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## Board of Education

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Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Parents/ Guardians:

I am writing to inform you that effective **Monday, May 3, 2021**, the following changes will be made to the district schedules. These changes are possible due to the recent social distance guidance change from 6 ft. to 3 ft. by the NYSDOH. Keep in mind that safety is our number one focus. We will continue to do everything possible to provide a safe and secure environment for your children.

**Remote learners:** Those children who are fully remote may continue in this model for the remainder of the 20-21 school year. Parents of hybrid students who do not want their children to come into school 5 days per week may choose to go fully remote.

**Hybrid Learners:**

- **UNION EAST:**
  - Hybrid Students in UPK through grade 2 (already coming into school 4 days per week) will add Wednesdays. There will not be a schedule/teacher change for these students. They are already scheduled at the 6ft distance guidance in their classrooms.
  - Hybrid Students in grades 3 and 4 will come to school in person five days per week and where practicable we will maintain the 6 ft. distance guidance.
- **MIDDLE SCHOOL:**
  - Hybrid Students in grades 5 - 6 will come to school in person five days per week and where practicable we will maintain the 6 ft. distance guidance.
  - Hybrid students in grades 7 - 8 will increase their in person time by coming in every other Wednesday. For example, during the week of May 3, 2021, Cohort A will attend on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. During the week of May 10, 2021, Cohort B will come in person on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. That pattern will continue until the end of the school year.
- **HIGH SCHOOL:**
  - Grades 9-12 will maintain their hybrid schedule, however, instruction will now be fully synchronous. We cannot cohort the students adequately enough to meet the NYSDOH guidelines required for a full in person return. Also, Wednesdays are used extensively in the high school for remediation for students struggling with course content. Thus the current hybrid model for grades 9-12 will stay in place for the remainder of the school year.

- All students attending in-person on Wednesdays will be dismissed one hour early as we have typically did in past in past school years (*we dismissed one hour early on Thursdays*) to provide time for teacher professional development.

**Transportation:** We will remain on the current school time schedules. Two students will sit in each seat. We prefer that family members sit together. We will open the bus windows slightly for increased ventilation. The capacity of the buses with two in each seat is 44 students. We will continue to work on the logistics of parent transport, which has helped us keep the bus capacity to a lower number.

**School Breakfast and Lunch:** The 6 ft. social distance guidance remains in effect. Students in grade UPK through 8th grade will continue eating in their classrooms. We will add additional rooms to maintain the 6 ft. social distance guidance when necessary. High school students will continue eating in the cafeteria at desks with 6ft. distance.

**Health and Safety:** Parents must continue to follow the district's reopening plan guidance, this includes:

- Monitoring their child's health at home; asking and answering the four questions as well as temperature checks. Promote hand washing and mask wearing; and working with our school nurse.
- Teachers and staff will monitor adherence to mask wearing and social distance requirements.
- Students will be expected to wear masks at all times, to be taken off during meals and when given a mask break. Teachers will be encouraged to bring their students outside whenever possible.

All families need to be prepared with alternate supervision plans for younger children should quarantine need to be implemented in your child's classroom or if the ECDOH / NYSDOH issues new guidance based on the spread of COVID 19 that is applicable to everyone.

I recognize that another change this late in the game can appear challenging or frivolous. You may be asking, why now? Let me assure you that having our students attend in person as much as possible has always been our goal. Ultimately it is good for kids. As a district we feel that we need to take advantage of every opportunity we are given to increase instruction. Also, it does not seem like the spread of COVID 19 is going away anytime soon. This move helps the district prepare for a more robust yet safe in-person summer program as well as a full return to school in the fall. We need to all work together for the benefit of our children in every aspect of their lives.

Sincerely,

Mary A Morris  
Superintendent