

Audubon Public School District
Safe Return to School Plan
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Foreword:

Employee, student, and community safety are paramount to all Audubon Public School District decisions. The items included below may be influenced by the local, county, regional, state, and/or country-wide impact of COVID-19 and any evolution of the virus. Many if not all of the practices, procedures, and protocols included below may change throughout the 2021-2022 school year. The school community will be included in and updated swiftly of any changes.

What is the plan for the Audubon Public School District (APSD) 2021-2022 student schedule?

Based on the guidance provided by the New Jersey Department of Education and the Office of the Governor, APSD will deliver our programs in-person following pre-pandemic schedules (i.e. full-day).

Can a parent or student elect to participate remotely or in a hybrid model?

No, not at this time. A remote delivery model is not available for our students and is not part of the overall plan for the 2021-2022 school year; however, if the pandemic evolves and requires a modified, hybrid, and/or full remote school day, the District is prepared to pivot.

Will facemasks be required for faculty, staff, students, and/or visitors?

Governor Murphy updated State-wide facemask requirements on August 6, 2021. All students attending public schools in New Jersey are required to wear facemasks. This mandate was updated to include all faculty, staff, and visitors on August 9, 2021. Vaccinated individuals are required to wear masks during the in-person school day as well. There are times throughout the school day that this requirement may be lifted, e.g. during strenuous aerobic exercise, when outside, when the heat index in an indoor location exceeds 79⁰ Fahrenheit. Athletic and extracurricular activity participants are to follow the guidance of their coaches, facilitators, and supervisors. Face masks are optional during evening events when social distance can be maintained, including but not limited to Board of Education and Audubon Education Foundation meetings; unvaccinated guests are encouraged to wear facemasks. Student discipline may be necessary for any non-compliance. Facemask protocols may change throughout the year. Any updates will be communicated to the school community.

Will my child, if age 12 or older, or faculty and staff be required to get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccines are not mandatory at this time for employees or students in New Jersey public schools. However, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to mitigate against the spread of the virus. The District assisted any and all interested employees to get vaccinated in the Spring of 2021. Vaccinations are readily available throughout the County. The only time the District will inquire about vaccination status is during contact tracing; employees and families are not required to respond to these inquiries; however, lack of vaccination may impact the need to and/or length of quarantine.

Will the District be conducting diagnostic and/or screening tests for employees or students.

Although recommended, New Jersey school districts are not required to conduct diagnostic and/or screening tests. APSD will not be conducting diagnostic and/or screening tests at this time excluding temporal scans.

When should my child stay home from school?

The District families (and employees) were vigilant during the 2020-2021 school year and made good choices for themselves and our school community. If an employee or child feels sick they should stay home. If they have a fever of 100.4°F or higher or have two or more COVID-19 symptoms, they should not come to work/school and are encouraged to see a physician. Quarantine protocols vary based on local COVID levels, please contact the school nurse for further guidance.

What will happen when a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19?

The District will continue to send weekly COVID updates. Of course, if your child is in close contact with an expected COVID-19 case, you will be contacted directly by administration and/or a school nurse. Quarantine protocols vary based on local COVID levels. The District will continue to follow the Camden County Department of Health (CCDH) guidelines and guidance.

What will be the screening process for faculty, staff, students, and visitors?

All District employees and students (via their parent/guardian) will be required to sign a one-time waiver. The document includes exposure risks and symptoms that the employee or student (parent/guardian) is agreeing that they are in compliance in order for them to attend school. Frequent reminders about general hygiene and waiver requirements will be shared with all school community members. In addition, all employees and students will need to pass a temporal temperature screening in order to be in school or within a district facility. Visitors will be limited at this time; however, all visitors will need to complete a COVID questionnaire and undergo a temporal scan. Spectators at inside events will be treated as visitors. Spectators at outside events will not be formally screened but need to adhere to all District COVID protocols.

What support will be put in place if a student is quarantined?

Synchronous and/or projected based learning will be instituted as swiftly as possible when a student, students, or an entire class is quarantined. The quarantined student(s) will be able to join in for class instruction remotely or they may complete modified assignments. The days of quarantine will not count against the student's attendance status if they actively participate in instruction. If a student is ill and cannot participate in in-person or remote learning, their parent/guardian is to reach out to administration for guidance. Each quarantine will be unique and will be addressed as such.

Will Nutri-Serve be offering meals to all students who qualify for free or reduced price breakfasts and lunches?

The Federal Meal Program will be providing free breakfasts and lunches to ALL school-aged students for the 2021-2022 school year. However, it is imperative that everyone complete the Free or Reduced Meal application whether you qualify or not. District funding is impacted by the number of approved applications. Nutri-serve is planning on offering the full array of meal and a la carte options. Breakfast and lunch options may be limited at the beginning of the year. Additional items will be added as the year progresses. A la carte items are not included in the free meal program.

How will meal service be provided at each of the schools?

Once again, Nutri-serve is planning to offer a full line of breakfast and lunch options. Students that are electing to have breakfast, will be assigned locations to eat and the maximum social distance will be maintained between the students. Overall lunch service will vary at each school location. Haviland students will be assigned grade lunch periods that are staggered in a half-in and half-out format. In other words, half the grade level will eat while half the grade level participates in recess activities and then the groups will switch. The Mansion students will follow a similar format and additional outside seating will be available. The Junior-Senior High students will have additional sites to eat, e.g. main cafeteria, auxiliary gymnasium, etc. Each school will monitor these protocols closely and they may change over time keeping student and staff safety at the forefront of all District decisions.

Will students be able to have snacks and drinks throughout the school day?

Elementary students will be permitted to have snacks throughout the school day at predetermined times. Students are to follow the school-wide protocols and the guidance of their classroom teacher(s) when eating. The water bottle stations throughout the schools will remain on while the water bubblers are turned off. The procedures for drinking water are more flexible, but once again, students are to follow the school-wide protocols and the guidance of their classroom teacher(s).

Will schools be able to maintain social distance in classrooms and other spaces?

With all of the district students returning to in-person learning, the District will not be able to assure a social distance of 6 feet or more in most environments. The District was able to mitigate the spread of the virus in the Spring of 2021 through its numerous procedures and protocols including but not limited to temperature screenings, required facemasks, frequent cleanings of high touch areas, access to hand sanitizer, on-going monitoring and maintenance of heating and air ventilation systems, and isolation and quarantine protocols. Please remind your child to follow and adhere to all school protocols and procedures.

Will desk shields be available?

The District has elected to keep the desk shields in classroom settings. Desk shields may be used to separate students during meal service. Desk shields are available to any classroom teacher upon request and may be helpful for specific locations such as small group instructional areas. Administrative assistants and office personnel may remove their shields if they wish at this time. The District will continue to monitor the local, regional, and state-wide trends for COVID-19; desk shield installations may change throughout the school year.

Will special area teachers in the elementary schools be going to the classroom for instruction during the 2021-2022 school year?

At this time, the special area teachers, e.g. Art, Music, Physical Education, STEAM, and World Language will deliver instruction from their assigned locations. Students will go to the special area teacher's classroom/instructional space for learning. The students will use hand sanitizer prior to leaving their classroom and/or upon entry to the special. Face masks are required and students will be socially distanced as much as possible.

What are the hallway procedures for our schools?

The design of each school is unique, therefore each school has school-specific procedures for hallway and stairwell use. Signs are clearly visible throughout the schools and teachers and students will be trained in regards to expectations. Students are to adhere to all COVID-19 protocols. Disciplinary actions may be taken if needed.

What are bathroom procedures for our schools?

Each bathroom has been clearly marked with the maximum number of occupants. Stalls have been staggered (blocked or marked closed) in order to maximum social distancing. Procedures have been put in place for access (number of students out of a homeroom, etc.) and frequent cleaning.

What is the plan for athletics and extracurricular activities during the 2021-2022 school year?

The athletic and extracurricular programs will follow the pre-pandemic schedules while putting in place pandemic safety measures. Our Fall programs have already begun and are not following a modified schedule. In other words, practices, scrimmages, competition, and championship schedules are back to a “normal” season. The District will follow the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) recommendations. COVID screenings and quarantine protocols will follow Camden County Department of Health guidelines.

If my child and/or I feel anxious about COVID-19, what can we do?

It has been a challenging year and a half. It is natural to be concerned. The District has put in safety measures in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and teaching sessions in order to educate and provide social-emotional support for our school community. If you would like to talk with someone, the following mental health services are available to students and staff:

- **Students** may talk with their school counselor or school nurse.
- **Families** and parents may call the New Jersey Department of Health’s Coronavirus 24/7 hotline at 1-800-222-1222. (If calling from an out-of-state phone line, call 1-800-962-1253.)
- National Association of School Psychologist - [Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\): A Parent Resource](#)
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network - [Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope with Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [How to Talk to Your Kids About Coronavirus](#) - Public Broadcasting Service
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: [Talking with Children: Tips for Caregivers, Parents, and Teachers During Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#)

Will the Keep Elementary Youth Safe (KEYS) program be available at Haviland and Mansion?

Yes. The KEYS program will be available for the 2021-2022 school year. The program currently does not have a cap on participants and will run following pre-pandemic practices while instituting pandemic safety protocols. The [2021-2022 KEYS Manual](#) has additional information for interested families.

Will the District be offering a Preschool Program?

The Audubon Public School District will continue to offer a preschool program for the 2021-2022 school year. Identified preschool disabled students will participate along with their tuition-based general education peers. The District has applied for Preschool Aid monies for the 2021-2022 school year; any updates and/or changes will be communicated to the school community.

What can a family do if they do not have internet access?

The District has a list of families who have informed us that they lack internet access. We also have sent out surveys to all parents both via email and school messenger. Comcast and Verizon offer free or reduced price internet access. [Follow this link for access to a thorough list of providers and their plans.](#) The District has devices available for all students; please reach out to your child's principal for device support.

What can we do when our school-supplied device is broken or disabled?

The District will be addressing Chromebook exchanges on a daily basis at each school. Please contact your child's Main Office (HAS & MAS) and Library Media Center (AHS) for an exchange. These timelines and protocols may change.

How are the Audubon schools cleaned and disinfected?

The District has a comprehensive cleaning program that includes all buildings and facilities. We have hired additional part-time day and night custodians in order to keep the facilities clean when staff and students are present and to fully clean prior to the start of a new school day. The District protocols include cleaning high touch, high traffic, and communal spaces (e.g. bathrooms) every hour to hour and a half. Cafeteria surfaces are disinfected before and after each meal service.

Our school custodians clean the following daily:

- All doorknobs/bars/handles
- All handrails
- All light switches
- All desktops/tabletops
- White boards/chalk boards (excluding lesson plans written on them)
- All white board/chalkboard ledges
- All pencil sharpeners
- All floors (especially common areas including gymnasium, library media centers, etc.)
- All drinking fountains/water refilling stations
- All sink faucets
- All urinal/toilet handles
- All dispensers

What cleaning resources are available throughout the District?

Each classroom and District office will have Re-Juv-Nal sanitizing wipes, liquid hand sanitizing gel, a spray bottle with Re-Juv-Nal, and a microfiber towel (towels will be replaced daily). In addition, gloves and disposable face masks will be available as needed.

If you have additional comments, questions, or suggestions about the Audubon Public School District Safe Return to School Plan, please feel free to complete the attached [Safe Return to School Plan Community Survey](#).