



Empowerment Academy Charter School: The Road Forward: Fall 2022

Introduction

Empowerment is committed to providing a safe return to in-person education for the school year. We plan to provide full-day, full-time, in-person instruction and operations. The following guidance includes a range of strategies the district will implement to reduce risks to students and staff from COVID-19 while still allowing for fulltime in-person learning.

The district will continue to monitor the data and follow the recommendations of Governor Murphy's office, the NJDOH, and Jersey City/Hudson County Department of Health to ensure that we maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for our students and staff. Please note that per evolving guidelines, all plans outlined below are subject to change based on local, state and federal mandates.

Resources:

[Governor Murphy Mask Announcement](#)

[Executive Order 251](#)

[The Road Forward](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccine - CDC](#)

[NJDOH Vaccine Information](#)



Vaccination - Appendix A

Empowerment Academy does not provide services for vaccination at this time. However, per the state guidance neither vaccination nor routine testing is required for students and staff members. If any member of our community is interested in obtaining information about vaccination, please see the following:
<https://www.jerseycitynj.gov/cityhall/health/covid19vaccines>. There is a comprehensive list of locations that offer vaccination services within Hudson County.

Communication With Jersey City/Hudson County Health Department - Appendix B

School officials will continue to maintain close communication and meet with the local Department of Health on a regular basis in order to provide information and share resources with the staff and community on COVID-19 transmission, prevention, and control. Students and employees with symptoms related to COVID-19 or close contacts must be safely and respectfully isolated from others. Our Head Nurse, Henrietta Johnson and Director of Education, Shona Hendry are the liaisons to the Department of Health. School nurses and Principals are continually consulted for building based issues relevant to cases and quarantines.

Masks - Appendix C

The wearing of masks on school grounds is optional. However, students and/or staff members may be required to wear a mask for 10 days per medical and CDC guidance in the event of exposure.

Physical Distancing - Appendix D

Physical distancing is optional per CDC guidance.

Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette- Appendix E

Empowerment Academy encourages regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or the length of singing the Alphabet song) prior to/following eating, sharing materials and use of district outdoor equipment to reduce the spread of COVID-19. If soap and water are not readily available, use of provided hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol is required.



Meals - Appendix F

Breakfast and lunch meals will be distributed in a manner that was done pre-pandemic.

Transportation - Appendix G

Masks on school transportation are optional. However, students and/or staff members may be required to wear a mask for 10 days per medical and CDC guidance in the event of exposure.

Our fleet of buses transport students to and from school each morning and afternoon in a safe and reliable manner.

Cleaning, Disinfection, and Airflow - Appendix H

Classrooms will be cleaned daily in accordance with internal checklists.

Cafeterias will be cleaned daily in accordance with cleaning and disinfecting procedures.

Bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected during the operating day and once again after school closes for the day.

Additional outside air will be introduced where possible by opening doors, windows, and installation of two-way fans.

Screening, Exclusion, and Response to Symptomatic Students and Staff Members - Appendix I

Parents who feel their children are sick should keep them home and contact a physician.

Contact Tracing - Appendix J

Contact tracing will not occur for purposes of isolation and quarantine.

Testing - Appendix K

COVID tests (PCR or rapid) are acceptable forms of testing at Empowerment Academy. We will not accept self/home tests for neither positive nor negative results at this time.



Student and Staff Member Travel - Appendix L

There are currently no travel restrictions.

Empowerment Academy Remote Learning Plan

Inclement Weather

Per the NJ Department of Education, the district can only initiate remote learning in the event the school district is required to close school for more than three (3) consecutive school days due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure. Otherwise, in the event of short-term (1 or 2 day) school closure due to inclement weather or another reason, **there will be no remote learning.** If and when we do not have school for three consecutive days, we will let you know if students can log in remotely that day.

Communication of Health Related School Closure Plan/Notification to Close Process:

1. Director of Education to Principals and Leadership Team
2. Director of Education to Director of Operations
3. Principals to all Staff within their respective buildings
4. Director of Operations to Parents/community via School Messenger notification, website, telephone & social media.

Component 1: Equitable Access to Instruction

Technology Access

In order for all students to have access to curriculum during an extended absence, school issued/assigned Chromebooks will be distributed to all students in Grades K-8.

- For students in need of internet access, the district will be lending out wifi devices.
- Parents have the opportunity to email their child's teacher and/or principal, if necessary, during the normal school working hours of 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.
- Social Emotional learning is infused in all subject areas and all grade levels.
- Title One services and information can be found here [HERE](#).
- All curriculum plans cover 21st Century Community Learning skills and standards

Unless otherwise noted, in person instruction will be offered to all students.

- We have many other learning opportunities including before and after school programs (such as Morning Tutoring, Afterschool Tutoring, Afterschool Clubs/Activities, and Enrichment programs).

Access to Guidance Counselors/Social Workers

The Guidance Department will see students in-person but are also available via email, google chat, office phone, etc.



Component 2: Special Education Needs Special Education and Related Services for Students with Disabilities

While we are operating in-person, all programs and services are being provided to students ages three through 21 according to Federal and NJAC 6A:14 requirements with modifications and accommodations, as required. Students will continue to receive provisions of their IEP and will be provided with a free and appropriate education including special education and related services to the greatest extent appropriate. Appropriately certified and qualified professional staff members will continue to implement these programs through distance learning opportunities or individualized learning packets, as the use of school facilities will not be available. Student progress is being monitored by both the teacher and case manager. Student data will be used to determine achieved goals and objectives to determine the possible need for an extended school year or compensatory education.

Special Education Programming

All special education programming will be consistent with the student's individualized education program (IEP) and shall meet the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

In-Class Resource Programs

All IDEA classified students with an in-class resource program documented in the IEP and Section 504 students are provided with modifications and accommodations to meet their needs.

Self-Contained Programs

Not applicable as we are a full inclusion school and do not offer self contained programming.

Related Services (Speech-Language; Counseling

Students eligible for speech-language services (ESLS) have an individualized education plan (IEP) developed by their speech-language specialist based on current goals and objectives as stated in the student's IEP.

Child Study

Team/IEP Team/Evaluation and IEP Process During the Virtual Learning Process, Identification Meeting, Eligibility Meetings, IEP Meetings and Reevaluation Planning Meetings are being held via audio or video conference in order to stay in compliance with the annual/re-evaluation due dates. Initial and Reevaluation assessments that are feasible are being completed during the school closure.

Component 3: ELL/Bilingual Needs

Empowerment Academy is providing in-person instructional options to address the needs of the English Language Learners.



Component 4: Food Services Plan

To ensure the provision of school nutrition benefits or services for eligible students, Empowerment Academy will do its best to feed students on Free and Reduced Lunch status in -person.

Component 5: Virtual Instruction Day Plan

In the event of a district closure, Empowerment Academy will adopt a virtual school format to continue student instruction.

Teachers will use Google Classroom, Google Meets/Teams, and email to communicate and post assignments to students. We encourage all parents to view their child's assignments in Google Classrooms.

Component 8: Summer Programming Extended School Year:

At the present time, Summer School for students who are struggling academically have been and will continue to be held in person.