



## **Margate Schools Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Pursuant to the Federal American Rescue Plan Act, Section 2001(i)**

Local Education Agencies (Margate Schools) must plan to provide full-day, full-time, in-person instruction and operations for the 2021-2022 school year. The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) worked collaboratively to develop the following guidance to operationalize that goal. This guidance includes a range of strategies that Margate Schools should consider implementing to reduce risks to students and staff from COVID-19 while still allowing for fulltime in-person learning. The absence of one or more of the strategies outlined in this document does not preclude the reopening of a school facility for full-day in-person operation with all enrolled students and staff present. This document contains expectations for the fall learning environment. This guidance document is intended to supplant health and safety protocols outlined in Executive Order No. 175 and the Road Back. The document contains recommendations rather than mandatory standards. Schools should anticipate potential updates to this guidance prior to the start of the new school year, as additional federal recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) become available.

### **MARGATE: Margate Schools Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services**

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**Margate Schools Name: MARGATE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Original Date: 6/24/21**

**Dates Revised: 7/7/21, 8/20/21, 9/3/21**

#### **Maintaining Health and Safety**

##### **A. Universal and correct wearing of masks**

On August 5, 2021, the CDC issued new indoor masking recommendations for individuals in K-12 school settings. That guidance is available here: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html).

Indoors: In alignment with recommendations from the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics, on August 6, 2021, Governor Murphy signed [Executive Order 251](#) which requires that all staff, students, and visitors wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status, in the indoor premises of school buildings. This requirement applies to all public, private, and parochial preschool programs and elementary and secondary schools, including charter and renaissance schools. As outlined in the Executive Order, there are limited exceptions to this requirement (see full list below).

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Outdoors: In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. The CDC recommends that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people. Fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings if they or someone in their household is immunocompromised.

Appropriate and consistent use of masks may be challenging for some individuals, however mask use is required for all individuals in indoor school settings with the following exceptions:

- When doing so would inhibit the individual's health, such as when the individual is exposed to extreme heat indoors;
- When the individual has trouble breathing, is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a face covering without assistance;
- 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 use of a face covering;
- When the individual is under two (2) years of age;
- When the individual is engaged in activity that cannot physically be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating or drinking, or playing a musical instrument that would be obstructed by a face covering;
- When the individual is engaged in high-intensity aerobic or anaerobic activity;
- When a student is participating in high-intensity physical activities during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals; or
- When wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task.

Where an individual is seeking a medical exemption from the masking requirement pursuant to the first or third bullet above, documentation from a medical professional supporting this exception is required pursuant to [Executive Order No. 253](#).

Other guidelines for effective masking:

- Masks and/or barriers do not preclude an individual from being identified as a close contact to a COVID-19 case.
- Information should be provided to staff and students on proper use, removal, and washing of masks.
- The most effective fabrics for cloth masks are tightly woven such as cotton and cotton blends, breathable, and in two or three fabric layers.
- Masks should be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled or damp/wet.
- Students, teachers, and staff should have access to additional disposable or cloth masks in case a back-up mask is needed (e.g. mask is soiled or lost during the day).
- Clear masks that cover the nose and wrap securely around the face may be considered in certain circumstances including for the teaching of students with disabilities, young students learning to read, or English language learners.

#### Transportation and Masks

School buses should be considered school property for the purpose of determining the need for prevention strategies.

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- Masks must be worn by all passengers on buses, regardless of vaccination status per CDC's Federal Order.
- If occupancy allows, maximize physical distance between students.
- Open windows to increase airflow in buses and other transportation, if possible.
- Regularly clean high touch surfaces on school buses at least daily.

**Specifics related to Margate Schools internal plan include these details:**

**Margate Schools recognize the importance of safeguarding students and staff within the school environment. Face masks will be required of all individuals who enter the school buildings. Masks must be worn within the building at all times when in common areas or while around other individuals. Staff may have a mask break if they are alone in their classroom/office or other small space. As soon as restrictions from EO 251 are lifted, the district will strongly consider a mask optional policy for students and possibly also staff. Margate School local Face Coverings Policy 5141.10 had a first reading on 9/1/21 and is due for the second and final reading on 10/6/21.**

**B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)**

Though physical distancing recommendations must not prevent a school from offering full-day, full-time, in person learning to all students for the 2021-2022 school year, where possible, Margate Schools will establish policies and implement structural interventions to promote physical distancing and small group cohorting.

During periods of low or moderate community transmission, Margate Schools should implement physical distancing recommendations to the maximum degree that allows them to offer full in-person learning. During periods of high community transmission, if maximal social distancing recommendations cannot be maintained, Margate Schools should prioritize other prevention measures including screening testing and cohorting.

- Within classrooms, maintain 3 feet of physical distancing to the greatest extent practicable, while offering full-time, in-person learning to all students.
- Outside of classrooms including in hallways, locker rooms, indoor and outdoor physical education settings, and school-sponsored transportation, maintain physical distancing to the greatest extent practicable.
- The CDC recommends a distance of at least 6 feet between students and teachers/staff and between teachers/staff who are not fully vaccinated in all settings.
- As feasible, maintain cohorts or groups of students with dedicated staff who remain together throughout the day, including at recess, lunch times, and while participating in extracurricular activities. Cohorting people who are fully vaccinated and people who are not fully vaccinated into separate cohorts is not recommended.



In addition to the distancing recommendations outlined above, the Margate Schools may consider implementing one or more of the following strategies to maximize opportunities to increase distance between students:

- Facing desks in the same direction.
- Avoiding grouped seating arrangements.

Identifying opportunities to maximize physical distancing should be prioritized for the following higher-risk scenarios, especially during periods of high community transmission:

- In common areas, in spaces where students may gather such as hallways and auditoriums.
- When masks cannot be worn, including cafeterias.
- When masks may be removed, such as during outdoor activities.
- During indoor activities when increased exhalation occurs, such as singing, shouting, band practice, sports, or exercise

**Specifics related to Margate Schools internal plan include these details:**

**Physical Desk Barriers**

- **Hard plexiglass physical barriers on teacher desks or other staff areas, where needed, to facilitate small-group instruction/evaluation/communication**

**Class Size**

- **Addition of classes and sections to reduce class size to accommodate the need for three feet social distancing**
- **Approximate class size 12-16 students in all grades**
- **Amount of teacher/student contact will depend on particular teaching assignments/duties, but will be limited.**

**Room Arrangement**

- **Desks will be 3 feet apart, facing the same direction (depending on Smartboard location), as much as feasible**
  - **Teacher decides room arrangement to effectively use classroom space**
  - **Furniture removal may be required to accommodate spacing needs**
  - **Certain classrooms, such as the science labs and art/music room, will space students at lab tables and art/music stations to the greatest extent possible**
- **Wide aisles for teacher/student movement, when necessary, and storage of backpacks.**

**Sharing Items, Books, and Supplies**

- **Teachers can limit the need for sharing items through instructional choices**

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- **Technology**
  - 1:1 device distribution (Chromebooks)
  - Limit the sharing of ipads in K-1
- **Supplies**
  - All student supplies should be stored in a container (limit sharing of pencils, crayons, markers, glue, etc.)
  - Frequently sanitized supply cups (pens/pencils) for classrooms and office use if sharing is required
  - Prepare individual sets of supplies, as is reasonable, for art, science lab, and math (individual math manipulatives kits for each student)
- **Frequent cleaning of items that must be shared**
  - Provide staff with cleaning supplies and “Spot cleaning” training
- **Instructional material alternatives (examples include)**
  - Digital workbooks, digital textbooks (for grades 2 and up)
  - Google slides turned into classroom conversations (Pear Deck)
  - Online book websites to substitute for library books and/or classroom library
    - Raz-Kids, Epic!, Vooks, Readworks, MobyMax
  - White boards (digital whiteboards)
  - Worksheets in page protectors for easy cleaning and reuse
- **Assignments and Assessments**
  - Incorporating digital options (i.e. Google Classroom) to :
    - Easily transition to remote schooling in the event of a health-related school closure
  - Turn hard copy pages or PDFs into editable digital worksheets (may use PDF editing software such as Kami or DocHub)
  - Homework ideas:
    - K - 1: homework can be sent home, but Class DoJo to screenshot/scan to send work back to teacher
    - Grades 2 -8: homework could be all digital via Google Classroom
- **Rewards: limit treasure boxes where students place hand in to choose**
- **Snacks: must be individually wrapped if provided by the classroom**

#### Student Belongings

- **Middle school: Students will have access to the lockers to store their belongings. They will be issued a chrome book each morning to use throughout the day. All of a student's personal belongings will be kept in their lockers during the school day, students may carry their backpacks**
- **Elementary School: Keep small personal supplies in the student desk/bins and/or in a backpack next to their desk. Optional use of large ziploc bags to hang backpacks, coats, etc in cubbies is a consideration for kindergarten**

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- Family notice for weekend cleaning of backpack, coat, lunchboxes, etc. before the next week of school
- Students encouraged to limit the amount of personal items/books they take to and from school

#### Snacks/Water in the Classroom

- Water bottle filling stations are available; water fountain access will be eliminated
- Students should bring their own healthy snack daily and water bottle filled from home
- Ross snack time is incorporated into their daily schedule

#### Student Lunches and Recess Times

- Lunch and recess periods will be increased to enable single grade cohorting or small group cohorting, as feasible.
- Frequently touched surfaces will be thoroughly cleaned. Surfaces that come in contact with food should be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before and after meals. Given the data regarding COVID-19 transmission, the use of single-use items, such as disposable utensils, is not necessary during meals.

#### **C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette**

The following guidance will be followed in our district:

- Margate Schools should teach and reinforce hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).
- Encourage students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue if not wearing a mask. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hand hygiene as outlined above should be performed immediately.
- Maintain adequate supplies including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, and no touch trash cans.

Hand hygiene should take place:

- Upon arrival at school.
- Before and after meals and snacks.
- After going to the bathroom.
- After blowing nose, sneezing, or coughing into tissue.
- When hands are visibly soiled.

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**Specifics related to Margate Schools internal plan include these details:**

**Hand-Sanitizing Stations and Clearing of High Touch Surfaces**

- **Stationary hand sanitizer stations are installed/available in every classroom, at primary entrances and exits, and near lunchrooms and bathrooms**
- **District-wide routines for students to sanitize/wash their hands before they exit a room and before entering any room, when using the lavatory, and before and after eating**
- **Teacher/student workspaces and/or materials should be cleaned before and after use on a regular basis**

**D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation**

Schools should follow standard procedures for routine cleaning and disinfecting with an EPA-registered product for use against SARS-CoV-2. This means at least daily cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are touched often, such as desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, phones, and toys.

If a person exhibits COVID-19 compatible symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19 within 24 hours of being in the school building, school staff should clean and disinfect the spaces occupied by the person. Once the area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be reopened for use.

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick or positive and do not use those areas until after cleaning and disinfecting.
- Wait as long as possible (at least several hours) after the person has exited a space before cleaning and disinfecting.
- Open doors and windows and use fans or HVAC settings to increase air circulation in the area.
- Use products from EPA List according to the instructions on the product label.
- Wear a mask and gloves while cleaning and disinfecting.

Improve airflow to the extent possible to increase circulation of outdoor air, increase the delivery of clean air, and dilute potential contaminants. This can be achieved through several strategies:

- Bring in as much outdoor air as possible. This will be done through our ventilation system in both schools without opening windows.
- Do not open windows or doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (such as exposure to extreme temperatures, humidity, or triggering asthma symptoms), or if doing so would otherwise pose a security risk.
- Use exhaust fans in kitchens.
- Consider having activities, classes, or lunches outdoors when circumstances allow.

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**Specifics related to Margate Schools internal plan include these details:**

**Classroom Ventilation**

***Board Policy adopted September 2020: #3510 Operation and Maintenance of Plant***

- HVAC and air handling units will be inspected frequently to ensure proper air flow-before September and every other week thereafter following ASHRAE guidelines
- Classroom windows cannot be open without adversely affecting the HVAC and ventilation to the rest of the building
- Ventilation will be increased by bringing in more outside air
- Operational runtime will be increased as needed
- Controls will be modified to prevent system economy overrides

**Frequent Sanitizing**

- daily electrostatic spraying completed each day when students are in session

**E. Screening, Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, and travel restrictions**

**Daily Student Screening**

Parents/caregivers should be strongly encouraged to monitor their children for signs of illness every day as they are the front line for assessing illness in their children. Students who are sick should not attend school. Schools should strictly enforce exclusion criteria for both students and staff. Schools should educate parents about the importance of monitoring symptoms and keeping children home while ill. Schools can use existing outreach systems to provide reminders to staff and families to check for symptoms before leaving for school. Schools should provide clear and accessible directions to parents/caregivers and students for reporting symptoms and reasons for absences.

**Student Illness**

Parents should not send students to school when sick. For school settings, NJDOH recommends that students with the following symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school:

- At least TWO of the following symptoms: fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion, or runny nose; OR
- At least ONE of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, or new taste disorder.

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- For students with chronic illness, only new symptoms or symptoms worse than baseline should be used to fulfill symptom-based exclusion criteria.

Unvaccinated students or staff who have household members experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and meet COVID-19 Exclusion Criteria should also be excluded from school. If the symptomatic household member tests positive for COVID-19, the student/staff member will need to quarantine

#### If Student or Staff Become Ill at School

Children and staff with COVID-19 symptoms should be separated away from others until they can be sent home.

- Ask ill student (or parent/guardian) or staff whether they have had potential exposure to COVID-19 in the past 14 days meeting the definition of a close contact.
- Individuals should be sent home and referred to a healthcare provider. Persons with COVID-19- compatible symptoms should undergo COVID-19 testing.
- If community transmission is low, ill individuals without potential exposure to COVID-19 should follow the NJDOH School Exclusion List. No public health notification is needed UNLESS there is an unusual increase in the number of persons who are ill (over normal levels), which might indicate an outbreak.
- If ill students have potential COVID-19 exposure OR if community transmission is moderate or high, they should be excluded according to the COVID-19 Exclusion Criteria.

#### Procedure for Positive Students

Ill individuals with COVID-19 compatible symptoms who have not been tested or individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 should stay home until at least 10 days have passed since symptom onset and at least 24 hours have passed after resolution of fever without fever reducing medications and improvement in symptoms.

Persons who test positive for COVID-19 but who are asymptomatic should stay home for 10 days from the positive test result. The COVID-19 Exclusion Table described in NJDOH guidance for Local health departments can be used to determine the need for and duration of school exclusion based on the level of COVID-19 community transmission in their region.

#### Procedure for Close Contacts

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Per the CDC, close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone with suspected or known COVID-19 for 15 or more minutes during a 24-hour period. In certain situations, it may be difficult to determine whether individuals have met this criterion and an entire cohort, classroom, or other group may need to be considered exposed.

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) where both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting.

To that end, excluded individuals who are close contacts of staff or students who tested positive for COVID-19 may be considered for a reduced exclusion period based on community transmission levels as follows:

- High (orange) exposed close contacts should be excluded from school for 14 days.
- Moderate or Low (yellow or green) exposed close contacts should be excluded from school for 10 days (or 7 days with negative test results collected at 5-7 days)
- Schools serving medically complex or other high-risk individuals should use a 14-day exclusion period for the exclusion of these individuals or those who work closely with them when identified as close contacts in all levels of community transmission.

Exposed close contacts who are fully vaccinated and have no COVID-like symptoms:

- Do not need to quarantine or be excluded from school, but they will be tested following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 with the other employees that week who are unvaccinated.
- Should still monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following an exposure.
- If they experience symptoms, they should isolate themselves from others, be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 testing and inform their health care provider of their vaccination status at the time of presentation to care.

### **Contact Tracing**

Contact tracing is a strategy used to determine the source of an infection and how it is spreading. Finding people who are close contacts of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, and therefore at higher risk of becoming infected themselves, can help prevent further spread of the virus. School staff should identify school-based close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases in the school.

- As with any other communicable disease outbreak, schools will assist in identifying the close contacts within the school and communicating this information back to the LHD.

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- With guidance from the LHD, schools will be responsible for notifying parents and staff of the close contact exposure and exclusion requirements while maintaining confidentiality.
- Schools should closely and regularly monitor the numbers of students, teachers, and staff with COVID-19, as well those in isolation and in quarantine. In collaboration with the local health department, decisions should combine information about levels of community transmission with school-specific factors, such as implementation of prevention strategies and the number of cases among students, teachers, and staff. As levels of community transmission increase, schools should further strengthen prevention strategies and monitor cases to reassess decisions.

### **Travel Advisories**

While there is no statewide travel advisory or mandate in place at this time, schools are encouraged to have a policy for exclusion for students and staff that is consistent with CDC COVID-19 travel recommendations. The CDC recommends that travel be delayed for those who are not fully vaccinated. If travel cannot be delayed, domestic and international travelers who are not fully vaccinated should get tested with a viral test 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel, even if they test negative. If testing is not completed post-travel, individuals should self-quarantine for 10 days. International travelers who are fully vaccinated should also get tested with a viral test 3-5 days after travel, self-monitor for symptoms, and isolate and get tested if symptoms develop. For those traveling to/from New Jersey, domestic travel is defined as lasting 24 hours or longer to states or U.S. territories other than those connected to New Jersey, such as Pennsylvania, New York, and Delaware.

- [NJ travel recommendations](#)
- [CDC international travel recommendations](#)
- [CDC domestic travel recommendations](#)

### **Remote Instruction**

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9, schools must be in session for 180 days to receive state aid. The statute requires that school facilities be provided for at least 180 days during the school year. Section (b) notes that where a district is required to close the schools of the district for more than three consecutive school days due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive and/or recommendation by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure, days of virtual or remote instruction commensurate with in-person instruction will count towards the district's 180-day requirement.

Margate Schools may be confronted with the incidence of COVID-19 positive cases amongst staff and/or students. If Margate Schools is required to exclude a student, group of students, a class, or multiple classes as a result of the scenarios listed above, while the school itself remains open for in-person instruction, the Margate Schools will be prepared to offer virtual or remote instruction to those students in a manner commensurate with

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in-person instruction to the extent possible. In circumstances when the school facilities remain open and in-person instruction continues in those classrooms that are not required to quarantine, those days in session will also count towards the district's 180-day requirement in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9

**Specifics related to Margate Schools internal plan include these details:**

**Coordination with Atlantic County Board of Health**

- The school district will assist with providing records of groups/cohorts, assigned staff, and daily attendance
- Atlantic County Board of Health conducts the contact tracing with the involvement of school administration or designees

**Remote learning for any isolated/quarantined students:**

Students required to quarantine due to Covid exposure (confirmed positive case or confirmed close contact) or in the event that travel restrictions are reinstated, will be provided with remote instruction and work to be completed outside of school during their quarantine period. Remote learning will be coordinated with the classroom teacher(s) upon notice of the need to quarantine. Remote learning does NOT take place while the child is traveling. Remote learning is only offered when the district requires the child to quarantine (e.g close contact, positive case, travel). In most cases, remote learning and live streaming can be offered to the student within two school days of the need. In the event of travel, with advance notice remote learning should begin immediately upon the child's return to home.

Instruction will be provided to students who may not have access to sufficient broadband, or to any technology required for virtual or remote instruction. Reduced cost options for internet access are available and shared with families. All students in school have access to their own chromebook for learning and activities, which will be available to them in the event they need to switch to remote learning. Guardians may also request to borrow chromebooks for home use if they reach out to their building principal. In the event that a child is somewhere without internet access, alternative print materials will be provided during their remote learning period to continue their education. A survey to measure each student's home access to internet access and technology will be done in September to prepare in advance.

Remote instruction will be provided to all students required to isolate or quarantine by the school due to covid exposure. Remote instruction activities may include live streaming into the classroom, live streaming between a teacher and students, remote access to learning materials, independent study and learning assignments, and other activities designed to deliver lessons and measure comprehension. Students on remote learning will be provided with the equivalent of 4 hours of daily activities to count as present for the school day.



## **F. Diagnostic and screening testing**

When schools implement testing combined with key prevention strategies, they can detect new cases to prevent outbreaks, reduce the risk of further transmission, and protect students, teachers, and staff from COVID-19. Screening testing involves using SARS-CoV-2 viral tests (diagnostic tests used for screening purposes) intended to identify occurrences at the individual level even if there is no reason to suspect infection—i.e., there is no known exposure or in the cases of unvaccinated workers. Developing and implementing a screening testing strategy is particularly important during periods of high community transmission when physical space limitations prevent the implementation of maximal social distancing practices. Results of all testing – including point of care – must be reported to public health authorities by the entity conducting the testing. Schools are also encouraged to report aggregate screening testing results, including the number of tests performed, directly to NJDOH through the Surveillance for Influenza and COVID-19 (SIC) Module in CDRSS.

### **Specifics related to Margate Schools internal plan include these details:**

**Margate is one of many districts working with the Atlantic County Department of Health to plan for and implement weekly or bi-weekly Covid testing of all unvaccinated employees. Unvaccinated employees will be provided a day and time to get tested and results will be maintained in a confidential manner. More information to follow as exact procedures are developed. Margate School local Vaccinations and Testing Policy 5141.11 had a first reading on 9/1/21 and is due for the second and final reading on 10/6/21.**

## **G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible**

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting vaccination can help schools safely maintain in-person learning, as well as extracurricular activities and sports. Although COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective, and accessible, not all school-aged children are currently eligible to be vaccinated. Most K-12 schools will have a mixed population of fully vaccinated, partially vaccinated, and unvaccinated individuals at any given time, thereby requiring the layering of preventive measures to protect all individuals.

Pursuant to [Executive Order No. 253](#), all Margate Schools, nonpublic schools, and parochial schools must maintain a policy that requires all covered workers to either provide adequate proof that they have been fully vaccinated or submit to COVID-19 testing at minimum one to two times weekly. 'Covered workers' includes individuals employed by the Margate Schools or school, both full and part-time, including, but not limited to, administrators, teachers, educational support professionals, individuals providing food, custodial, and administrative support services, substitute teachers, contractors, providers, and any other individuals performing work in the Margate Schools or school whose job duties require them to make regular visits to such

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covered settings, including volunteers. 'Covered workers' does not include individuals who visit the covered setting only to provide one-time or limited duration repairs, services, or construction.

**Specifics related to Margate Schools internal plan include these details:**

**At this time, Margate does not provide vaccinations to staff or students. Information on obtaining free vaccinations is shared and readily available.**

**H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies**

Federal and state disability laws, to the extent applicable, require an individualized approach for students with disabilities consistent with the student's IEP or Section 504 plan. Educators and school leaders must remain aware of their obligations under federal and state disability laws and should also consider adaptations and alternatives to prevention strategies, while maintaining efforts to protect students, teachers, and staff from COVID-19. Margate Schools staff, led by the Child Study Team case managers, will ensure the proper delivery of services and supports to all students with IEPs or 504 Plans.

Additionally, schools are encouraged to consider a phased prevention approach to fully reopening this upcoming year. A phased prevention approach for K-12 schools relies on several core concepts as dictated by the CDC.

- K-12 schools should be the last settings to close after all other prevention measures in the community have been employed, and the first to reopen when they can do so safely. This implies that decision-makers and communities should prioritize schools for reopening and remaining open for in-person instruction over nonessential businesses and activities, including indoor dining, bars, social gatherings, and close contact sports as community transmission is controlled.
- In-person instruction should be prioritized over extracurricular activities, including sports and school events, to minimize risk of transmission in schools and protect in-person learning. Prolonged periods of remote or virtual learning can have negative effects on educational progress for students, potentially slowing or reversing academic gains. Students from low-resourced communities, English learners, and students with disabilities might disproportionately experience learning loss due to limited access to remote learning technology and fewer learning support systems and services outside of schools. Safe in-person schooling can also offset the negative social, emotional, and mental health impacts of prolonged virtual learning. Minimizing the risk of spread during extracurricular activities and social gatherings outside of school can help maintain in-person instruction. Some close-contact sports might not be able to be implemented at any level of community transmission given the risk of transmission and the inability to implement prevention strategies.<sup>1</sup> Schools may consider using expanded screening testing for sports and extracurricular activities to identify cases and reduce risk of transmission from people who are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic.



- Lower susceptibility and incidence among younger children compared to teenagers suggests that younger students (for example, elementary school students) are likely to have less risk of in-school transmission due to in-person learning than older students (middle schools and high schools). In addition, younger children may benefit more from in-person instruction and are less independent than older students.
- Families of students who are at increased risk of severe illness (including those with special healthcare needs) shall be accommodated to the greatest extent possible, regardless of the mode of learning offered.
- Schools are encouraged to use cohorting, especially in areas of substantial (orange) and high (red) transmission, to facilitate testing and contact tracing, and to minimize transmission across cohorts.

## Ensuring Continuity of Services

A. Describe how the Margate Schools will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff's social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services. (1000 character limit)

### School Climate and Culture

- **Prioritize health and emotional well being over everything else.**
- **Assess school climate to identify vulnerabilities via SSIS SEL screening tool**

### For underserved populations

Long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put many racial and ethnic minority groups at increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19. People who identify as American Indian/Alaska Native, Black, and Hispanic are disproportionately affected by COVID-19; these disparities have also emerged among children. The absence of in-person educational options might disadvantage children from all backgrounds, particularly children in low-resourced communities who might be at an educational disadvantage. To enable in-person learning in schools that serve racial and ethnic groups disproportionately affected by COVID-19, school administrators and public health officials can work together to help schools plan and implement comprehensive prevention strategies, engage community partners, and assist with referrals to medical care. It is important that these schools have the resources and technical assistance needed to adopt and diligently implement actions to slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19 among people inside the school and out in the community. Schools play a critical role in promoting equity in education and health for groups disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Margate Schools staff will work in tandem with our School Physician, Dr. Budnick, to ensure proper access to health care and services.

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**School lunches** will be offered free of charge for the 2021-22 school year. Any child that wishes to get a School Lunch needs only sign up each morning in homeroom. Students that are on remote learning due to a Covid related quarantine or isolation will be offered a free lunch to be delivered to their home, if requested.

## Public Comment

A. Describe how the Margate Schools sought public comment on its plan, and how it took those public comments into account in the development of its plan. Note, the ARP requires that Margate Schools seek public comment for each 60-day revision to the plan. (1000 character limit)

**The Plan to Reopen was posted on the district website in June 2021. A discussion was held during the Board of Education meeting on June 9, 2021 to share the plan with the public and invite comments and feedback. A link to a survey was also provided on our district website, which allowed members of the community to share comments in addition to the public board meeting. Public comment was considered and included in our planning process, as appropriate. We uploaded our original plan to the NJDOE by the June 24 deadline.**

**July update - with the release of new guidance, our plan was updated to reflect the new guidelines. The plan was shared at the July 7, 2021 BOE meeting and posted on the district website for parental review.**

**August update - recent updates, especially EO 251, have impacted the reopening plans for all NJ schools. New mandates and guidelines are incorporated into the August 21, 2021 draft version of the plan. The plan will be shared on the district website and at the next Board meeting on September 1, 2021.**

**September update - the newest update is reflected in this document, which includes EO 253 related to vaccinations and regular testing. The plan was BOE approved 9/1/21 to prepare for the students' return to school on September 9, 2021.**

B. Describe how the Margate Schools ensured that the plan is in an understandable and uniform format; is to the extent practicable written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, will be orally translated for such a parent; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, will be provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent. (1000 character limit)

**Any parent requiring a translation can simply contact either schools' main office for assistance.**

*All details within this plan are subject to revisions based on new information released by the NJDOH and/or NJDOE.  
**September 1, 2021 update - <https://www.nj.gov/education/roadforward/docs/HealthAndSafetyGuidanceSY2122.pdf>***