



## NEW PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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January 2, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff,

Tomorrow, January 3rd, we will open our schools to full-days of in-person learning to begin the New Year. The Board of Education, administration, and I appreciate the continuum of sentiments from the community, and I want to thank those that have reached out and shared their thoughts with us over the past few weeks. Your thoughts and ideas help guide our decision-making as we determine our next steps as a school community. The administration and nursing staff met today to continue our dialogue regarding the opening of schools. These are our sentiments.

1. Our schools are a structured, safe place for our students, and we have been successful as a community over the past three school years in managing COVID-19, despite the evolving variants.
2. We have learned a great deal about the ramifications of students staying home in a virtual environment. It significantly impacts their academic, physical, social, and emotional growth. Additionally, their academic stamina is greatly impacted. These elements have been observed time and time again, and we must weigh this impact on our entire student body. Our staff has worked incredibly hard to address these issues and we are seeing progress, due to your children's perseverance and our staff's dedication, patience, and talent.
3. Neither the Department of Health nor the Department of Education have asked us to close or go to a remote environment. I can't speak to the disparity from one district to another district across the State. In the absence of a specific directive from a State entity, we will see districts handling matters differently based on their own individual needs and circumstances. Please remember, we have and will continue to focus on what is occurring in New Providence and make decisions in the best interest of our students and staff based on our experiences.
4. The administration has consistently addressed any and all COVID-19 related matters in a swift and meaningful manner to ensure everyone's safety. There was a great deal of controversy at the onset of the school year with the Delta variant. We have been delicately balancing and grappling with a myriad of concerns, and we are grateful for the success and transformation we have witnessed thus far. Our entire staff successfully worked through each hurdle that we were met with, to ultimately return our schools to their most effective environment for our students.
5. As a community, we have all taken care of one another for the past three years as we have managed through these challenging times. We have addressed individual circumstances in the best interest of our students and teachers as they have been presented. We have created a framework that allows for our students and staff to be successful from home when staying home is required via our protocol.
6. Our teachers have been steadfast on the frontlines every day and have covered for one another during expected and unexpected absences. The students, staff, administration, and nurses have been incredibly responsible in managing quarantine and isolation.
7. Our nurses and administrators have worked throughout the day, evenings, and weekends, contact tracing, scheduling, and rescheduling their schools to ensure everyone's safety.

Here are some important reminders and information:

1. As we are concluding the holiday break, this week, if your child is pending a PCR test result and is **symptomatic**, please have your child stay home pending a negative PCR result and contact your child's school nurse. This applies to those who are fully vaccinated and unvaccinated. Your child will have access to Zoom as they await their negative PCR test result.
2. As we are concluding the holiday break, this week, if your child is pending a PCR test result and **you have members of your immediate household who have tested positive**, please have your child stay home pending a negative PCR result and contact your child's school nurse. This applies to those who are fully vaccinated and unvaccinated. Your child will have access to Zoom as they await their negative PCR test result.
3. As we are concluding the holiday break, this week, if your child is pending a PCR test result as a precautionary measure and is **asymptomatic**, you may send your child to school. Please contact your school principal with any specific individual concerns.
4. In the event you have questions, as you await results from the district voluntary testing, please contact ACCU REFERENCE automated number at (908) 474-1004 to access your patient portal.
5. Please make sure that you are wearing a well-fitted mask while in the school building.
6. If you are not comfortable with your child having lunch in school, as we indicated in the beginning of the year, please contact your building principal to schedule pick up of your child for lunch. Please return your child in a timely fashion for the remainder of the school day.
7. If your child is home as a result of isolation or quarantine, you will be provided with Zoom access to your classes.
8. If your child is out for reasons other than COVID-19 related matters, they will have access to Google classroom for their assignments.
9. If your child and/or any member of your immediate household is immunocompromised, and we are not already aware of this situation, please contact your building principal to discuss this matter.
10. It is important as a school community that we remain vigilant after school with respect to choices of activities and play for your children. Recognize that your actions can have ramifications for others.
11. We are awaiting an update from the Department of Health on school specific guidance on the new CDC regulations regarding isolation and quarantine. We will share this information with the school community accordingly.
12. Please note, in the event we are unable to properly staff a classroom or a school building, remote access may be deemed necessary. Communication regarding these matters may need to be made promptly and will be communicated directly from the building principal and district.

Please reference the [student/staff Covid-19 chart](#) located on the district website for more information regarding absences.

Our reality is that we are continuing to deal with COVID-19. What is fortunate is that we, as a community, have and will continue to work together in the best interest of our students and staff to successfully provide a safe, meaningful educational environment. We have learned a great deal over the past three years in how to manage our schools through a pandemic. We need to take what we have learned and harness our successes to continue to persevere. I ask that as we open tomorrow, we take our responsibilities very seriously. I know that if we each do our part, our students and staff will have a successful experience.

Thank you for all of your support, and I wish each of you a successful and Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David M. Miceli, Ed.D." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

David M. Miceli, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools