

**ANNA SCIACCA**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

February 22, 2021

Dear Members of the Garfield Community:

The Garfield District is preparing for the opening of In-Person Instruction with the implementation of the hybrid model, effective March 8, 2021. Parents will have the choice to continue with fully remote learning from the home or to send the child to school for instruction. All students who are returning to school will be assigned into either the Purple or Gold cohort and will report to school for two one-session days per week. Wednesday will continue to be a fully remote learning day for all students until further notice. It is important to inform you, that in accordance with the District policy, a student must remain as a fully remote learner for thirty school days prior to having the opportunity to transition into the district's in-person learning program.

The decision to reopen schools with the Hybrid model on March 8<sup>th</sup> is being made in collaboration with our local Health Department and is the result of balancing our most current data related to Covid-19 positive cases in the community with the need for many students to receive In-Person instruction to address both academic gaps as well social-emotional learning issues. Fortunately, in the month of February there have been less Covid cases in the city of Garfield with the positivity rate at about 8% as compared to as high as 12% in recent months. There are also some counties in the state of NJ that have left the high-risk level and are now included in the moderate risk, which is a sign that things are trending in the right direction.

The Garfield Public School District recognizes and follows the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC (Center for Disease Control)), State of New Jersey Department of Health, Garfield Health Department, New Jersey Department of Education and the State of New Jersey Travel Advisory (Travel Advisory). The CDC recommends that schools can open, regardless of whether teachers have been vaccinated, provided that there is strict adherence to the protocols of handwashing, wearing masks at all times, monitoring staff and students for symptoms, contact tracing, and social distancing. The Garfield District will diligently enforce all protocols to the greatest extent possible to prioritize the health and safety of our staff and students. The District maintains a very close collaboration with our local and county health departments, public health nurse and our medical director. All positive cases of Covid-19 identified among the staff and students are immediately reported to the Health Department so that decisions can be made regarding closing schools when necessary.

[The Garfield District Restart and Recovery Plan](#), found on the district website, has been updated to reflect the most current CDC guidelines and outlines the district protocols that will be enforced during the pandemic. The plan includes pertinent information regarding General Health and Safety Guidelines, Transportation, Schedules, Screening, PPE, Response to staff and students presenting symptoms, contact tracing, facilities cleaning practices, meals, and Physical Education / Recess. The District has also posted a [Plan Summary](#) on the website which includes the highlights and most important parts of the Restart and Recovery Plan in various sections. Parents are strongly

WE ARE AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/ EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYEE  
We Do Not discriminate as to Age, Race, Creed, National Origin, Gender, Sexual Orientation, or  
Disability

encouraged to refer to both the Restart and Recovery Plan as well as the Plan Summary on the district website for the most updated information.

As we reopen schools, the district will continue to prioritize the health and safety of our students and staff. Staff members will conduct a visual health screening upon student and staff arrival at school, including a temperature check. Any student or staff member with a temperature at or above 100.4 degrees will be placed in a designated isolation room until arrangements can be made for them to safely leave the school. Parents are encouraged to be on the alert for any signs of illness in their children and keep them at home when any symptoms of a cold or virus are presented. Additionally, parents and staff are required to review the [Daily Symptoms Screening Questionnaire](#), which can be found on the district and schools' websites and contact the school with any concerns. Parents and staff members are also advised to report any family illness, travel plans, and unusual circumstances to the school nurse.

[The Garfield Public Schools Covid-19 Protocol Flowchart](#) has been posted on the website. This flow chart will detail the process and management of various scenarios associated with any staff member or student exhibiting Covid symptoms and/or being exposed to Covid -19. After reviewing the chart, you may refer questions to your school nurse who has been trained in the district protocols and is a valuable resource in every school. In accordance with the most current CDC guidelines, a school, upon the investigation of the local health department, may be closed for fourteen days when there are any two unrelated positive cases of Covid-19 identified in that building. Parents who opt for the In-Person instruction must be aware that any school or individual classroom can be closed without advance notice and students in that school or classroom must resume fully remote learning for fourteen days or until the school is safe to reopen

Preparations for opening have been completed in all district schools. The necessary PPE (personal protective equipment) is available, and a schedule for increased cleaning and sanitizing is in place for all schools that includes the use of EPA approved and registered Covid-19 disinfectant cleaning agents, techniques, and equipment.

Your school administrator will be reaching out and providing you with more specific information regarding school hours, daily schedules, cohort assignments and the specific implementation of the health and safety protocols that are outlined in the Restart and Recovery Plan.

In closing, I encourage you to review the posted information so that you can make an informed decision that best suits your child and family. I thank you for your continued support and cooperation as we continue to meet the challenges presented by this pandemic. Please reach out to my office, your school administrator, and school nurse with any questions or concerns. Stay safe and be well!

Regards,

*Anna Sciacca*

**Superintendent of Schools**

WE ARE AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/ EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYEE  
We Do Not discriminate as to Age, Race, Creed, National Origin, Gender, Sexual Orientation, or  
Disability

WE ARE AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/ EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYEE  
We Do Not discriminate as to Age, Race, Creed, National Origin, Gender, Sexual Orientation, or  
Disability