

**Township of Union School District
Safe Return to School
2021-2022
Frequently Asked Questions**

Created August 6, 2021
Revised September 8, 2021

Table of Contents

Facilities

Question: What does it mean by the statement, “ a room is well ventilated”?

Question: I understand that a report about the district’s ventilation systems was created in the spring. What are the results of this report?

Question: Will teachers be able to keep all of their furniture, including rugs in the classrooms?

Question: My daughter will be attending Union Township Pre-K 3 at the five points YMCA. Please provide information about the ventilation system for the Pre-K classrooms at five points.

Health and Safety

Question: Will there be an isolation area for anyone who appears ill during the school day?

Question: Will there be an exception to the requirement to wear masks for students who have health impairments and/or IEP needs?

Question: When will students take mask breaks?

Question: What will be the process of handling students with COVID-like symptoms of sore throat, nasal congestion, and headaches for example? Will it matter if they are vaccinated or unvaccinated?

Question: When a student presents with symptoms at school, will the school be equipped with rapid tests or will these students be required to get tested elsewhere prior to returning to school?

Question: Will students and personnel have to complete a health screening form like they did last year?

Question: Will there be a nurse specifically located at the five points branch for the Union Township Pre-K-3 students?

Question: What is the percentage of returning staff that is vaccinated so we know our kids are protected in the classroom?

Question: Will dividers be used on desks?

Daily Operations

Question: Will we have lunch in the lunchroom or in the classrooms?

Question: How will lunch be handled in terms of safety when the masks are off and the children are all eating in the same area?

Question: Will the students have the traditional lunch or will lunch be a “boxed” lunch?

Question: Will students be required to change for physical education classes?

Question: Will the elementary students at the schools with lockers be able to use them?

Learning

Question: Will teachers have the option to teach virtually?

Question: Will students have a virtual option? If so, will it be a separate virtual school or will teachers be teaching virtual and in-person students at the same time?

Question: Will our special area classes push into the classrooms?

Question: If a child has to be quarantined for 10 days. Will Virtual Learning be available during that time?

Question: Is there a way that my daughter can be opted out of going in school?

Question: My question is what happens if parents refuse to send their children back? What are the other options that parents have?

Question: Will you have A & B days schools?

Question: Will there be before and aftercare?

Miscellaneous

Question: Will we have the YMCA before and after school programs?

Question: Will we have a traditional Open House with parents and families in the building or will it be virtual?

Question: Will we have a traditional Kindergarten and Pre-K orientation with parents invited in the schools?

Question: Can PTA's have other parents/guardians help with events?

Question: Where will children hang winter coats, hats, scarves, etc? Will they carry these or wear them all day?

Question: I also heard there is no busing for Vauxhall Residents over the bridge is that right? If true, why is that?

Question: Will students be allowed to use mask lanyards (similar to eyeglasses lanyard) to hold their masks during the day when they are on mask breaks or on times when they are not required to have them on?

Facilities

Question: What does it mean by the statement, “ a room is well ventilated”?

Answer: Building spaces (i.e., classrooms, hallways, gymnasias, etc.) that adhere to the CDC-recommended ventilation specifications are considered well ventilated. Information about this recommendation can be found by clicking the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/ventilation.html>

Question: I understand that a report about the district’s ventilation systems was created in the spring. What are the results of this report?

Answer: The engineering firm EI Associations created a report titled Ventilation Assessment Township of Union Public Schools in January 2021. The results of the report can be read by clicking the following link:

<http://www.twpunionschools.org/documents/Ventilation-Report-2021-2022.pdf>

Question: Will teachers be able to keep all of their furniture, including rugs in the classrooms?

Answer: At this time the district stresses the need to prioritize social distancing as the main focus in a classroom setup. We ask that extra furniture in the classroom be removed to be consolidated within the classroom. Additionally, teachers are asked not to have rugs in the classroom.

Question: My daughter will be attending Union Township Pre-K-3 at the Five Points YMCA. Please provide information about the ventilation system for the Pre-K classrooms at Five Points.

Answer: The district will reach out to YMCA for more specific information regarding ventilation. We will update this information when information becomes available.

Health and Safety

Question: Will there be an isolation area for anyone who appears ill during the school day?

Answer: Every school will have an isolation area for anyone who is presenting with symptoms associated with COVID-19.

Question: Will there be an exception to the requirement to wear masks for students who have health impairments and/or IEP needs?

Answer: When a student’s documented medical condition or disability, as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Educational Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, precludes the use of a face covering.

Question: When will students take mask breaks?

Answer: Students will take mask breaks when they are outside or conditions can be met in which physical distancing is available. Elementary students will not wear masks during snack time. All K-12 students will not be required to wear a mask while eating during their lunch periods. Pre-K students will not wear a mask during nap time.

Question: What will be the process of handling students with COVID-like symptoms of sore throat, nasal congestion, and headaches for example? Will it matter if they are vaccinated or unvaccinated?

Answer: Anyone who expresses symptoms associated with COVID-19, regardless of his/her/their vaccination status, will be guided to the school's isolation area and will be required to leave the building. Any individual who expresses such symptoms, whether in school or at home will not be allowed to return to the building until a COVID-19 PCR test is taken (anyone who tests positive will be required to quarantine for 14 calendar days, per CDC guidelines).

Question: When a student presents with symptoms at school, will the school be equipped with rapid tests or will these students be required to get tested elsewhere prior to returning to school?

Answer: The school district will not be administering tests. Only a PCR test result will be considered acceptable as an assessment of an individual's health status. Individuals who are vaccinated (valid proof must be presented) will not be required to be tested and/or quarantined unless they become symptomatic. In the case, a vaccinated person becomes symptomatic, they must quarantine until the results of a PCR test can be provided or the end of a 14-day quarantine has been accomplished, whichever can be accomplished first.

Question: Will students and personnel have to complete a health screening form like they did last year?

Answer: There will be a one time form that is located in the Genesis Parent Portal that must be completed. If it is not completed a child will be excluded from the classroom until it is complete.

Question: Will there be a nurse specifically located at the Five Points branch for PreK-3 students?

Answer: We are currently in the process of hiring a part-time nurse

Question: what is the percentage of returning staff that is vaccinated so we know our kids are protected in the classroom?

Answer: Dr. Taylor will be sharing information about survey data regarding the vaccination status of district employees. Please be reminded that the governor is requiring all school employees to be vaccinated or tested weekly starting October 18th.

Question: Will dividers be used on desks?

Answer: The district decided not to purchase additional dividers since various studies showed they are not helpful for preventing transmission of COVID-19 and in fact may increase risk of the infection. The following research was cited in the New York Times:

- [Johns Hopkins](#): desk screens in classrooms were associated with an increased risk of coronavirus infection.
- [Wellesley Public Schools \(Massachusetts\)](#): plexiglass dividers with side walls in the main office impeded air flow.
- [CDC](#): desk barriers had little effect on the spread of the coronavirus compared with ventilation improvements and masking

Daily Operations

Question: Will we have lunch in the lunchroom or in the classrooms?

Answer: All lunches and breakfast will take place in the school's cafeteria. Preschool students will have lunch in their classrooms.

Question: How will lunch be handled in terms of safety when the masks are off and the children are all eating in the same area?

Answer: Students will be separated and socially distant as much as possible and, in the case of middle and high schools, will be allowed to eat outside.

Question: Will the students have the traditional lunch or will lunch be a "boxed" lunch?

Answer: Meals will be served in a traditional manner. Students will wait in lines and choose their options from the cafeteria. There will be choices at mealtime, but the options will be limited. Meals will also be free for everyone for the 2021-2022 school year.

At the high school, there will no longer be a deli/salad bar with a cafeteria working making the meals. Sandwiches and salads will be premade.

Question: Will students be required to change for physical education classes?

Answer: Students will not be required to change for physical education; however, they are still required to participate and should bring the appropriate footwear every day.

Question: Will the elementary students at the schools with lockers be able to use them?

Answer: No lockers will be used at any level within The District.

Learning

Question: Will teachers have the option to teach virtually?

Answer: Teachers will have the option to teach virtually in certain circumstances when approved by the administration.

Question: Will students have a virtual option? If so, will it be a separate virtual school or will teachers be teaching virtual and in-person students at the same time?

Answer: As directed by Governor Murphy, there will be no virtual option offered at this time for the 2021-2022 school year. All students and personnel will be back in the buildings five days a week for a normal school day.

Question: Will our special area classes push into the classrooms?

Answer: “Special subject” classes will not “push-in;” students will attend these classes in the appropriately scheduled classrooms.

Question: Will virtual learning be available if a child has to be quarantined?

Answer: There will be an opportunity for synchronous and asynchronous learning for quarantined students.

Question: Is there a way that my daughter can be opted out of attending school in person?

Answer: As directed by Governor Murphy, there will be no virtual option offered at this time for the 2021-2022 school year. All students and personnel will be back in the buildings five days a week for a normal school day.

Question: What happens if parents refuse to send their children back? What are the other options that parents have?

Answer: Governor Murphy has not approved any other learning option for Pre-K-12 students at this time. The school will resume five days a week for full-day in-person learning.

Question: Will you have A & B days schools?

Answer: A & B days will not be offered at this time

Question: Will there be before and aftercare?

Answer: There will be before and aftercare.

Miscellaneous

Question: Will we have the YMCA before and after school programs?

Answer: The before and after school programs will be in session.

Question: Will we have a traditional Open House with parents and families in the building or will it be virtual?

Answer: Open House events (also known as Back to School Night) will, at this time, be held virtually.

Question: Will we have a traditional Kindergarten and Pre-K orientation with parents invited in the schools?

Answer: Preschool teachers will host a virtual orientation for families on September 1, 2021.

Question: Can PTA's have other parents/guardians help with events?

Answer: The PTAs will adhere to the district's visitor policy in terms of daytime events on school property.

Question: Where will children hang winter coats, hats, scarves, etc? Will they carry these or wear them all day?

Answer: Children will be asked to carry their coats, hats, scarves, etc with them.

Question: I heard there is no busing for Vauxhall Residents over the bridge; is that right?

Answer: There will be busing for Vauxhall Residents.

Question: Will students be allowed to use mask lanyards (similar to eyeglasses lanyard) to hold their masks during the day when they are on mask breaks or on times when they are not required to have them on?

Answer: Yes