



Avalon Elementary School

721 California Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15202
412-732-3300 | northgatesd.net

October 22, 2020

Dear Families,

The first day of our hybrid school schedule is just around the corner. While school will open differently; there is still something special about preparing for another school year. As you may have heard, after great care and deliberation we have determined that the hybrid learning schedule was the best way to begin in person school.

We are very happy to welcome your child to the 2020-21 school year. Cohort A will meet Monday and Thursday. Cohort B and students remaining online will meet Tuesday and Friday.

We have created two days of orientation sessions for our students and families to maintain small groups and proper social distancing. These orientation sessions will be held throughout the day **Thursday, November 5 and Friday, November 6**. During this session you and your child will be informed on the building procedures and expectations as we begin to return. If you're not comfortable attending an orientation session in person or are unable to attend during your assigned time please email me so we can make other arrangements.

NOTE: Students remaining online WILL NOT attend orientation.

We ask that only one adult comes to the orientation to help keep our groups as small as possible. While your student awaits their class orientation session, our teachers will be providing lessons and skill building activities to assist your child with the transition to hybrid learning.

The first full week of hybrid learning will begin on **Monday, November 9**. The school day will begin at 9 am and end at 3:05 pm.

Safety in School:

AHN has provided feedback that wearing a mask is the best defense against COVID, and they need to be worn at all times when we are in the buildings with the exception of breakfast and lunch. During meal times, students will be at a minimum 6 feet apart from each other and special cleaning protocols are in place for those spaces. AHN expressed that COVID-19 transmission is less likely to occur by touching surfaces. However, a detailed plan is in place to clean all areas of the buildings, especially high touch areas.

- Teachers will be educating students on COVID symptoms in homerooms so that students are aware that they should report to the school nurse should they not feel well.
- Students will be required to wear masks while at school with the exception of when they are eating. Time will be built into the day for students to take a walk outside for a mask break.
- Students will not share materials.
- Students will not engage in any singing at this time.
- Band instruction will be held virtually.
- Outside visitors will not be allowed into the buildings.

A number of schools have already successfully returned to in-person learning. As anticipated, there have been cases of COVID-19 in the schools but they have been able to quickly manage them. The key is communication. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to the school nurse. It is also imperative that families immediately communicate any possible exposure to COVID-19 or a confirmed case in the family. We will work directly with you and, if necessary, the county health department to determine the best course of action.

When to Keep Your Student Home

Please use the following guide to determine if your child should stay home.

- Temperature: If your child's temperature is 100.4 degrees or higher stay home until fever-free for 24 hours.
- Is your child taking any medication to treat or reduce a fever such as Ibuprofen (i.e. Advil, Motrin) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol)? If yes, stay home.
- Is your child experiencing any of the following?

<p style="text-align: center;">Group A 1 or more symptoms</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Group B 2 or more symptoms</p>
<p>Cough Shortness of breath Difficulty breathing New olfactory disorder New taste disorder</p>	<p>Fever (measured or subjective) Chills Rigors Myalgia Headache Sore throat Nausea or vomiting Diarrhea Fatigue Congestion or runny nose</p>

Stay home if your child has:

- Has one or more symptoms in Group A OR
- Has two or more symptoms in Group B OR
- Is taking fever-reducing medication.

When a Student Gets Sick at School

If your student is exhibiting symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they will be sent to the school nurse immediately. The school nurse will evaluate the student and notify the parents/guardians to pick up the student ASAP. The student is then isolated. Parents and guardians will be advised to seek medical attention.

What if we have a case in the school?

If we have a case in school, the affected student/staff will be removed immediately. We will then work with the Allegheny County Health department to contact trace and make decisions about who should be quarantined. Parents will be notified via robo call and a written letter about the situation. Please keep in mind, we have to maintain student/staff confidentiality but we will provide all of the information necessary to individuals who may be impacted.

Entrances for Morning Arrival:

Students will enter the building through the designated entrance as listed by homeroom below.

Entrance Auditorium A Gymnasium	Entrance Auditorium B Auditorium Floor	Entrance Auditorium C Auditorium Floor	Entrance Auditorium D Auditorium Balcony
Lipovsky (K) Rupik (K) Monahan (1)	Borza (2) Maxwell (2) Lewis (4) Persson (4)	Bonicky (1) Auth (3) Folino (3)	O'Donnell (5) Roberts (5) Farmer (6) Majerac (6)

IMPORTANT: Breakfast Line will enter at the MAIN ENTRANCE to the school.

Dismissal:

To maintain safe social distancing there will be a staggered departure schedule with different exit points within the building. When the students are dismissed everyone needs to leave school property before the next grade level exits. The following grade levels will be dismissed at the following times:

Dismissal Time	Rear Parking Lot B2	Front Parking Lot B1	Main Entrance A3	Auditorium Entrance A
2:55 pm	Lipovsky (K) Rupik (K)	Auth (3)	Majerac (6) Farmer (6)	Roberts (5) O'Donnell (5)
3 pm		Borza (2)	Lewis (4) Persson(4)	Maxwell (2)
3:05 pm		Bonicky (1)	Folino (3)	Monahan (1)

Hallways and Stairwells:

There will be signage and floor markings to encourage proper distancing in the hallways as well as a specific direction to walk when changing classes. The hallways will be one way to avoid any close contact. The stairwells on the **RIGHT SIDE** will be for going **UP** and the stairwells to the **LEFT SIDE** will be for going **DOWN**. This will be for the back stairwell as well.

Office Procedures:

There will be only one visitor or family in the office at a time. The security vestibule will be utilized as the waiting area for any overflow that needs to use the office. There will be a limit on visitors to pre-arranged visits only, excluding emergencies. There will be signage designated for the entry and exit of all doors.

Allergy Concerns:

In order to keep students and faculty safe, **NO PETS** are to be brought on school premises. If you have a service animal, please contact the main office at 412-732-3300 Ext. 3000 to facilitate a safe entrance plan.

Students Remaining Online

In an effort to continue to offer our students a high-quality education with as little disruption as possible, we have adjusted our plans for students at the elementary level who choose to remain online as of November 9.

Grades K-2

We are currently working to hire additional staff that will work with our K-2 students who are electing to remain online. These students will follow the same schedule as an in-person cohort with three live instruction days and two asynchronous days. All three of their live days will be online. Students will follow the same pacing and curriculum as the students attending in person.

Grades 3-6

Students in grades 3-6 who remain online will be in their own homeroom section in each building, and will maintain the teachers that they currently have. They will be scheduled just like a student within a normal cohort with three live instruction days and two asynchronous days. All three of their live days will be online.

Students with IEPs will continue to receive support and adaptations from their Special Education teachers, and they will be able to meet with those teachers during office hours as well. Students with one on one support from a paraprofessional will continue to receive that support virtually on a daily basis.

While our virtual students may not be physically present, it is important to us that they still feel connected to their school community. Support for students will be available each day through an open virtual support room. In addition, we will be monitoring our virtual students closely with regular check-ins and will make adaptations as necessary to meet each student's needs.

This is a challenging time, and we thank you for your patience, understanding, and flexibility as we make responsible decisions to keep our community safe. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with questions. You can also access the latest information on our website www.northgatesd.net by clicking on the Reopening Plans link. We are very excited to welcome back our students, and we want this to be a positive experience for all of our families.

Thank you,

Dr. Joseph Peacock
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