

*Paramus Public Schools:
Public Board Update*

January 25, 2021

Presentation Overview

1. [NJDOH Guidelines \(as of January 19, 2021\)](#)
 - a. [Important Changes to Guidelines \(all changes highlighted in yellow\)](#)
 - i. Process for Individuals with COVID-19 Compatible Symptoms
 - ii. Identification and Exclusion of Close Contacts of COVID-19 Positive Individuals (Quarantine)
 - iii. School Closure Scenarios
 - iv. Students with Chronic Illness
 - b. [Length of Quarantine](#)
2. [Full-Remote/Hybrid Data](#)
3. [Learning Schedules](#)

Changes to NJDOH Guidelines: *COVID-19 Compatible Symptoms*

- **Process for Individuals with COVID-19 Compatible Symptoms**
 - Individuals with COVID-19 compatible symptoms **must be excluded** when the region is in the “high” (orange) or “very high” (red) risk level.
 - Close contacts of individuals with COVID-19 compatible symptoms **should no longer be excluded** when the region is in the “high” (orange) or “very high” (red) risk level.

Changes to NJDOH Guidelines: *Identification and Exclusion of Close Contacts*

- **Identification and Exclusion of Close Contacts of COVID-19 Positive Individuals (Quarantine)**
 - Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone with suspected or known COVID-19 for 15 or more minutes during a 24-hour period. In certain situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire cohort, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed. **These situations should occur rarely if schools are adhering to social distancing recommendations.**

Changes to NJDOH Guidelines: *School Closure Scenarios*

Closure

The [COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix](#) is one tool that can inform the decision-making process for school districts when considering when remote learning might be indicated. Local circumstances should be considered when making decisions impacting specific school districts and schools. Many factors would need to be considered when deciding to close schools to in-person learning, such as whether all close contacts of cases can be identified and excluded from school, and the distribution of cases within the school. **Closure is a local decision that should be made by school administrators in consultation with the local public health department. While it is not possible to account for every scenario that schools may encounter over the course of the school year, the following scenarios may help inform the decision for when schools should temporarily close.**

SCENARIO	CLOSURE
1 case in the school	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive case are excluded from school for 10 days in absence of testing, (14 days when Regional Risk Level is orange)
2 or more cases in the same classroom (outbreak limited to one cohort)	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive case are excluded from school for 10 days in absence of testing, (14 days when Regional Risk Level is orange) Recommendations for whether the entire classroom would be considered exposed will be based on public health investigation.
2 or more cases within 14 days, but are linked to an exposure outside the school setting (e.g. in same household, exposed at the same event outside of school)	School remains open*; students and staff in close contact with positive cases are excluded from school for 10 days in absence of testing, (14 days when Regional Risk Level is orange)
2 or more cases within 14 days, linked together by some activity in school, but who are in different classrooms (outbreak involving multiple cohorts)	Recommendations for whether school closure is indicated will be based on investigation by local health department.
A significant community outbreak is occurring or has recently occurred (e.g., large event or large local employer) and is impacting multiple staff, students, and families served by the school community	Consider closing school for 14 days, based on investigation by local health department.
2 or more cases are identified within 14 days that occur across multiple classrooms, are not linked to exposures outside the school setting, and a clear connection between cases cannot be easily identified but in-school transmission is suspected	Recommendations for whether school closure is indicated will be based on investigation by local health department.
Very high risk of community transmission (refer to COVID-19 Regional Risk Level Matrix)	Recommend fully remote learning until COVID-19 transmission decreases.

* A temporary closure may also be considered for a period of 2-5 days if a student or staff member attended school while potentially infectious but before being confirmed as having COVID-19. This short-term dismissal allows time for local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation impacting the school and perform contact tracing.

Changes to NJDOH Guidelines: *Students with Chronic Illness*

- ***Students with Chronic Illness***
 - For students with chronic illness, only new symptoms or symptoms worse than baseline should be used to fulfill symptom-based exclusion criteria.



NJDOH Guidelines: *Quarantine Length*

COVID-19 exclusion criteria for close contacts:

CDC released guidance with options to shorten the quarantine time period following exposure to a confirmed positive case. While CDC and NJDOH continue to endorse 14 days as the preferred quarantine period – and thus the preferred school exclusion period – it is recognized that any quarantine shorter than 14 days balances reduced burden against a small possibility of spreading the virus. Additional information is described in [NJDOH quarantine guidance](#).

In the school setting, excluded individuals who are close contacts of staff or students who tested positive for COVID-19 may be considered for a reduced exclusion period based on Regional Risk Levels:

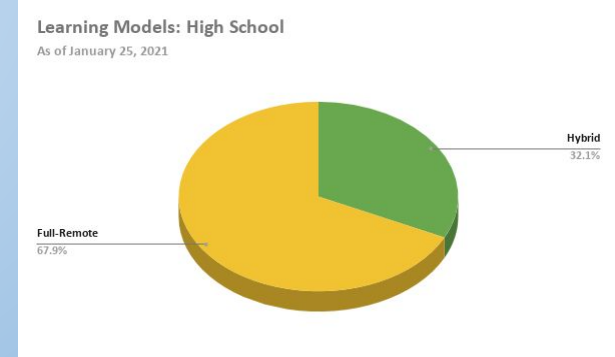
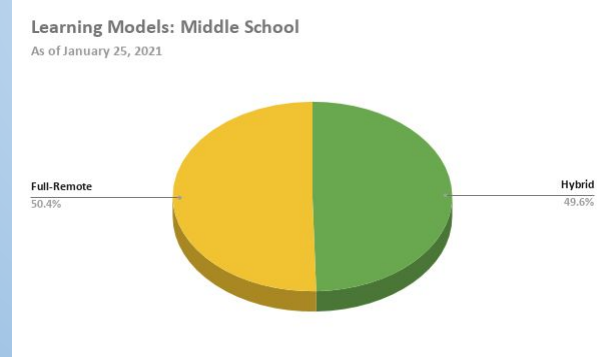
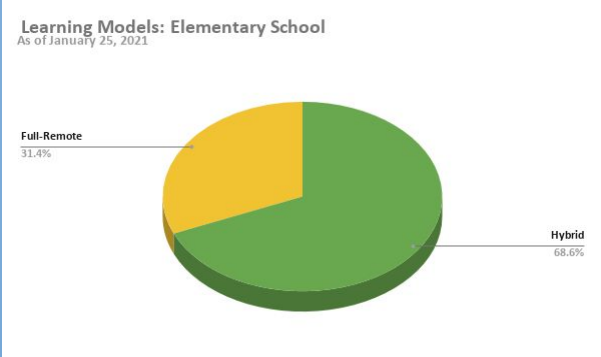
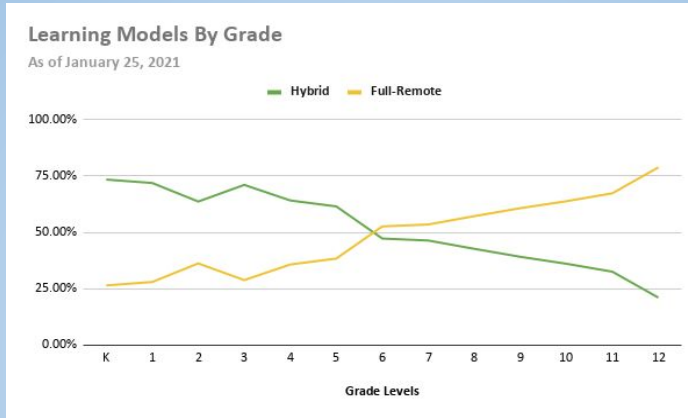
High (orange) exposed close contacts should be excluded from school for 14 days.

Moderate or Low (yellow or green) exposed close contacts should be excluded from school for 10 days (or 7 days with negative test results collected at 5-7 days).

Schools serving medically complex or other high-risk individuals should use a 14-day exclusion period for the exclusion of these individuals or those who work closely with them when identified as close contacts throughout all risk levels.



Full-Remote/Hybrid Learning Model Participation



Learning Schedules

- Applicable committees from the district's overall [Restart and Recovery Committees](#) have met and begun the process of reviewing the existing learning schedules to determine if any adjustments should be made.
- The full school community will have the opportunity to provide feedback through surveys created by the committees.
- The committees will balance community input, NJDOH guidelines, experiential knowledge, and student needs in forming their recommendations.
- The committees have a target date of February 22, 2021, for a presentation of their recommendations to the community at the Board of Education meeting.
- The applicable committees are:
 - *Health Precautions and Responses*
 - *Scheduling/Structure*
 - *Special Education and Related Services*
 - *Facilities*
 - *Transportation*