



# Neshaminy School District

Neshaminy High School • 2001 Old Lincoln Highway • Langhorne, PA 19047

Good Morning Neshaminy,

Continuing the discussion about the planning and options for the opening of school in September, I'd like to review the academic and transportation plans again (It's a teacher thing), discuss Masks and COVID-19 Symptom Screening and finally, survey you for your thoughts as things stand now. ("...as things stand now" is an understatement)

We believe the planned options make Neshaminy agile enough to adjust when circumstances change significantly. We see the daily changes in thoughts, ideas, recommendations and requirements given the recent increase in COVID-19 cases around the Nation. However, we aren't jumping to change immediately with each new iteration; instead, we'll wait for the "Greatest Hits" compilation closer to the start of school in September.

## **Big Picture Stuff:**

### **Goals of the Re-opening Health & Safety Plan:**

1. Flexibility, Choice and Safety
2. Develop options that we can switch between on short notice either prior to the start of school or at any point during the year.
3. Give parents a Remote Learning Option if they are uncomfortable sending their child back to school.
4. Reserve a seat in school for the children/parents choosing the Remote Learning Option for easy transition back to the classroom setting.

Ultimately, the Cabinet and I will make a recommendation as to the best way to safely reopen schools. Then the School Board will either approve the recommendation or alter it.

Once the District has a plan for In-school Education in September, parents will make a decision between the adopted In-school District Plan or the Independent Plan D Remote Learning Option. Additionally, Neshaminy Staff will make a decision between working under the established conditions or choosing from other options available to them under District, State and Federal Policies.

## **Rough Timeline:**

- Week of July 20: Re-opening Health & Safety Plan Available (Another long email)
- Week of July 27: School Board approval of the July Version of the Re-opening Health & Safety Plan
- Week of August 3: Parents will be asked to commit to using Neshaminy Transportation or not using Neshaminy Transportation so we can optimize busing numbers. (Another long email)
- Week of August 10: Parents will be asked to commit to either the District In-school Reopening Plan (Plan A or Plan B) or an independent Remote Learning Options (Plan D). More next week on this option. The Goal is to permit students to exit this program and return to the In-school offerings seamlessly. (Another long email)
- Week of August 17: School Board revisits the Re-opening Health & Safety Plan and revises if necessary (Another long email)
- Week of August 24: ( ?? We can only imagine...)

## **Review of the Academic Plan Options**

Leading Option. Plan A: All students in school, every day. Maximize distance as best as possible given the number of students. Distancing in most classrooms will be approximately 3 feet. We've got a lunchroom problem in all schools to work out and need a large purchase of elementary school desks to arrive; but otherwise, we are in good shape.

Plan B: Blue/Red Alternating Day Schedule One day in school, then next day online. Prioritize 6 feet of distancing in classrooms and lunchrooms. This option is ready to go as well.

Plan C: All online similar to the Spring if schools are closed by the Commonwealth. Teachers have planned and warehoused lessons for Canvas for the month of September. If this option is in place for a significant duration, we will enhance the Online experience with more synchronous opportunities.

Independent Plan D: Parents can opt their child out of the above options for Online Remote Learning in Math, English, Science and Social Studies. We will add more depth to this Option once we can approximate the number and grade levels of students involved; hence the survey below.

## **Review of the Transportation Plan Options**

Option 1: Normal Bus Runs with 50+ at high school level, 60+ at middle school level and 70+ at elementary level. Students wear masks while on the bus.

Option 2: Limit Bus runs to two students per seat (52 students). Stagger school start and end times. Reduce instructional time at all levels. Students wear masks while on the bus.

New Option 3: If enough parents plan to provide their own transportation to and from school, then there might be another plan better than both Plan A and Plan B; hence the survey below.

Each week I will add details to the re-opening plan by addressing additional facets so you are aware and can make informed decisions. This week's facets are Masks and COVID-19 Symptom Screening. Ultimately, all such information will end up in a single document for your review.

Additionally, we are working on plans for school-based parent meetings and to open schools and classrooms for parents to actually see the planned arrangements... which is a lot easier said than done... but given the circumstances. "Wait and see" is the mindset for late August.

## **Student Masks in School**

When this email was first drafted, I thought the mask issue was resolved as the Commonwealth's Department of Health recommendation for indoor summer camps did not require children to wear masks. As such, we assumed the same would follow for schools in September. However, the guidance on the wearing of a mask is again a topic of discussion by government and health agencies.

As things stood prior to the Commonwealth's Universal Mask Order, the following was the administration's recommendation to the School Board. Each student should have a personal mask to be worn in school when interacting with others in close proximity. Additionally, students will be asked to wear their mask while riding the bus and for the "change of classes" in our secondary schools. We will ask parents to supply their children with a mask for school.

However, that all changed with the Universal Mask Order which does apply to schools. We understand the mask debate. As sworn and commissioned officers of the Commonwealth, the Board and I are required to follow such Commonwealth directives. We are still clarifying the details but, as of this email, masks are a requirement in schools.

The “Policing” of mask wearing on buses and in schools will not be an easy task. Honestly, it’s not a task that can be achieved. Instead, we will need to appeal to students’ sense of civic duty and concern for others as the “right thing to do.” Again, predicting the conditions and recommendations that will exist 6 weeks from now is next to impossible. As with everything, this too may change.

### **Preview Entry Symptom Screening**

Individual student temperature checks and COVID-19 symptom questionnaires at the point of entry of schools (or buses) is not feasible. In conversation with the Bucks County Health Department, we will ask students (and parents) and staff to self-check for symptoms prior to leaving for school in the morning. Additionally, the morning routine in each school will start with a reminder and review of the COVID-19 symptoms along with the importance of not attending school when not feeling well. We are working on a daily email questionnaire to remind and facilitate the importance of self-checking.

### **Non-binding Parent Survey**

Finally, to better prepare for September, we need to get an idea where each family stands with the potential options of both the academic plan and transportation plan. Please complete the below survey for EACH of your school-age children. The survey is non-binding and you are not making a final decision for September. (That decision will come however...) We are just attempting to ‘ballpark’ what parents at each level are thinking. I do ask for your child’s name, ID number, grade and school so when we export the data to Excel we can disaggregate the results. Names and ID’s help us find duplicate responses.

I’ve included an Open Response Text Box for any additional thoughts/ideas/concerns/questions. Or if you’d rather just call me, 215-809-6512 rings my cell.

Parent Survey Link: [https://neshaminy.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cIVRd5f9F5PXuFn](https://neshaminy.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cIVRd5f9F5PXuFn)

Help us help you by completing the brief survey by the evening of Sunday, July 19. Please call, email or text your friends and neighbors with Neshaminy children and remind them to do the same. The planning is improved when we can anticipate volume in some areas based on your tentative intentions. I will publish the survey results next week along with explaining more details of the plan.

On behalf of the entire Neshaminy Cabinet and,  
With Neshaminy Pride,  
Rob

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My past emails may be found at [www.neshaminy.org/Page/42023](http://www.neshaminy.org/Page/42023)