



Monday, March 1, 2021

Good Evening Upper Darby School District Families:

This is Dr. Daniel McGarry, Superintendent of Schools, reaching out to you with another update regarding our plans to reopen schools. As I stated in an earlier communication, it is our intent to provide notification of any changes to our reopening of schools process to families as close to two (2) weeks in advance as possible. We held another Districtwide Reopening of Schools update meeting with teachers and staff on February 26th. During this meeting, we reviewed updated guidance from the Chester County Health Department and Center for Disease Control (CDC). The updated guidance from the CCHD and CDC will allow us to move up our reopening of school timeline and expand our plan to include more grades. We wanted to communicate those updates with you at this time. As always, I want to thank our teachers, staff, students, and parents for your input, collaboration and support as we work through our plans to reopen schools.

[CCHD updated guidance](#)

As of today, we are pleased that our students in grades K-5 and K-12 low-incidence programs have been able to return to in-person instruction at 6 feet. Thanks to the valiant efforts of our nurses, and our Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Ed Marshaleck, we begin rapid antigen testing teachers and students on January 26th. The following mitigation strategies have helped us get to this point in our reopening of schools plan:

1. Require masks of staff and students
2. Rapid antigen testing of students(certain programs) and staff
3. Encouraging proper hygiene at home and while at school
4. Symptom screening at home prior to coming to school and/or work
5. STAY HOME if you are sick

I want to reiterate our goal: To bring back as many grade levels and students as possible in the cohort/flexible/in-person instruction model while still providing the option for virtual learning for parents who do not feel comfortable transitioning their students back into buildings at this time. We are grateful that our staff and administration are equally dedicated to our efforts to expand in-person opportunities for more grade spans.

I am happy to report that we are expanding our plan to return students for in-person instruction to more grades. **Our next step is to expand the option for in-person instruction in cohorts to grades 6 through 12 on March 22nd.** Following spring break, we will be asking families to commit to either in-person instruction or virtual instruction. In order for us to move beyond our cohorts at 6ft of distance between students, especially in our cafeterias, we will need students/families to commit to virtual learning for the remainder of this school year. Please begin to discuss your comfort level of attending in-person instruction versus virtual instruction. We will be providing more information on this process later this week.

We continue to monitor positivity and community transmission rates as we make decisions about expanding in-person instruction to additional grades. We will also continue to communicate any updates to our plan as close to two (2) weeks as possible to allow you and your family as much planning time as we can.

Please find linked in this document the following:

- [UDSD Daily Symptom Screening Tool](#) - This tool is meant to help families determine whether or not students should attend school each day and to help families identify when a child is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. Please reference it regularly.

As always, our priority is to provide all of our students with the safest, most engaging educational experience possible. As we transition students back to our schools, our middle school and high school schedule will change in order for us to meet recommended guidelines for in-person instruction keeping students at 6 feet and eventually between 3 feet to 6 feet. Please remain vigilant in your safety efforts and encourage your child to maintain social distancing, to wash hands, and to wear his/her mask. We intend to continue to support students as they adjust to their in-person return and students who are continuing in virtual learning. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work through our plans to return students to our schools for in-person instruction.

Thank you and have a good evening.

Dates	Event
Monday, March 22, 2021	Students in Grades 6 through 12 return for cohort/flexible/in-person instruction at 6ft of social distancing. Virtual/at-home learning remains an option for parents who do not feel comfortable transitioning their students back into buildings at this time.
Friday, March 26, 2021	Date for parents and families to commit to virtual or in-person instruction. District administration will reassess our ability to commit to more in-person instruction between 3ft and 6ft of distance between students for this school year. More information will be provided to families.
**Monday April 5, 2021	Tentative date for students in K-5 to attend school at between 3ft and 6ft of social distance.
**Monday April 26, 2021	Tentative date for students in K-5 to attend school at between 3ft and 6ft of social distance.

**** Returning students at between 3ft and 6ft of social distance will only be possible if enough students/families commit to remaining fully virtual for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year.**