

# School Opening Plan

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Board of Education Meeting  
August 25, 2021



# Introduction

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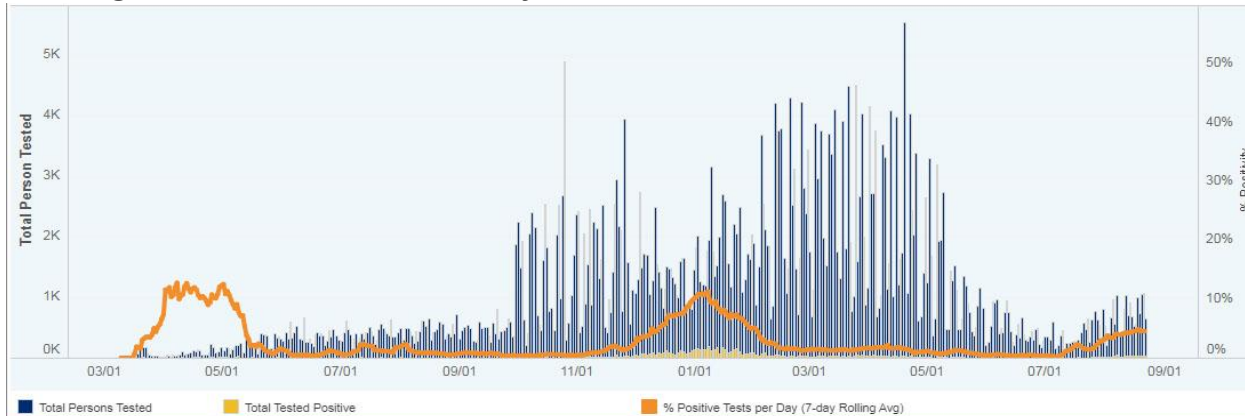
- All K-12 students will return to full time in-person learning for the 2021-22 school year.
- School Opening Plan created based on guidelines and recommendations provided by the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics and the NYS Education Department in consultation with Questar III BOCES and regional school districts.





# Status of COVID-19

- Rensselaer County has a 4.5% infection rate (7-day average) as of August 21.
- Classified as a “high” transmission zone.
- 68.9% of county population 18+ is fully vaccinated (67.4% of 12+ is fully vaccinated), according to Rensselaer County Health Department



Test Results - Yesterday		Total Persons Tested	Total Tested Positive	% Positive, Yesterday	% Positive, 7-day Avg
Capital Region	Rensselaer	613	28	4.6%	4.5%

Source: NYS Department of Health



# Multi-Layered Mitigation Strategies

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- Multi-layered mitigation strategies are intended to maintain a healthy and safe learning environment.
  - Temperature checks
  - Universal masking
  - Social distancing
  - Regular cleaning and disinfecting
  - Respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene
  - Parents/guardians and staff screen for symptoms each day
  - Students and staff staying home when sick
  - Surveillance testing

# Face Masks

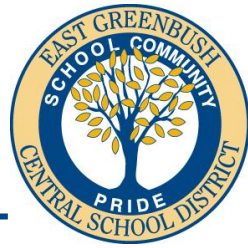
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- Face masks (cloth mask or surgical mask that cover both the mouth and nose) will be required for all students, staff and visitors inside schools and on school buses regardless of vaccination status. Bandanas and neck gaiters will not be permitted.
- Students will be provided mask breaks when seated in class and socially distanced.
- Masks will be optional when outdoors on school property.

# Social Distancing

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- Schools will maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms.
- All schools within the district are able to comply with this guidance and fully accommodate all students for instruction.



# Ventilation

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- Schools have implemented improved ventilation procedures to allow more fresh air into buildings including:
  - Purge cycle program in all schools
  - Running exhaust fans 24/7
  - Repairing and replacing exhaust fans
  - Upgrading air filters



# Cleaning and Disinfecting

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- Continued regular cleaning and disinfecting of school buildings, buses and high-touch areas.
- In accordance with CDC recommendations, in general, cleaning once a day is sufficient to remove potential viruses that may be on surfaces. Classroom desks will not need to be disinfected after each period at Columbia High School and Goff Middle School.
- Surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected daily by custodial staff. High touch surfaces will be given additional cleaning and disinfecting.



# Transportation

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- All students and staff must wear face masks while riding on a school bus regardless of vaccination status.
- Windows and roof hatches will be open to increase ventilation on the bus.
- Cleaning and disinfecting will continue following each bus run daily.



# Cafeteria

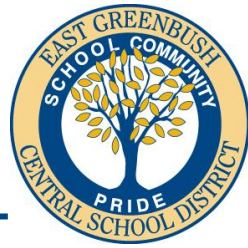
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- Seating arrangements for students are being made to ensure as much physical distancing as possible within space constraints.
- Layered mitigation protocols will include:
  - Hand washing or hand sanitizer before and after meals
  - Limiting mask removal to the duration of eating
  - Cleaning and disinfection between lunch periods
  - Providing increased ventilation of seating areas

# Athletics

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- Interscholastic sports will be offered to students this Fall.
- Mandatory Surveillance Testing
  - “Higher-risk” sports (Football, Volleyball, Cheer) will have weekly mandatory testing for all students regardless of vaccination status.
- Voluntary Surveillance Testing
  - Testing is also available on a voluntary basis to all students participating in moderate to low risk sports.
- Parent/Guardian consent for testing of students is required in all cases.
- No spectator limits at this time.
- Contact tracing information required through the use of a new QR code and app.
- Indoor sports will have a face mask requirement.

# Music

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- General Music, Chorus and Orchestra must wear masks and maintain 3 feet social distancing during instruction.
- Wind and brass instrumental instruction will maintain 3 feet social distancing and make use of bell covers for instruments.
- Outdoor instruction will be considered as weather permits.



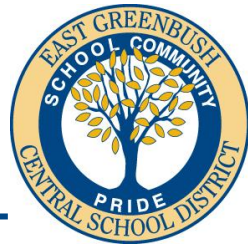
# Physical Education

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- When indoors, students should maintain 6 feet social distancing during physical education instruction.
- Physical Education teachers will prioritize outdoor activities as weather permits.





# School Procedures - Columbia

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- Arrival
  - All students are encouraged to ride the bus to and from school.
  - Parent drop-offs will begin at 7:10 in the bus loop located outside the main entrance.
  - Student drivers should arrive between 7:00-7:10 and park in their designated parking spot.
- Entry
  - All students will use the Main Entrance and will be screened for temperatures.
  - **Masks are required to be worn at all times inside the building.** We ask that all students wear a mask while in line to enter the building and maintain a social distance of three (3) feet while waiting.
- Classroom Procedures
  - Desks will be separated by 3 feet and students are required to wear a mask in all classes.
  - Students will be provided mask breaks when seated in class and socially distanced.
  - Mask breaks will be 3-5 minutes in duration at teacher discretion and only during times when students are working silently at their desks.
- Lockers
  - Lockers will not be used during the school day and students will be allowed to carry backpacks.



# School Procedures - Columbia

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- Hallways
  - Staggered student release from classes will be used to reduce congestion in the hallways.
  - Students should keep right in hallways and stairs to avoid congestion.
  - Administrators and monitors will assist students with transitions and prevent congregating in the halls.
- Physical Education
  - Students will be required to wear masks and maintain 6 feet of social distance when inside for class.
  - Students outside can remove their masks but will still maintain social distancing.
  - Students will not be required to change for gym classes.
- Cafeteria
  - Students will be required to wear their masks until they are in their designated seat.
  - The students will be socially distanced 3 feet during lunch and will be required to put their mask back on once they have finished eating.
  - Hand washing or hand sanitizing before and after meals will be encouraged for all students.
  - Cafeteria will be cleaned and disinfected between lunch periods.



# School Procedures - Goff

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- Arrival
  - All students are encouraged to ride the bus to and from school.
  - Parent drop-offs will begin at 7:30 in the drop off lane outside the main entrance.
- Entry
  - Students will enter the building at different entrances and have their temperature checked.
    - 6th graders - Main Entrance in front of the building
    - 7th graders - Green House side entrance
    - 8th graders - Cafeteria entrance
  - **Masks are required to be worn at all times inside the building.** We ask that all students wear a mask while in line to enter the building and maintain a social distance of three (3) feet while waiting.
- Classroom Procedures
  - Desks will be separated by 3 feet and students are required to wear a mask in all classes.
  - Students will be provided mask breaks when seated in class and socially distanced.
  - Mask breaks will be 3-5 minutes in duration at teacher discretion and only during times when students are working silently at their desks.





# School Procedures - Goff

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- Hallways
  - Administrators and monitors will assist students with transitions and prevent congregating in the halls.
- Lockers
  - Lockers will not be used during the school day and students will be allowed to carry backpacks.
- Physical Education
  - Students will be required to wear masks and maintain 6 feet of social distance when inside for class.
  - Students outside can remove their masks but will still maintain social distancing.
  - Students will not be using locker rooms and not required to change for gym classes.
- Cafeteria
  - Students will be required to wear their masks until they are in their designated seat.
  - The students will be socially distanced 3 feet during lunch and will be required to put their mask back on once they have finished eating.
  - Hand washing or hand sanitizing before and after meals will be encouraged for all students.
  - Cafeteria will be cleaned and disinfected between lunch periods.



# School Procedures - Elementary

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- Arrival
  - All students are encouraged to ride the bus to and from school.
  - Parent drop off information will be provided in a letter from each respective principal.
- Entry
  - Students will have their temperature checked upon entering school.
  - **Masks are required to be worn at all times inside the building.**
- Classroom Procedures
  - Desks will be separated by 3 feet and students are required to wear a mask in all classes.
  - Students may remove masks for meals and snack/mask breaks when socially distanced.
  - Students will be provided with a minimum of 3 mask breaks per day for no longer than 10 minutes in duration. Mask breaks will alternate between rows within the classroom where appropriate.
  - Markers of a minimum of 3 feet or more will be implemented in common areas and places where lines may form (library, cafeteria, gymnasium, classroom desks, etc.)



# School Procedures - Elementary

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- Physical Education
  - Students will be required to wear masks and maintain 6 feet of social distance when inside for class.
  - Students outside can remove their masks but will still maintain social distancing.
- Cafeteria
  - Students will be required to wear masks until they are in their designated seat.
  - The students will be socially distanced 3 feet during lunch and will be required to put their mask back on once they have finished eating.
  - Hand washing or hand sanitizing before and after meals will be encouraged for all students.
  - Cafeteria will be cleaned and disinfected between lunch periods.



# Contact Tracing

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- The district will conduct contact tracing and quarantine protocols in accordance with Rensselaer County Health Department guidelines.
  - **CDC Quarantine Exception:** In the K–12 indoor classroom setting, the close contact definition excludes students who were within 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a [clinically compatible illness](#)) if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) **correctly and consistently** wore well-fitting [masks](#) the entire time.
- Students subject to a quarantine order from the county health department will receive alternative instruction.
  - Grades 6-12: Live stream and asynchronous assignments via Google Suite
  - Grades K-5: Tutoring and access to asynchronous assignments via Google Suite

# Testing

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- The district is working with Questar BOCES and the Rensselaer County Health Department to implement a COVID-19 testing program for students and staff this fall once regional plans are finalized.
  - Surveillance Testing
    - A voluntary testing program that would provide data on potential community spread and help identify asymptomatic cases
  - Point of Care Testing
    - Should students/staff develop symptoms at school, they can be given a rapid test at the Health Office and have results in 15 minutes

# Full Remote Program

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- A Full Remote Program through Questar III BOCES will be offered to medically eligible students. This program will be a regional Full Remote Program for K-12 students taught by Questar instructors.
- Parents interested in this program should submit the [Form for Student Medical Needs](#) by August 27, 2021.

# School Events

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- The East Greenbush CSD is committed to restoring as many in-person school events as possible this school year, including welcome back events, open houses, apple races, etc. Some virtual options may be maintained.
- Based on feedback, parent-teacher conferences will be maintained as virtual events, though parents can request an in-person conference.
- Outside groups will be permitted to use school facilities when adhering to all policies.
- Face masks would be required for any indoor events and they would be optional for outdoor events.



# COVID-19 Vaccine

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- The COVID-19 vaccine is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the pandemic.
- All eligible individuals are encouraged to receive the vaccine as soon as possible.
- Currently, there are three vaccines available:
  - Pfizer - ages 12+
  - Moderna - ages 18+
  - Johnson & Johnson - ages 18+
- If you have any questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, please contact your family physician.

Find a COVID-19 vaccine at [www.vaccine.org](http://www.vaccine.org)





# Communication

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- Any COVID-19 updates will be shared with faculty, staff and families via email and text message.
- Opening Plans and other important information will be posted at [www.egcsd.org](http://www.egcsd.org).

*Our opening plan will be adjusted as needed based on the changing circumstances related to COVID-19 and recommendations from the CDC and NYS Education Department.*

# Keys to Success

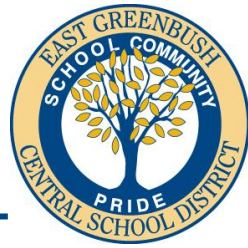
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- Student Engagement - Classroom and Extracurricular
- Attendance
- Increased academic and social emotional supports for students
- Flexibility - adjust plans in response to changes in infection rates and guidance
- Communication - seek solutions at the most appropriate level
  - Teacher → Principal → Central Admin/Superintendent → Board of Education

# Timeline

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- Wednesday, August 25 - Board of Education Meeting
- Thursday, August 26 - School Opening Staff Meetings
- Thursday, August 26 - School Opening Meeting for Parents (Elementary)
- Monday, August 30 - School Opening Meeting for Parents (Goff)
- Tuesday, August 31 - School Opening Meeting for Parents (Columbia)
- Thursday, September 9 - First Day of School (K-12)