live virtual instruction? How will it work?

A. *There will be scheduled time on Tuesday and Thursday for teachers to be live virtually with the students. It could change by elementary, middle and high school. There will be live instruction on Microsoft Teams, as it is secure.*

Q. Why is Old Bridge not live streaming like neighboring districts?

A. *This was discussed with the Remote Learning Task Force. The ability to live stream and protecting the student's privacy rights is important. The camera would only need to be focused on the teacher at the front of the room or board. Best educational practices tell us, that is not the best approach, when a teacher is only talking at a class for 40-60 minutes. Ideally, the teacher is leading the instruction and then going to students and*

checking with them. For the students who are remote, while the teacher is checking with those in class, they will not see the teacher or hear instruction. We have not seen data or evidence that this is an effective or engaging way to teach remotely and while some districts indicate they are using we have not seen evidence of its success. There is also a PERC (Public Employment Relations Commission) decision on the ability to put cameras inside the classroom. This is something that would be negotiated with the OBEA. The district and teachers believe they can provide better instruction through other methods.

Q. Will elementary students get any live instructions on the days they are home?

A. *They will on Tuesday and Thursday. On the days the teacher is in school, in the afternoon they can check on students who are home, if their student indicates they are having an issue, the teacher will reach out to the individual student to provide assistance. We are also looking at the role of our school counselors and CST's to see how they can be more of a resource to those students who are home while their teacher is teaching.*

Q. Will each teacher set a schedule on their availability to assist students who are not in school?

A. *Yes, there will be a set schedule for students and teachers with clearly defined times to start and end the day and when the teacher is available for assistance and answering questions are not in the school.*

Q. For live streaming, can't the district just have the parent sign a waiver?

A. *It is not just the data privacy, as above stated above, the quality of the instruction has not been proven to be effective. In addition, you can only sign a waiver for your child not the other children. The remote learning will include live virtual teacher instruction using Microsoft Teams.*

Q. Can students who have their own laptop still get one?

A. *Yes, every student in the district will be able to get a laptop. We will be moving to a 1:1 device model. Information will be available closer to the school opening with instructions on how to pick up.*

TEACHER SPECIFIC

Q. How are teachers being chosen for 100% remote learning?

A. *We continually evaluate staffing assignments and will assign staff according to certification requirements.*

Q. When will teachers be trained?

A. *Teachers return to school on September 1st and will participate in training that will emphasize remote learning. Professional development will be launched in August allowing our staff to begin their training prior to their return. Our district hosts a summer institute that will run virtually on August 19th and will be used as a demonstration for remote learning using various tools within Microsoft Teams.*

Q. Will student teachers and interns be allowed in our schools?

A. *Yes, we will support teacher education programs and adhere to licensure and certification requirements.*

Q. Will teachers be teaching remote from their homes on Tuesday and Thursday?

A. *Yes, on Tuesday and Thursday will be used to clean the classrooms and school between cohorts being in the school.*

PARENT SERVICES

Q. Will there be training provided for parents?

A. *Yes, we are developing parent training resources that will help familiarize parents with the technology platforms, methods of communicating, instructional components, etc. We are also working on parent resources to help families with social emotional well-being and self-care.*

TRANSPORTATION

Q. Who should I contact if I want to drive my child to school?

A. *The district will be providing forms to opt out of bus transportation.*

Q. Will buses run at full capacity?

A. *No, we will be operating at 33% capacity on our school buses and in our school facilities.*

FOOD SERVICES AND DELIVERY

Q. How will students who receive free/reduced lunches be provided lunch on remote learning days?

A. *The district is developing a plan for food distribution and will provide more information as it becomes available.*

Q. Will students eat breakfast and snacks in the classroom?

A. *This is still being determined as we do need to provide breakfast to those entitled. Outside dining could be used when the weather allows, other options being investigated to find options that minimize risk.*

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Q. Will students who normally go to the resource room for instruction stay in the gen ed instruction classroom?

A. *Those students will receive instruction with a resource certified special education teacher within the day. Whether this will be in the same classroom or different room will be determined. They will also be provided activities and instruction during the days they are remote.*

Q. Do you have any information on the special education kindergarten program?

A. *All programs are being evaluated and each grade level, as well as the type of programs offered, i.e. self-contained, resource pull out, ICR classroom, students who have an IEP in a gen ed setting, and programs will be put in place both in school and remotely based on the needs of the student.*

Q. How will remote learning work with a student with an IEP?

A. *It will depend on the unique grade level, however, if a student has a modification or accommodation in their IEP, the work that is expected to be completed at home/remote will be modified by the special education teacher prior to going home.*

Q. Will special education students be required to wear masks?

A. *NJ DOE recently mandated everyone in school wear a mask. There are certain exceptions, including (but not limited to) a student's documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an IEP which precludes the use of a face covering. [See here for more information.](#)*

Q. What will be the role of the paraprofessional?

A. *That role as not changed. They will still work under the direction of the teacher. They will continue to support instruction.*