

# **Opening Planning Fall 2021**

**Presented to Menands UFSD BOE  
August 23, 2021**

## **OUR OBJECTIVE**

- All students will return fully to in person instruction.
- We will use what we have learned over the last 18 months.
- This includes a reliance on experts in the fields of health & education.
- We are committed to a safe and healthy learning environment for students and staff.

## **MOST CURRENT GUIDANCE**

- American Academy of Pediatrics: [AAP](#)
- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention: [CDC](#)
- The United States Department of Education: [USDOE](#)
- The Albany County Health Department: [ACDOH](#)
- The New York State Department of Education: [NYSDOE](#)
- Information shared at recent parent & staff meetings

## **AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PEDIATRICS**

“ . . . the AAP believes that, at this point in the pandemic, given what we know about low rates of in-school transmission when proper prevention measures are used, together with the availability of effective vaccines for those age 12 years and up, that the benefits of in-person school outweigh the risks in almost all circumstances.”

They go on to say:

“Everything possible must be done to keep students in schools in-person.” - and in particular:

- All eligible individuals should receive the COVID-19 vaccine.
- All students older than 2 years and all school staff should wear face masks at school (unless medical or developmental conditions prohibit use).

## **THE CDC KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- Students benefit from in-person learning, and safely returning to in-person instruction in the fall 2021 is a priority.
- Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting vaccination can help schools safely return to in-person learning as well as extracurricular activities and sports.
- Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all students (age 2 and older), staff, teachers, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status.
- Screening testing, ventilation, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, staying home when sick and getting tested, contact tracing in combination with quarantine and isolation, and cleaning and disinfection are also important layers of prevention to keep schools safe.

## **THE CDC KEY TAKEAWAYS CONTINUED**

- Students, teachers, and staff should stay home when they have signs of any infectious illness and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care.
- Many schools serve children under the age of 12 who are not eligible for vaccination at this time. Therefore, this guidance emphasizes implementing layered prevention strategies (e.g., using multiple prevention strategies together consistently) to protect students, teachers, staff, visitors, and other members of their households and support in-person learning.
- Localities should monitor community transmission, vaccination coverage, screening testing, and occurrence of outbreaks to guide decisions on the level of layered prevention strategies (e.g., physical distancing, screening testing).

## **THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

- Everyone Ages 12 Years and Older: Get Vaccinated Before School Begins
- Make a Plan to Prevent COVID-19 from Spreading at School
- Connect Students and Families to Nutritious School Meals
- Help Students and Families Access Safe Transportation to School

## **THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONTINUED**

### Wearing Masks:

CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Consistent and correct mask use is particularly important indoors and when physical distancing cannot be maintained. When teachers, staff, and students (ages 2 years and older) consistently and correctly wear a mask, they protect others as well as themselves.

### Physical Distancing:

CDC recommends that schools maintain at least three feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask wearing, to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. When it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least 3 feet, such as when schools cannot fully re-open while maintaining these distances, it is important to layer multiple other prevention strategies, such as indoor masking. The CDC has underscored the importance of students returning to in-person learning to support the social, emotional, and academic development of students and improve life outcomes.

## **THE N.Y.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

The overall goals for the 2021-2022 school year are to keep students and staff healthy and safe, be responsive to student needs, and maximize in-person teaching and learning, including:

- COVID-19 Vaccinations
- Monitoring community Transmission
- Wearing Masks
- Physical Distancing & Cohorting
- Screening & Testing
- Handwashing & Respiratory Etiquette
- Staying Home When Sick
- Cleaning & Disinfecting of Facilities

## **OUR OVERARCHING PLAN BASED ON THE GUIDANCE A TIERED MITIGATION APPROACH:**

- All students receiving in-person instruction
- Encouraging vaccinations for all eligible
- Mask wearing
- Screening/Testing
- Monitoring Community Transmission
- 3-feet physical distancing when feasible, 6 feet in the cafeteria when feasible, and utilizing seating charts in classrooms and on buses
- Minimizing visitors to the building
- Handwashing, hand sanitizing & respiratory etiquette
- Protocols and procedures to address symptomatic, ill and COVID positive individuals.
- Cleaning & disinfection
- Maximizing ventilation in all settings

## Proposed Menands Plan

**COVID-19 IS EVER CHANGING  
PLANNING MUST BE FLUID  
PLANS CAN & WILL CHANGE**

## **INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE, UPDATED & COMMUNICATED**

- Continue to monitor the school web page: [www.menands.org](http://www.menands.org)
- We have equipped the webpage with “G-Translate” so the information can be translated into a variety languages using the drop down menu.
- We will continue to use School Messenger to disseminate information.
- “First Day” Packets and more specific information around what students and families can expect will go out in the mail this week.