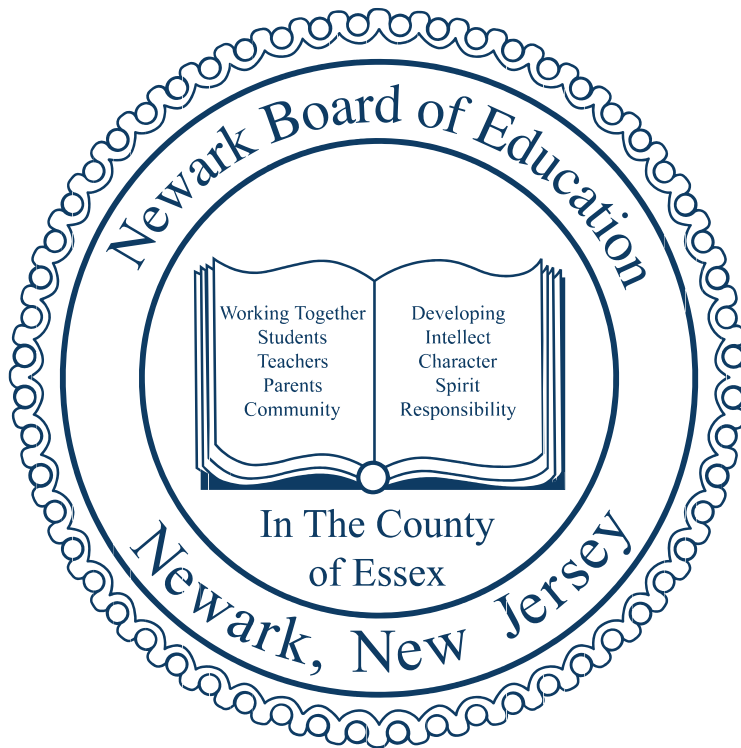


# Newark Board of Education Task Force for the Reopening of Schools

## Executive Summary



**Roger León**  
**Superintendent of Schools**  
**June 15, 2020**

# NBOE Task Force for the Reopening of Schools

## Members

Member	Title
Nicole T. Johnson	Co-Chairperson, Deputy Superintendent
Valerie Wilson	Co-Chairperson, School Business Administrator
Hon. Tave Padilla	NBOE Board Member
Maria Ortiz	Executive Director, Office of Student Life
Abdullah Ansari	Executive Director, Information Technology
Dr. Tonya McGill	Executive Director, Food Services
JoAnne Watson	Executive Director, Labor Relations
Quanika Dukes-Spruill	Executive Director, Transportation Services
Steven Morlino	Executive Director, Facilities Management
Dr. Marguerite Leuze	Director, Health Services
Levi A. Holmes II	Executive Director, Security Services
Atiba Buckman	Principal, Speedway Elementary School
Dr. Sharnee Brown	Principal, Central High School
Dr. Deneen Washington	Principal, Belmont Runyon School
Danielle Gaines	Teacher, Belmont Runyon School
Andrea Valerius	Lead Teacher, Technology High School
Honore Hodgson	Teacher, East Side High School
Bruno Coelho	Student Representative, NBOE
Argetina Aquino	Parent, First Avenue School
Anthony Baskerville	Senior Guard, West Side High School
John Abeigon	President, Newark Teachers Union
Wilhelmina Holder	President, Secondary Parent Council
Mike Maillaro	Director of Research and Communication, Newark Teachers Union
Christine Taylor	President, City Association of Supervisors and Administrators
Elizabeth Corker	Math Teacher Coach, Mount Vernon Elementary School

On Monday, May 4, 2020, Mayor Ras. J. Baraka announced the Newark Reopening and Recovery Strikeforce. In alignment with those efforts, Superintendent León created the NBOE Task Force for the Reopening of Schools.

The co-chairpersons of the NBOE Task Force for the Reopening of Schools are Deputy Superintendent Nicole T. Johnson and School Business Administrator Valerie Wilson.

They are working with a comprehensive team of stakeholders that includes principals, teachers, other instructional and non-instructional school-based staff, central office employees, board members, parents, students, community members, and union leaders. The group represents expertise across many facets. The Superintendent has charged this group with the responsibility of providing recommendations and guidance for consideration regarding the reopening of schools. The Task Force met several times over the course of a month to take an in-depth look at several areas such as school operations including the distribution of meals, adherence to social distancing guidelines and the implementation of precautionary measures; student and staff supports which includes counseling, training on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and screening for trauma; and instructional considerations such as intervention, extended learning time and remote instruction. The Task Force was committed to addressing the needs and concerns of students, staff, parents and the community at large. The overarching goal was to provide recommendations that support the community in feeling safe about returning to school.

Understanding that it is unlikely that any reopening plan would fully encapsulate all of the necessary considerations for reopening schools upon a health related closure, the Task Force has prioritized recommendations under five areas of focus: *school operations* (ensuring the health and safety of all students and staff); *student supports* (supporting the needs of students); *staff supports* (supporting the needs of district staff); *instruction* (providing high-quality learning experiences and mitigating learning loss) and *remote learning/technology* (attending to the technology needs of students and staff).

These recommendations are in response to Covid-19 and may evolve as new information becomes available from the CDC, the State of New Jersey, the New Jersey Department of Education or the City of Newark.

# School Operations

Prior to in-person instruction	With in-person instruction
<p>Establish safety procedures based on guidelines from CDC, New Jersey Department of Health and the Newark Department of Health.</p> <p>Create and disseminate a guidance document, in accordance with CDC guidelines and recommendations from the Office of Health Services and the Office of Facilities to be shared with administrators, staff and families.</p> <p>Assess wellness of staff and students prior to reopening.</p> <p>Work with transportation to establish a plan that meets social distancing and health and safety requirements.</p> <p>Expand training for transportation staff.</p> <p>Prepare for the safe distribution of breakfast and lunch.</p>	<p>Monitor the implementation of safety procedures.</p> <p>Prepare educational programs for administrators, staff and families to reinforce the guidelines.</p> <p>Continue to assess wellness of staff and students.</p> <p>Re-evaluate every three months.</p> <p>Provide supports for the students and staff that do not meet readiness criteria to return to school or work.</p> <p>Communicate regularly with parents and primary care providers to maintain safe and appropriate reentry to school.</p> <p>Continuously monitor and evaluate student routes for efficiency and adherence to health and safety standards.</p> <p>Identify Transportation leads to participate in the Office of Pupil Transportation Training on expectations, goals and objectives regarding student transportation.</p> <p>Increase monitoring efforts to ensure that State, Federal and District guidelines are followed regarding transportation.</p> <p>Mandatory training for bus staff district-wide and mandatory meetings with bus company owners.</p> <p>Work with school staff to ensure the safe distribution of breakfast and lunch.</p>

## Instruction

Prior to in-person instruction	With in-person instruction
<p>Establish a plan to mitigate learning loss.</p> <p>Provide professional learning for teachers and instructional staff.</p> <p>Communicate clear decisions and guidance around grading, report cards, attendance, and promotion policies.</p> <p>Establish school based instructional teams to create</p>	<p>Assess the effectiveness of extended learning programming and all academic and social-emotional interventions.</p> <p>Analyze results of needs assessment to create instructional goals and plan for targeted interventions.</p> <p>Continue to monitor and adjust interventions for most vulnerable students.</p>

<p>instructional goals and individualized plans for students.</p> <p>Consult with Child Study Teams to identify additional modifications needed for students with IEPs based on new instructional platforms and assessments.</p> <p>Consult with Bilingual and ESL teachers to identify the needs of English Language Learners.</p> <p>Establish policies for the classroom/school environment.</p>	<p>Continue to provide professional development on an on-going basis throughout the school year.</p> <p>Ensure that all schools have required licenses and training to use online curriculum platforms.</p> <p>Provide direct communication via Teacher Talk, Principal Points and during weekly and monthly meetings at the school level.</p> <p>Meet with teachers and parents to address student specific needs.</p> <p>Meet with teacher to address specific needs of English Language Learners.</p>
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## Remote Learning/Technology

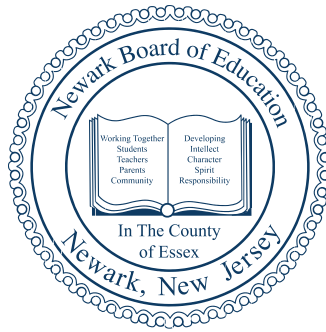
Prior to in-person instruction	With in-person instruction
<p>Establish standardized tools and platforms for staff, student and parent collaboration.</p> <p>Ensure that all stakeholders have connectivity to the internet and access to technology and online curriculum resources.</p> <p>Ensure all students and teaching staff members receive the training needed to optimize the implementation of online learning and student learning.</p> <p>Establish an attendance policy for virtual and hybrid-learning.</p> <p>Establish a district-wide communication policy and standardized methodology for communication with all stakeholders in virtual platforms and modalities.</p> <p>Establish Safety and Cyber Security Protocols.</p> <p>Redesign the IT department to provide support, upgrades and maintenance.</p>	<p>Develop operational policies and procedures to ensure sustainable and equitable implementation of remote learning.</p> <p>Work with the NJDOE to develop policies for online learning.</p> <p>Work with the NJDOE to develop policies for online learning that address student seat time to ensure on-time credit accumulation and graduation.</p> <p>Monitor the effectiveness of remote learning and access to technology.</p> <p>Provide frequent and on-going training throughout the school year on all technology tools and platforms.</p> <p>Monitor all virtual platforms for usage.</p> <p>Ensure sound security practices are implemented and enforced.</p> <p>Survey staff to garner feedback on support provided by the IT department.</p>

## Student Supports

Prior to in-person instruction	With in-person instruction
<p>Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to inform student support services at the school and district level.</p> <p>Open or create a Student Support Center in every school.</p> <p>Provide educational training for students on safety precautions, safe interactions and school protocols.</p>	<p>Provide support in meeting the social, emotional and mental health needs of students.</p> <p>Monitor the effectiveness of the Student Support Centers.</p> <p>Conduct a student survey to assess student understanding of school protocols, student wellness, etc.</p>

## Staff Supports

Prior to in-person instruction	With in-person instruction
<p>Provide additional professional learning/orientation days for all staff in preparation for return to in-person learning and work.</p> <p>Update relevant district policies and procedures in accordance with new requirements, and in collaboration with bargaining unions.</p> <p>Establish policies for the work environment.</p> <p>Evaluate personnel needs.</p>	<p>Revisit training throughout the year on all topics and with all school and district community.</p> <p>Provide relevant training materials to all staff.</p> <p>Expand Employee Assistance Program and communicate services to faculty and staff.</p> <p>Partner with community organizations to provide additional resources and support as needed.</p> <p>Consistently update staff on current guidelines from the CDC, New Jersey Department of Health, Newark Department of Health and New Jersey Department of Education.</p> <p>Have available for staff educational materials on loss, grief, stress and anxiety.</p> <p>Provide staff with updated policies and procedures.</p> <p>Ensure workstations meet social distancing recommendations.</p> <p>Monitor work schedules to determine if adjustments are needed.</p> <p>Communicate hiring procedures with school and district staff.</p> <p>Share candidate pool when a vacancy is known to ensure staff coverage.</p> <p>Communicate retirements, resignations or staff unwilling to return to hiring managers and school administrators.</p>



**Roger León  
Superintendent**

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