

School Opening- BCSD 21-22

August 12, 2021

Goals for Tonight

Discuss our initial plans for the 21-22 School year in regards to COVID-19 mitigation in regards to CDC guidance

Answer questions

Please be patient, guidance from New York State has been non-existent this summer

We are planning for an amazing year!



CDC COVID -19 Mitigation Measures and Recommendations

Indoor Masking

Emphasizing vaccinations (voluntary)

Ventilation

Screening

Physical Distancing

COVID-19 Testing (voluntary)



BCSD is following CDC guidance for the 21-22 School Year

On advisement from the New York Department of Health and the New York State Education Department we will be following the CDC school opening guidelines for this upcoming school year

It means **universal masking will be in effect at the beginning of the school year for all staff and students in our school district for the foreseeable future**

It also means the focus will be on in-person instruction for all of our students



Why universal masking for all staff and students?

Based on community transmission, the CDC highly recommends a mask mandate in Dutchess County

Proper masking allows us to reduce the number of staff and students who have to quarantine through contact tracing, if you are wearing a mask you are mostly exempt from quarantining per CDC

Our ages 4-11 students have not had access to a vaccine yet

Masking helps allow all students and staff to return to school

Masks will not be required outside of school and students will be given frequent masks breaks

We will evaluate this policy throughout the school year



Vaccines

Vaccines are not mandatory for students or staff

We will work on holding vaccination clinics to increase our rate with students and work with the local health department on education efforts for people who have questions

Vaccines are working, please consider getting vaccinated!



Ventilation

Each classroom uses a MERV-13 filter in its air handler unit

Each classroom has a portable HEPA filter

Both are high quality air filtration tools



Health Screening

We are going to continue with using the daily health screener, it might be a slightly different format this year- staying home when sick is extremely important

We are discontinuing the use of temperature screening before the school year. Very few districts used it last year and there is a growing consensus that it is not an effective way to screen COVID-19.



Distancing

CDC recommends three feet distancing in schools with mask wearing

What about breakfast/lunch? Each school is preparing different lunch plans to make sure students can eat lunch and stay as distanced as possible. Plans include some outside eating, split lunch shifts, etc. We will share these plans out as we complete them.



COVID-19 Testing

COVID testing is voluntary

Testing is recommended for staff and students as a further mitigation effort

We are exploring different ways to accomplish this hopefully in partnership with Dutchess County



Remote Education

NYSED (state education department) is not requiring districts to provide remote education to students but has asked districts to be ready to move a school or district to temporary remote learning for all students if needed.

The priority is placed on in-person instruction for this school year for all students

We are evaluating a program for remote learning at BOCES for students with a serious medical condition that prevents them from attending in-person education and creating a process that will identify those students



Final Thoughts

We will continue our communication efforts for this month and during the school year in the form of email, robo-call, and zoom town halls.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Matt

