

# HIGHLAND SCHOOL PHASE II PLAN

**February 26, 2021**

- **GOAL:** Establish a safe and routine program that allows for daily instruction with little to no loss of instructional time in core subjects, while ensuring that all instruction consists of direct teacher instruction for all subjects, including Specials.
  - **IMPLEMENTATION DATE:** **March 8<sup>th</sup>**
  - **FINAL OPT-OUT DATE:** by **March 1st** (see below) [District Opt-Out-Form Phase II](#)
    - **Important:** Those students who are currently in the pure virtual program will stay in the pure virtual program unless an email request is sent to the Principal by March 1<sup>st</sup> so arrangements can be made for return, otherwise the next opt-in date is April 5th.
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## **The School Day:**

- Students in grades 3-6 will attend school Monday through Friday for a half-day in-person schedule. After dismissal, students will return home and eat lunch, but then log back on 7th period (1:30pm) for live virtual instruction by a core teacher (this is not optional and virtual attendance will be taken). 6<sup>th</sup> grade will rotate the core schedule so students will not have the same class virtual all the time.
  - **Rationale:** This schedule allows us to maintain a 43 minute period schedule, which is important as subjects become departmentalized in the upper elementary grades. A 43 minute period reduces potential learning loss in core subjects and provides ample time for instruction. The only way to accomplish this was to make 7<sup>th</sup> period virtual.

## **Specials:**

- Students will no longer have every special every week. Students will have 2 to 3 specials courses a week depending on the grade level, which will be rotated weekly. Specials will be both in person and virtual (with a teacher). All students will have at least one in-person Special every day for a week while in the building. Students will actually move to their Specials class. (Example; All 3rd grade students will have Music in person every day for a week. The following week, every 3rd grade student will have in person art, and so on.)
- The full virtual Specials classes (not asynchronous) will be in the afternoons. Attendance at the full virtual Special is mandatory. This too will rotate weekly.
  - **Rationale:** Implementing a condensed Specials in-person program, not only breaks up the 5 period day for the students, but allows for a more well-rounded educational experience, while alleviating the need for our youngest learners to manage all the Specials classes asynchronously. Furthermore, limited weekly specials allows for consistency, but also less moving around, which promotes safety. Students will still get all their Specials, but just over a 3-4 week rotating cycle.

## **Sample Schedules:**

- Click below for a sample schedule for each grade level: (Please keep in mind that your child's schedule may be different.)
  - [Grade 3 Sample Schedule](#)
  - [Grade 4 Sample Schedule](#)
  - [Grade 5 Sample Schedule](#)
  - [Grade 6 Sample Schedule](#)

**Safety:** (see Phase II Procedures and Safety PowerPoint below for more detailed information)

- Students will continue to wear masks the entire time while indoors. Please ensure that masks are proper fitting and are approved (no gators, breath outlets, etc.).
- Desks will be separated to the maximum extent possible.
- Desk Shields have been purchased for every single student desk, including lab tables.
- Staggered start and dismissal times, with separate entrances and exits for each grade level, including temperature checks, are still in effect. Students will use the same drop off and entrance times that were established in September.
- Students will still travel in homeroom cohorts to reduce mixing of students. The only exception are the 6<sup>th</sup> grade electives, which are the last period of the day (5<sup>th</sup> period). 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will be dismissed from their electives so there is only one change of cohort. These class sizes are much smaller than a normal class size.

### **Drop off and Dismissal:**

To prevent social gathering prior to and after school, please adhere to the drop off and pick up times to the best of your ability. While picking up/dropping off children, masks must be worn by parents while on school property. There will be no supervision prior to 8:20am.

- Drop-off times are alphabetical by last name (*Homeroom begins at 8:35am. Students who are in homeroom after 8:35am will be marked tardy. Students who are dropped off after 8:35am should report to the main office via the front door.*)
  - A-L- Drop off is at 8:20am
  - M-Z- Drop off times is BY 8:30am
- Dismissal Times:
  1. A-L- Dismissal at 12:25pm
  2. M-Z- Dismissal at 12:30pm

**POWERPOINT: For pictures and more detailed information about safety and procedural information, see the revised Power Point by clicking on the link: [PHASE II Procedures and Safety PowerPoint](#)**

### **Other Important Information:**

#### **Student Absences (*IMPORTANT*):**

- Since we are returning to every student every day for in person instruction, switching back and forth to and from virtual instruction for a day or two will not be allowed. It makes it difficult on attendance tracking and teacher instruction.
- Virtual instruction can only be done for two reasons:
  1. *Parent opts the student out of school by filling out the district opt-out form. The next time a student may return to in person learning is April 5<sup>th</sup>.*
  2. *A student is being quarantined for a close contact exposure, testing positive, or because of COVID symptoms. In this case, the nurse will define a return date.*
    - *For questions regarding potential Covid symptoms and possible quarantining, please contact the school nurse at [akulesha@mpsnj.org](mailto:akulesha@mpsnj.org).*
- **Students who do not meet the criteria above for virtual learning must be called out sick by the parent in the morning. If a student who should be in-person learning logs on for virtual instruction instead, the teacher will politely ask the student to leave the meet because they are absent.**

#### **Snack:**

- Students will not be getting a designated snack time at this time. We are avoiding eating in-doors with masks off. As the weather becomes nicer administration will revisit.

### Opting out:

- If a student is going to opt for the Highland pure Virtual Program, a District Opt-Out Form ([District Opt-Out-Form PHASE II](#)) must be filled out and sent to myself at [pgalasso@mpsny.org](mailto:pgalasso@mpsny.org) no later than **Monday March 1<sup>st</sup>**. After March 1<sup>st</sup>, schedules will be solidified and any changes could have a domino effect on other student programs. Please help us out and inform the school no later than March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Those students who are currently PURE VIRTUAL only and who would like to return to in person instruction for Phase II must email the Principal by Monday March 1<sup>st</sup> to opt back in. Otherwise, it is assumed your child is continuing with the Pure Virtual Program.

### Program for Pure Virtual Students:

- Students remaining pure virtual will still have access to the same curriculum as our in-person learners as teachers continue to work hard streaming in class content live. However, it is even more necessary that the pure virtual students show up on time, complete work by assigned dates, and practice good Meet Etiquette as defined in Phase II *Procedures and Safety PowerPoint* (link above).

### Before-care and After-care:

- There are before and aftercare services available through Midland Park Continuing Education. Morning care starts at 7am and aftercare begins right after school. Both programs take place at the Godwin School. To take part in the program please contact Mrs. Kasbarian at [bkasbarian@mpsny.org](mailto:bkasbarian@mpsny.org).

### Transitioning Specials:

- Since we are transitioning from asynchronous Specials to live Specials and students will no longer have every special every week we have to wrap up the asynchronous Specials Program. For this reason, **the last day to hand in assignments for the asynchronous specials classes will be March 5<sup>th</sup>**. All assignments that have not been handed in at that time will be marked accordingly. We are making a clean break from the asynchronous model.

### Working together:

- The district is moving to Phase II because based on the latest data and guidance we feel that in the classroom, with masks, desk shields, the school ventilation system, and distancing to the greatest extent possible, that we can provide a safe environment for everyone. However, it is very important that we work together to keep the COVID 19 virus out of the building. The district and the teachers are working hard to bring everyone back, but there are inherent risks. Please realize, that the decisions your family makes regarding events outside of school may affect others inside school. We will still be following quarantining protocol based on exposures in school. Please realize the only way we can navigate the pandemic safely and with as little disruption as possible to our students' academic program, is if we work together.

Should you have any questions or concerns please let me know.

Sincerely,



Peter Galasso, Principal

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