



Reopening Frequently Asked Questions

#Engage109

****UPDATED AUGUST 10, 2020****

GENERAL

Q: Where can I find the presentation that was given in the board meeting on Monday, July 27? (new on 7/31)

A: Here is a [link](#) to the presentation.

Q: I couldn't go to the board meeting and missed the Zoom session. Is there a recording somewhere? (new on 7/31)

A: The district has never posted videos of board meetings, but the [Board Briefs](#) of Monday's meeting are available for you to look at. The minutes of the meeting will be approved next month and will then be publicly available.

ABOUT THE NEXT STEPS....

Q: When is the first day of school? (new on 7/31)

A: 109 Online will begin with half-day instruction on Wednesday, August 19, just as planned.

Q: Will my child have a chance to meet their teachers prior to the 1st day of school? (new on 7/31)

A: This is something that we think will be beneficial for everyone and are working right now to determine how (in person in small groups or remotely) and when this will take place.

Q: How is my child getting their device to start the year? (new on 7/31)

A: Materials pickup dates will be scheduled close to the beginning of the school year at each building. We will notify you as soon as those dates are on the calendar.

Q: When will the first students be brought back to school in this “phased approach?” (new on 7/31)

A: The district is forming a task force to determine, monitor, and evaluate the evolving health and safety conditions that would prompt bringing kids back to school. They will be releasing more information about that soon.

Q: Why haven't you set a date or goal as to when kids will be back in school? (new on 7/31)

A: We are forming the School Re-Entry Task Force that will examine this question. We don't want to repeatedly set dates that can't or won't be met or have people plan their lives around them. We don't feel like that would be of much help to the community.

Q: Can my student be paired with (XYZ) so that we can do remote learning together? (new on 7/31)

A: Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate individual requests for families to be paired together or other placement requests of this nature.

Q: We would like to form a learning arrangement with other families for virtual learning (sometimes being referred to as “pods). Will the district be supporting that or can we choose other families to partner up with before class placements are established? (new on 7/29/2020)

A: Starting this school year is going to be a challenging time for everyone involved, and we understand that unconventional solutions and precautions are going to be necessary. One idea that has been proposed to us several times is the idea of students/families forming learning "pods" where students could work cooperatively outside of school. We as a district are unable to facilitate the organization of such groups and cannot take individual placement requests to accommodate these, but families are free to choose whatever supplementary route they feel will help their student's education.

Q: When are class placements coming out?

A: Class placement information will be released no later than August 14th. We first need to determine which families are electing to stay in virtual learning until winter break, which will delay the placement process.

Q: "Do I still need to submit health forms by the start of the school year if we are doing remote learning? If yes, what is the best way to submit them? (new on 8/10)

A: The health requirements are the same for all students attending DPS 109 whether learning is remote or in person. We will be following the standard state mandated deadline of October 15th for submission of physicals /immunization records. The forms prior to school opening forms

should be emailed to mphelps@dps109.org. As the school year begins the forms can be emailed to the specific building nurse, faxed to the specific school or a hard copy can be placed in the secure drop box outside of the district center.

109 ONLINE-SPECIFIC

Q: Where do I get more information about 109 Online?

A: Go to www.dps109.org/109online for more information about the program.

Q: The e-learning in the spring wasn't a great experience for my child. How will this program be better? (new on 7/31)

A: There will be 5 hours of instruction daily, and much of it will be synchronous. There will also be more consistency with communication platforms, and students will be held to grading standards. You can find a lot more information at www.dps109.org/109online.

Q: Can we check out books from the school library while we are learning remotely? (new on 7/31)

A: Yes. We will be communicating more details about the ways by which families can select, pick up, and drop off books in the near future.

PHYSICAL HEALTH & SAFETY PLANNING FOR WHEN STUDENTS RETURN -- please refer to our [School Reopening Scenarios packet](#) if you don't see your specific question answered below:

Q: Do you think the kids will be stressed out about wearing a mask, keeping distance and not taking off the mask or touching it during class? (new on 7/20/2020)

A: This will be a stressful and difficult time for everyone involved, and the committee is very conscious of that in our planning. There is a specific social-emotional well-being subcommittee tasked with coming up with recommendations to help students and staff in this unprecedented time.

Q: Do kids need to have a negative COVID-19 test in order to attend school?

A: Based on current guidance issued by ISBE/IDPH and conversations with the Lake County Health Department, there is no recommendation for a required negative COVID-19 test result in order for students to begin the school year.

Q: What are the protocols for when a family member of a student tests positive for COVID-19?

A: In accordance with the Part 3 guidance issued by ISBE/IDPH: “Those who had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19 infection should isolate at home and monitor for symptoms for 14 days. Close contact means the individual was within 6 feet of the individual with symptoms for more than 15 minutes.” District 109 has been in contact with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Lake County Health Department since the pandemic was declared in March, and will continue those cooperative partnerships in order to work collaboratively to outline any necessary procedures (other than what has already been included in the Part 3 guidance) specific to our buildings regarding quarantine recommendations. You can read more about this in our [School Reopening Scenarios packet](#).

Q: If a family member tests positive - will families be required to share that with the school or will the child be allowed to come to school?

A: In order to work collaboratively to ensure the safety of all stakeholders in our District 109 community, we ask that you let us know if your child has had close contact with a family member or friend who is either exhibiting symptoms of or has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Examples include siblings, parents, grandparents, other relatives, babysitters, etc., whether they reside in your home or not. Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of the individual with symptoms for more than 15 minutes. According to ISBE Part 3 Transition planning anyone who has had contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or is suspected of having COVID-19 infection should isolate at home and monitor for symptoms for 14 days.

Q: Will kids be asked and forced to stay home if they decide to travel on vacation, out of state, or even get on a plane? Can we ask families to report this? (new on 7/13/2020)

A: If families travel, it will be up to them to self-report and comply with all guidelines and protocols issued by the CDC, Illinois Department of Public Health, and Lake County Health Department. We will be in close communication with all of those agencies closely throughout the year. We will be doing temperature checks daily before students enter district facilities.

Q: How will tracked attendance be handled if a student is quarantined?

A: A remote learning option will be made available for students who are unable to return to in-person learning. The details of what this will look like are currently being worked out by the Remote Learning Subcommittee; however, if a child is engaged in the remote learning option

provided for him/her, he/she would be counted as “in attendance” as they were during the district-wide remote learning days last spring.

Q: How will children be screened upon arrival to school? What will happen if a child doesn't pass a screening?

A: In accordance with the Part 3 guidance issued by ISBE/IDPH: “Schools and districts must conduct temperature and symptom screenings or require self certification and verification for all staff, students, and visitors entering school buildings. Individuals who have a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit/38 degrees Celsius or [currently known symptoms of COVID-19](#), such as fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, may not enter buildings. Individuals who exhibit symptoms should be referred to a medical provider for evaluation, treatment, and information about when they can return to school.” District 109 will be conducting temperature checks for all students prior to their entry into the building and if they have a temperature greater than 100.4 parents/guardians or an emergency contact will immediately be notified and the student will remain isolated (following procedures outlined in the guidance) until they are picked up from the building. We encourage parents/guardians to also take the temperature of their children at home whenever possible to do everything we can to ensure that students do not arrive at school and fail the temperature screening.

Q: Will the students have to wait in cars before being checked upon arrival to school?

A: Students will exit the bus or car and proceed directly to an assigned entry door for the temperature check.

Q: What about a kid with just a cold or seasonal allergies who is coughing? A child who goes home with a temperature?

A: Please let us know prior to the first day of school (or update any existing information with the building nurse) if your child has a medical condition, such as seasonal allergies, that may result in symptoms similar to those we are screening for. Please also continue to encourage your child to visit the building nurse as they normally would if they are not feeling well. If a child is presenting with any of the following COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, fatigue, muscle and body aches, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea) we will follow outlined screening procedures per the Part 3 guidance issued by ISBE/IDPH and contact parents/guardians immediately.

Q: Will there be a separate area in the nurse's office for ordinary scrapes etc., to separate those that might present with symptoms of COVID?

A: *According to ISBE's Part 3 Transition Guidance: Schools will "provide a supervised quarantine space for students/staff who are experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms and may be awaiting evaluation and/or pickup. Students must never be left alone and must be supervised at all times while maintaining necessary precautions within the quarantine space." The supervised quarantine space for students in District 109 will not be the nurse's office so students requiring care for routine medical needs will continue to be served in the current nurse's office.*

Q: What about a case when a student is having no symptoms but carrying the virus. How would you go about that?

A: *In accordance with the Part 3 guidance issued by ISBE/IDPH, all confirmed cases of COVID-19 will be reported to the Lake County Health Department as required by the Illinois Disease Reporting requirements issued by IDPH. We have been in contact with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Lake County Health Department since the pandemic was declared in March, and will continue those cooperative partnerships in order to work collaboratively to outline any necessary procedures (other than what has already been included in the Part 3 guidance) specific to our buildings regarding contact tracing recommendations, etc. which may help identify potential asymptomatic carriers.*

Q: Is there a policy on mask wearing for students?

A: *According to ISBE's Part 3 Transition Planning Guidance FAQ: "As required by IDPH, except while eating and during band, face coverings must be worn at all times in school buildings, even when social distance is maintained. All individuals in a school building must wear a face covering unless they have a medical contraindication, are under 2 years of age, have trouble breathing, or are unconscious, incapacitated, or unable to remove the face covering without assistance... Face coverings are not required outside if social distance is maintained (if individuals remain 6 feet apart from each other)." We will be working with families to discuss and problem solve any individual concerns or needs for their child regarding face coverings.*

Q: Will kids be able to bring their own masks? Or will only school provided masks be allowed?

A: *The district will provide face coverings for students, but students will be allowed to bring their own face covering as long as they comply with the CDC/ISBE guidelines. According to ISBE's Part 3 Transition guidance "Ensure that the face covering fully covers the mouth and nose, and that the covering fits snugly against the sides of the face with no gaps"*

Q: Will students be required to use PPE ONLY when 6 ft distance can't be maintained? If desks can be placed 6 ft apart, then PPE doesn't necessarily need to be worn, correct?

A: According to ISBE's Part 3 Transition Planning Guidance FAQ: "As required by IDPH, except while eating and during band, face coverings must be worn at all times in school buildings, even when social distance is maintained. All individuals in a school building must wear a face covering unless they have a medical contraindication, are under 2 years of age, have trouble breathing, or are unconscious, incapacitated, or unable to remove the face covering without assistance."

Q: I am concerned about my special needs child in early childhood following the requirement for a face covering. How will these situations be handled?

A: We will be working with families to discuss and problem solve any individual concerns or needs for their child regarding face coverings. According to ISBE's Part 3 Transition Planning Guidance FAQ: "As required by IDPH, except while eating and during band, face coverings must be worn at all times in school buildings, even when social distance is maintained. All individuals in a school building must wear a face covering unless they have a medical contraindication, are under 2 years of age, have trouble breathing, or are unconscious, incapacitated, or unable to remove the face covering without assistance."

Q: My son is deaf. Is it possible to provide to his teacher and classmates clear masks so he can lip read?

A: The district has purchased masks with a clear area so that lip reading is possible.

Q: Face shields - have they been deemed safe/protective? (new on 7/13/2020)

A: The Illinois State Board of Education says that masks should be used instead of shields in most circumstances. You can read more about that here: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/FAQ-Part-3-Transition-Guidance.pdf>. The majority of students and staff will wear masks unless they fall under the different circumstances in that document.

Q: Will the children be given more hand washing opportunities if they are in attendance this fall?

A: The Reopening Committee will be recommending specific times that each classroom or group of students will be scheduled for hand hygiene. We will also be directly teaching all stakeholders about the importance of hand hygiene and continuing this messaging throughout the school year. According to the Part 3 guidance issued by ISBE/IDPH: "Handwashing with soap and water is always the first recommended line of defense, but where this is not feasible or readily accessible, the use of hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol may be used."

Q: What is considered close contact?

A: The Part 3 guidance issued by ISBE/IDPH defines close contact as within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes.

Q: Has a policy been established for how many COVID-19 cases would trigger a shutdown?

A: In accordance with the Part 3 guidance issued by ISBE/IDPH, all confirmed cases of COVID-19 will be reported to the Lake County Health Department as required by the Illinois Disease Reporting requirements issued by IDPH. We have been in contact with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Lake County Health Department since the pandemic was declared in March, and will continue those cooperative partnerships in order to work collaboratively to outline any necessary procedures (other than what has already been included in the Part 3 guidance) specific to our buildings regarding quarantine recommendations or closures. Read more information in our [School Reopening Scenarios packet](#).

Q: Will schools have test kits to perform on-site tests for individuals showing symptoms?

A: District 109 will not have on-site COVID-19 test kits.

Q: Have you thought of contact tracing devices/wrist bands to help quickly identify contact?

A: In accordance with the Part 3 guidance issued by ISBE/IDPH, all confirmed cases of COVID-19 will be reported to the Lake County Health Department as required by the Illinois Disease Reporting requirements issued by IDPH. We have been in contact with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the Lake County Health Department since the pandemic was declared in March, and will continue those cooperative partnerships in order to work collaboratively to outline any necessary procedures (other than what has already been included in the Part 3 guidance) specific to our buildings regarding contact tracing recommendations, etc. We will take the lead from the Lake County Health Department regarding best practices for contact tracing and include any recommendations shared with us in our Reopening Plan

Q: What is the plan for the tracking process to maintain ongoing monitoring of individuals excluded from school because they have COVID-19 or COVID-19 like symptoms?

A: In accordance with the Part 3 guidance issued by ISBE/IDPH, all confirmed cases of COVID-19 will be reported to the Lake County Health Department as required by the Illinois Disease Reporting requirements issued by IDPH. The Lake County Health Department will then institute a tracking process to maintain ongoing monitoring of individuals excluded from school because they have COVID-19 like symptoms, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or have

been exposed to someone with COVID-19 and are in quarantine. Read more information in our [School Reopening Scenarios packet](#).

Q: Will they still be offering hot lunch for elementary schools?

A: Yes - PTO sponsored lunch will be permitted to continue. The Reopening Committee will be working with each building to determine what the logistics will look like for lunch distribution.

Q: Will social distancing of at least 6ft be made possible during lunch - and snack - since kids will have their masks off? How do we ensure this if they have to eat in a classroom that doesn't allow for that distancing? (new on 7/13/2020 -- from a DPS 1st grader!)

A: Students will observe social distancing to the best extent possible during lunch and snack. Right now, alternative spaces are being evaluated for these times of day; outside spaces when it's nice out, and larger rooms like the gym, music room, library, etc. Again, a final plan is still being worked on.

IN-PERSON LEARNING

Q: What are the plans for the number of students to be present in the same room at the time of learning? (updated 7/20/2020)

A: This depends on which instructional model is used. If school is held fully in-person, the number of students in each classroom will be consistent with previous school years--typically between 20 to 25 students in a classroom. The ISBE/IDPH guidelines require 6 foot social distancing to the greatest extent possible. The district is working to maximize distancing in classrooms to the greatest extent possible, but 6 foot social distancing is not possible in many school settings. If a hybrid schedule is used, class sizes would be essentially half of that, approximately 10 to 13 students.

Q: Are each of the schools large enough/have enough spaces to have all students in the building at one time and meet social distancing guidelines?

A: Hallways will be labeled with 6 ft markings to provide visuals for students. Bathroom breaks, minus emergencies, will be structured so that the number of students inside at any given time will be limited. Inside of classrooms, ISBE/IDPH have indicated "desks do not need to be spaced 6 feet apart." Students will be spaced to the greatest extent possible, but 6 foot social distancing is not possible in many school settings.

Q: How long are young students going to be expected to sit in their assigned seats in their classrooms?

A: Teachers will still be providing students with brain breaks, motor breaks, etc, as they typically would under normal circumstances. These breaks may look different under Phase 4 limitations, but we also know the importance of such breaks to allow for student engagement in learning to remain high.

Q: Would longer passing periods and transitions mean shorter class periods at all buildings?

A: Yes, to compensate for the need to better monitor and control hallway passing, this time will need to come from the instructional minutes.

Q: Will early release Wednesday still take place? (updated 7/20/2020)

A: Yes, but only if the school schedule looks the same as it has in previous years. If a hybrid model or full remote model is used, the schedule would need to be altered and we would communicate that change.

Q: What about books and other materials that tend to be used by multiple children throughout the day?

A: We are working through these details with subcommittee members. We believe that we either have sufficient materials to avoid sharing altogether OR we'll place an order that will allow for materials to be used only by individuals. Other materials that need to be shared will be disinfected in between usage.

Q: Will students be bringing devices home in the upcoming school year? (updated 7/13/2020)

A: Yes, the plan right now is for all students to bring home devices.

Q: With no sharing of objects in mind, will all assignments, lessons, etc have to be administered and submitted digitally only during school?

A: No. Subcommittee members are currently engaging in conversations with peers about supplies that are typically shared between students and what may need to be purchased to adhere to recommendations. This said, it is possible that some activities can be made digitally to avoid the sharing of materials.

Q: Will art rooms and music rooms be able to be used for class as normal?

A: In our elementary schools, art, STEM, and music classes will be held in the core classrooms (teachers rotating rather than students). PE will be held outside whenever possible, or in the gym or in classrooms during inclement weather. In our middle schools, these spaces will be utilized, as students will transfer from class to class. Subcommittee members continue to engage in conversations about how to transition students safely and strategically.

Q: Is there any consideration to as much outside learning as possible? (new on 7/13/2020)

A: Decisions on outside learning and other classroom space changes will be made on a building-by-building basis with each school's administration.

Q: Will you still be allowing parent volunteers into the schools?

A: No. Outside volunteers and other visitors will be prohibited or strictly limited.

Q: Will the library be open for students to check out books? (updated 7/20/2020)

A: The current thought is that the library spaces in each building will be used to allow larger groups to practice social distancing. Library services will still be available to students. We are determining exactly what those protocols will be. The Destiny book checkout system will be available for all students studying remotely.

Q: How will recess work? Can the kids still run around/ play games? Movement is going to be so important! (updated 7/20/2020)

A: The current thought is that students will be in structured zones during recess (one class per zone) and that social distancing will be enforced by supervisors to the greatest extent possible. At this point, students will not be accessing our playground equipment during recess due to concerns with our ability to appropriately clean the equipment during the school day. We will revisit opening access to the playgrounds throughout the school year.

TRANSPORTATION

Q: Will kids be allowed to sit wherever they want on the bus or will there be a seating chart? (new on 7/20/20)

A: We will likely utilize seating charts on the bus.

Q: Are the face masks & shields on the bus in addition to the ones they will receive at school? (new on 7/20/20)

A: District 109 is prepared to give every student one washable mask (riders will receive theirs on their bus ride but then not receive one at school)

Q: Regarding Busses, what about for special needs children that take those busses regardless of distance?

A: There will be no changes to bus riding expectations for students with special needs that have defined bussing guidelines outlined in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Q: Will free bus service continue to be available for those who previously qualified?

A: Yes.

Q: Will paid bus service not be offered this year? (new on 7/13/2020)

It is true that we are considering this, but it is far from decided. The issue we (and actually all districts in Illinois) face is that ISBE/IDPH have implemented capacity limits on school busses that fall far below the actual capacity of a bus. We think it likely that we will be able to offer transportation per usual, but in the event we have more riders than usual we would have to eliminate the option for purchase. Unfortunately, we do not have the ability to secure additional busses & drivers to expand transportation capacity.

Q: Weather permitting, will the windows be opened on the buses?

A: Yes

ACTIVITIES & EXTRACURRICULARS

Q: Will extracurricular activities or sports be allowed to run in the fall?

A: We are hoping to have extracurricular activities and sports in the fall. We are still working through recommendations, and we are awaiting further guidance from the Illinois Elementary School Association (the governing body of interscholastic activities at the elementary level).

Q: Will band be offered this year? (updated 7/20/2020)

A: Our committee and music teachers are doing extensive planning and research into the modifications needed to try and have music/instrumental classes held as safely as possible. Watch for those in our final recommendations due out the last week of July.

Q: Will there still be after school care through the park district that has in the past been held in the small gym?

A: Yes. This will be offered by the park district at all elementary buildings. More information regarding sign up will be shared by the Park District later this summer.

E-LEARNING

Q: Will there be an e-learning option for families who do not wish to return to in-person instruction?

A: Yes, the district is committed to working with students and families who have increased health risks, or may not feel comfortable returning to in-person instruction. Details of the eLearning experience and associated parameters will be forthcoming.

Q: Will the curriculum be the same at home (e-learning) vs. the curriculum at school? (new on 7/13/2020)

A: The curriculum plans for in-person vs. e-learning are being designed to mirror each other as closely as possible, knowing that some students may need to utilize both forms at some point this year. The staffing plan for everything is still being developed.

Q: Will the remote learning curriculum be improved from spring? (new on 7/20/2020)

A: You will find a much more robust eLearning plan as we head into this school year. Last year, we were in crisis management mode, which brought about an eLearning model that encouraged live, synchronous learning and one supported by asynchronous videos, etc. This year, you will find a more structured schedule, more live sessions, more small group instruction, more individualized feedback, and more accountability. You will be able to read more details once our plan is released in the coming days

Q: Will the district be prepared to start the year off with e-learning on time as if that were the plan?

A: Staff was working throughout the spring to prepare for the first weeks of school if still in eLearning in August. An aligned eLearning curriculum will be ready to go if it is needed.

Q: If we choose in-person instruction, can we pull our kids out for e-learning at our discretion? (new on 7/13/2020)

A: You will have the ability to transfer your student from in-person learning to e-learning at your discretion, understanding that there may be a delay in transferring them between the programs. We are still working on the process that will take place when students need to switch between in-person and remote education.

Q: Why must you agree to an entire grade period at home? If school is deemed safe by physicians and a child is allowed back why wouldn't they be allowed to come back in? (new on 7/13/2020)

*A: We are asking those that are **electing** a remote option to commit to a certain period of time so we can adequately plan and staff to serve all children best. This commitment would not apply to children who are required to quarantine and miss school because they or a family member tests positive for COVID-19.*

Q: Is there a plan to have teachers instruct for the full school day on Zoom/virtually, including specials?

*A: The eLearning committee is examining a variety of virtual learning options that are developmentally appropriate by grade band. All students will likely spend some time on Zoom each day, but teachers and students will not be on Zoom the length of the school day. **Primary students (K-2)** often need more learning support to develop independence; however, they are also the least likely to benefit from whole-group virtual instruction. Families of primary students were also more likely to request flexibility with access to lessons, as this enabled them to support the child's learning more conveniently at home. **Intermediate students (Grades 3-5)** are more comfortable with the structure of the school day and digital tools. As a result, they are better able to handle structured time on Zoom in short spurts for whole-class and/or small group instruction. **Middle School students (Grades 6-8)** have the most independence with their learning. Middle school teams have typically worked together to balance student time on Zoom. Direct instruction has occurred with full classes for delivery of new content.*

Q: What are the options for kids if they become sick? E-learning?

A: If a child has a normal illness, the child will remain at home, rest, and wait to return to school until 72 hours of being fever- and symptom-free. If a child has a prolonged absence due to illness, including COVID-19, eLearning instruction would be made available. The child would have access to learning activities along with some teacher support.

Q: If an entire classroom fell under quarantine, would that class move to remote learning temporarily?

A: The eLearning committee is planning for intermittent classroom and school closures. If classrooms or buildings were asked to remain at home, eLearning would become available.

Q: If the state of Illinois moves back into an earlier phase of the reopening process, do we immediately go back to remote learning?

A: Yes, if we were to return to Phase 1, 2, or 3, the district will be prepared to resume eLearning.

Q: Are we considering e-learning for the winter months/ flu season?

A: We will not be altering the schedule specifically for the winter months/flu season; however, the school will be prepared to implement eLearning if/when needed.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Q: What happens if a teacher gets it? Do you have subs ready to take over?

A: We have already gauged our Guest Teachers (substitutes) to determine their readiness to step into the working environment should we need coverage in the event a teacher or other employee who needs coverage is absent. They will follow the same pandemic protocols that all other employees are expected to follow and we also intend on establishing enhanced training for them to utilize our tech tools in both the classroom setting and remote learning setting, if needed.

Q: What will teachers be supplied with from the district to keep themselves safe and the students safe?

A: We intend on providing teachers with facemasks, hand sanitizer, wipes, classroom cleaning supplies. We also will have a supply of face shields if it is deemed wearing one is appropriate.

Q: If a teacher will not be returning this school year due to personal health concerns/FMLA leave, when will parents be notified of this? For example, if my child gets assigned Teacher X, will I be told if teacher X is going on FMLA and I should be expecting a sub?

A: This depends on whether the school year has begun or not. In prior years, and we can assume the same would occur this upcoming school year, staffing changes take place up to the day that class lists are released. If a teacher needs to utilize FMLA at the point that class rosters are available, the parents will receive prompt notification that a Long-Term Guest Teacher will be covering the class until the permanent employee returns from the requested leave.

Q: What type of training will staff receive in order to help identify students who may be struggling upon their return to school—especially students whose time at home may have been stressful due to parent/family member illness, parent job loss, etc.?

A: The District employs a premier team of trained Social Workers, Guidance Counselors, and School Psychologists who are all at the ready to identify and support those students who are expressing signs that the transition back to in-person learning is not going as smoothly as either the parents or teachers would like. Moreover, our teachers are also a first-line of identification to determine any struggles students are experiencing and working collaboratively with our Department for Student Services to allocate resources accordingly.

Q: What is being done in order to check-in on the social/emotional health of staff?

A: The District's benefits provider has a robust Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The Department for Human Resources has already distributed information on multiple occasions that advises employees in need of support to reach out to the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources or to make confidential contact with the EAP. Contact with the EAP is secure and confidential. They are trained experts who provide outstanding support to address stress, anxiety, signs of depression and other areas that our team needs at this moment.

Q: It seems like there will be a lot of increased demands on teachers. How are you helping and supporting them?

A: We have a team of highly professional and actively engaged educators. Although we have provided opportunities for assistance via our Employee Assistance Program for those who are struggling, we recognize the need to be vigilant and routinely check-in on them to make sure they are taking care of themselves as much as they are taking care of your children. Moreover, with increased expectations comes much needed conversations with representatives of both bargaining units. These meetings are occurring on a weekly basis and issues are brought to the table for discussion to generate viable solutions.

Q: Will teachers and other staff have periodic testing?

A: Any staff member who enters the building will be required to report on their symptoms to ensure that the buildings remain as COVID-19 free as possible. If a teacher has recognizable symptoms, we will work with the staff member to separate them from the classroom/instructional areas and isolate them in the designated zone until they can securely leave the building and receive medical attention. A medical clearance to return to work will be required and in the meantime, the staff member will be expected to follow all prescribed quarantine procedures. If the question is alluding to random testing or periodic testing for the sake of it, we do not intend on engaging in this practice.

GREAT QUESTIONS WE CAN'T ANSWER RIGHT NOW

Q: Where will masks go when eating? Should they be attached to straps to stay on the body? Will they need to change masks after eating and have multiple at school? If so, where with no lockers? (new on 7/13/2020)

A: Great question! A number of options are being considered.... we don't have a final answer on this right now.

Q: How will you manage to get students into the school with social distancing while you are taking the temperatures of kids as they come in and if you take their temperature in the classroom what happens when a child has a fever? Will you have the entire school waiting outside as you allow children in one by one with temp checks? What do you do on inclement weather days? (new on 7/13/2020)

A: A lot of excellent points that are all being considered. The entry procedures for each school are still being discussed by the committee and will be part of our final recommendation at the end of the month.

Q: Will lunch take place in the classroom or in the lunch room in smaller sections? Will food allergy protocol remain if in the classroom?

A: This question requires committee input. A response will be forthcoming.

Q: Are you going to cover details around the early learning program?

A: Yes. Details will be provided as soon as they are finalized.