

Message to RPS Families - 7/2/2020

Return to Learn Protocol & Parent Survey

Dear Ralston Public Schools Families,

Let me begin by saying thank you! You are our most important partners. This past year, that was truer than ever. You became your child's teacher, coach, and constant presence in an uncertain world. Thank you for the effort you made to support our educators and your child's learning from home.



I am proud of how our Ram Family has responded to the COVID-19 virus. As a District, we were able to protect everyone while continuing to educate and feed our students. Our new normal will be very different than in previous years. As we all adjust, I know we will continue to respond to this health crisis with flexibility, creativity, patience, partnership, care, compassion, grit, and gratitude.

While we are in the business of educating, our priority is the safety of our students and our employees. The **purpose of this message** is to **share our plan for the opening of the 2020-2021 school year** and ask you to **fill out a parent survey** concerning the upcoming school year.

The outline of our plan starts below and a [link to the parent survey](#) is located at the end of this message.

RPS Return to Learn Protocol for the 2020/2021 School Year

Our Return to Learn Protocol is a plan designed to provide options and clear guidelines to open our schools while keeping the health and safety of our students, staff, and community as a priority. As we continue to take direction from local and state health officials, this plan allows for flexibility during the school year in response to the current health status of our community. **The Return to Learn Protocol will go before our Board of Education for approval on Monday, July 13th.**

As we look to the start of the school year, we intend to open our buildings to all students as planned on Tuesday, August 11th.

We hope this message provides you with an outline of the health and safety measures that will be required within our schools to keep them open, safe, and healthy.

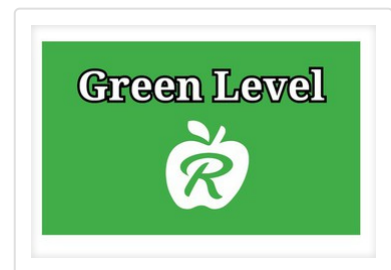
Our Return to Learn Protocol provides details on:

- **Our Three-Level Plan for Instruction**
- **Enhanced Safety Precautions at Each Level**
- **Mask Recommendation**
- **Enhanced Cleaning Procedures**

Instructional Levels Based on Intensity of COVID-19 Cases in our Community

Green Level (Enhanced Traditional Plan)

This is where there is a low spread of COVID-19 cases in our community. Our school days would look normal, following established bell schedules, with the addition of enhanced safety precautions to keep our students and staff safe and healthy. Transportation, lunch, and after-school programming will continue but will look different with specific safety guidelines. The District will provide those guidelines as we get closer to the school year. **We anticipate starting the school year in the Green Level, pending any new guidance from local and state health officials.**

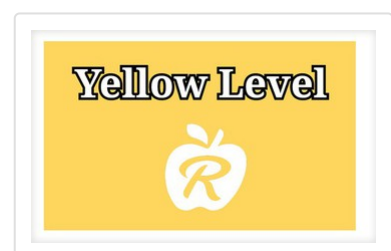


Green Level Enhanced Health & Safety Precautions:

- Increased availability of hand sanitizer
- Increased frequency of handwashing
- Increased frequency of cleaning high touch areas
- Limited visitation to school buildings to those with critical school business to complete
- Social distancing in classrooms, hallways, and other areas of the school when possible
- Parents as partners helping to assess daily symptom checks with their student(s)
- Staff performing symptom checks daily
- Limiting large group gatherings when possible

Yellow Level (De-Densify Population Plan)

This is when there is a moderate spread of COVID-19 in our community. While at this level, our student population will be divided into two groups (A and B) and will attend school on a modified "A" schedule or a modified "B" schedule. The modified schedule will include a



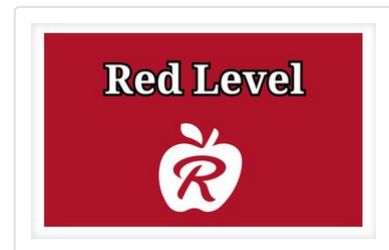
shortened school day to allow for extra planning time for educators and extra time to deep clean our schools.

Our District is exploring ways to ensure students within the same family or residence attend school on the same day. The A and B days will alternate. Students could receive face to face instruction three times one week and two times the following week. On the days when students are not in school, they will participate in “on your own” or “independent learning” at home. This model allows for students to still receive face-to-face instruction while significantly reducing the number of students in classrooms and allowing for more social distancing.

Yellow Level Enhanced Health & Safety Precautions (In addition to the ones listed in Green Level):

- Random temperature checks
- No visitors in school buildings
- Lunch/breakfast in classrooms or limited group size in cafeterias
- Staggered arrival and dismissal
- Staggered hallway movement
- No out of state travel
- Limited in-state travel & field trips
- Limited assemblies/pep rallies

Red Level (Remote Learning from Home Plan)



This is when there is a substantial spread of COVID-19 in our community. If we are required to move to this level, all students in grades K-12 will be issued a technology device, and RPS will execute our Remote Learning Plan. Students will engage with their teacher online on a daily basis. Educators will deliver all instruction virtually through Zoom or Google Classroom. Virtual instruction will include real-time instruction with a teacher and “on your own” or “independent learning” from home. The District will also establish a modified schedule for the school day. While in the Red Level, students will not be allowed on campus. District buildings will have limited access.

***** It is important to note, we anticipate moving from one level to another throughout the year. When transitioning, the District will need at least two days for educators and staff to prepare for entry into the new instructional level. The District has posted a potential 2020-2021 adjusted school calendar on the District website to accommodate for these potential transition periods. This will also go before the Board for approval on Monday, July 13th. RPS will also communicate a timeline to families at the beginning and end of each transition period during the school year. *****

Masks

According to the CDC, local and state health officials and pediatricians from our community, COVID-19 can be spread by people who do not have symptoms and do not know they are infected. That's why everyone needs to practice social distancing (staying at least 6 feet away from other people) and wear cloth face coverings in public settings. Cloth face coverings provide an extra layer to help prevent the respiratory droplets from traveling in the air and onto other people. It will be the recommendation to our Board of Education that our District continues to follow the guidance of our health experts, doctors, and scientists.



All students, staff, and visitors will be required to wear masks on any campus while school is in session.

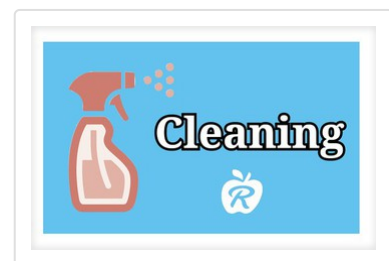
Additional Mask Guidelines:

- Periodic mask breaks will be conducted (using proper social distancing)
- Masks will need to cover the mouth and nose area
- All students and staff will be provided at least two masks per person
- Students and staff may use personal masks as long as they cover the mouth and nose area
- Disposable masks will be available at every campus location as needed

***** The District will work to develop a plan for families who have a student where wearing a mask poses a documented medical, behavioral, or developmental issue or concern causing impairment. *****

District Protocol for Cleaning

Ralston Public Schools will continue to follow the guidelines from the CDC and local health professionals. During the school day, students will view a heightened level of cleaning, from both our custodial staff and other staff members.



- RPS custodians and staff will clean all high touch surfaces regularly throughout the school day. Those areas include doorknobs, restrooms, light switches, classroom sink handles, keyboards, and countertops regularly throughout the school day
- Community toys, shared materials, and school supplies will be limited. Sanitation of those items will take place before and after use
- All cleaning materials in the classroom will be kept out of the reach of students
- Students and staff will wash their hands before handling any food and after helping students eat breakfast or lunch
- Students will wash or sanitize their hands every two hours

In Conclusion...

Our team has put a lot of planning, thought, research, and care into creating our **Return to Learn Protocol**. We hope this message gives you an idea of how we plan to keep our school

environments as safe as possible for our students and staff.

We continue to firm up our plans for our medically compromised students. We are also currently working with the Douglas County Health Department on how best to handle if a student(s) or staff member tests positive for this virus. RPS will provide you up-to-date information through a variety of communication channels as additional plans become finalized.

Ram Family, please understand there is no way for us to satisfy all as we make these decisions. Our priority is to keep everyone safe while not making life more difficult for our parents. Each family situation is uniquely different. We fully understand your varied concerns about health and safety, distance learning, the importance of face-to-face instruction, parents needing to work, the economy, and all of the other unexpected implications of being in school or not being in school.

Thank you for your continued support as we strive to do what is best for all of our students and employees during these challenging times.

Dr. Mark Adler
Superintendent
Ralston Public Schools

**** PLEASE CLICK - LINK TO ENGLISH VERSION OF PARENT SURVEY ****

**** PLEASE CLICK - LINK TO SPANISH VERSION OF PARENT SURVEY ****

