



Sayreville Public Schools Vision 2030

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Talk Sup Week 16 Review and Preview

January 3, 2022

Good morning Sayreville and happy New Year! We hope you had a happy and blessed holidays, and a relaxing winter recess. Welcome to another edition of Talk Sup. As I reported to you earlier this morning, Due to the snow predicted for this later morning during student arrival, we will have a **90 minute delayed opening today**.

As I noted in my broadcast email yesterday evening, the Sayreville Public Schools will be open for in-person instruction today, January 3, 2022, and for as long as mitigating factors, such as in-school virus transmission rates and staffing, will permit it. Therefore, should there be a time within the next several weeks that we decide, in consultation with and as per a recommendation by the New Jersey Department of Health, to close a school or the district due to health conditions or lack of staff, we will provide parents and staff with as much advanced notice as possible. Nonetheless, our administration, faculty, and staff at each school will begin preparing contingency plans, which include the potential distribution of learning devices and other resources to students in grades preK-7, in the case that we need to close a school or the district for a given time period.

However, due to in-district and vendor staffing challenges, please be aware that there may be **multiple bus delays today and throughout the week**. As we did earlier in the school year, we will do our best to report any delays to you as early as possible in the morning.

As referenced above, due to the fast spreading Omicron COVID-19 strain, over the winter recess we received many reports of individuals testing positive for the virus. Below please find the breakdown of cases per school that have been reported to us to date.

Arleth	8
Eisenhower	18
Truman	6
Wilson	8
Samsel Upper Elementary School	18
Sayreville Middle School	45
Sayreville War Memorial High School	42
Project Before at Cheesequake	2
Project Before at Samsel	2
Project Before Selover	1
Facilities	4
Administration	2

After conducting contact tracing in accordance with Center for Disease Control (CDC) and New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) guidelines, individuals from each location were determined to be in “close contact” with the infected people. At this time, all should have been notified and directed to quarantine. For more information on infections, click [here](#) to review our [Student](#) and [Staff](#) COVID-19 Dashboards.

Due to this recent surge, many people have contacted me to request that we begin school in 2022 virtually or that we give parents the option of allowing their children to learn remotely rather than in-person. First, while I completely understand these concerns, at this time, unlike the last school year, the Governor has not provided parents with the

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option for their children to participate in remote instruction rather than in-person. Furthermore, school districts are not permitted to make the decision to replace in-person instruction with virtual instruction without consultation and recommendation by the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), of which we are in contact daily with while reporting all cases. While the number of students and staff who have been infected has rose significantly over the past month and particularly this past week, we have not received any feedback nor recommendations by the NJDOH to move to virtual instruction. Nevertheless, many districts, including some in Middlesex County, have decided to begin the first several days, week, or two weeks of the new year remotely. While I am not aware of the unique circumstances that led to their decision, including whether it was recommended by the NJDOH, in Sayreville we will continue to proceed accordingly by reporting our cases to the NJDOH daily and consulting with them on a building by building basis as to whether to close a school and/or the district, which includes determining if we have enough staff to safely supervise and effectively educate our students.

Naturally, the decision to close schools for in-person instruction is an incredibly difficult one, as schools are by far the safest and most productive place for many of our children, and many of our parents that cannot work remotely, especially those that are frontline workers, depend on them for childcare. Furthermore, all our students have missed too much valuable in-person instruction over the past two years. Although virtual instruction is a viable alternative when there are no other options, as we have learned from our local and Start Strong assessment data, its effectiveness when it comes to learning is not close to that of in-person instruction, especially for our students with disabilities, English language learners, and our many socio-economically disadvantaged students. In addition, many of our students are still dealing with the adverse social and emotional impact of weeks and months of social isolation during remote instruction.

With this said, we completely understand if parents do not feel comfortable sending their child(ren) to school today or at all this week. Although child(ren) will be officially marked absent from school if their parents choose to not send them, we encourage them to complete all the work assigned to them by their teachers and posted on their respective learning management system platforms (Google Classroom or Oncourse Classroom). Conversely, for the parents that plan on sending your children to school, we continue to implore that you:

- **Do not send your child(ren) to school if they are symptomatic.**
- **Report to the administration and nurses at your child(ren)'s respective school(s) if your child(ren) are symptomatic or have tested positive.**
- **Diligently complete the daily health screener for your child(ren) every morning.**
- **Provide your child(ren) with a mask and remind them to wear it appropriately in school.**
- **Remind your child(ren) to practice appropriate hand hygiene**
- **Strongly consider participating in the school district's testing and vaccination programs.**

That being said, please remember that, as part of our district's [Safe Return Plan](#), this **Wednesday, January 5, 2022** we will resume **voluntary** staff/family and student/family **COVID-19 testing** with Back to School Solutions from **2:30 – 5 pm** and **voluntary vaccinations** with the Parlin Pharmacy from **4 -7 pm** in the **Sayreville War Memorial High School Cafeteria**. Please also note that the pharmacy is also providing **Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson and Johnson booster** shots. **Likewise, they are now also providing vaccinations for children 5 years of age and older. However, in accordance with the CDC and NJDOH it is recommended that parents consult with their child's pediatrician prior to getting them vaccinated, especially those under that age of 12.** Below, please find the tentative dates for both of these services throughout the fall. With regard to testing, since **we do not test people who are demonstrating symptoms**, if you are symptomatic, you should ask your healthcare provider for an appropriate testing location. If you are a staff member or the parent of a student who is interested in learning more information about how you and your residing family members can participate in this vital virus spreading prevention activity, click [here](#). **Please note** that if you have already participated in testing with us, you only need to conduct a telemedicine appointment. If you have never tested with us in the past, you would need to register using the following link <https://backtoworksolutions.com/SayrevillePSD.html>. Once you have conducted your telemedicine appointment, you will receive a **prescription** for the **PCR** test.



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As mentioned above the Parlin Pharmacy will once again administer **Flu and COVID-19 Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson and Johnson vaccine shots to anyone 5 years of age and older, as well as Pfizer, Moderna, and J&J booster shots, in the Sayreville War Memorial High School Cafeteria.** Naturally, **any individuals under the age of 18 will need to be accompanied by a parent/guardian, who will need to provide signed consent for the vaccination.** Therefore, anyone interested in receiving the vaccine **must register online in advance** by clicking [here](#) or by going to the **Parlin Pharmacy website (www.parlinrx.com).** Unfortunately, for safety purposes, **no “walk-ins” will be permitted into the school.** In fact, with in-district COVID-19 testing, **all registered participants must report to Door 22 of the high school cafeteria (adjacent to the dumpsters),** where they will be screened by our security team before being allowed into the vaccination room. Below please find the tentative dates and times.

COVID-19 Testing Schedule Via Back to School Solutions

- Wednesday, January 5, 2022
- Wednesday, January 12, 2022
- Wednesday, January 19, 2022
- Wednesday, January 26, 2022
- Wednesday, February 2, 2022
- Wednesday, February 9, 2022
- Wednesday, February 16, 2022
- Wednesday, February 23, 2022
- Wednesday, March 2, 2022
- Wednesday, March 9, 2022
- Wednesday, March 16, 2022
- Wednesday, March 23, 2022
- Wednesday, March 30, 2022
- Wednesday, April 6, 2022
- Wednesday, April 13, 2022
- Wednesday, April 27, 2022
- Wednesday, May 4, 2022
- Wednesday, May 11, 2022
- Wednesday, May 18, 2022
- Wednesday, May 25, 2022
- Wednesday, June 1, 2022
- Wednesday, June 8, 2022
- Wednesday, June 15, 2022
- Wednesday, June 22, 2022
- Wednesday, June 29, 2022

COVID-19 and Flu Vaccinations with the Parlin Pharmacy

- Wednesday, January 5, 2022
- Wednesday, January 12, 2022
- Wednesday, January 19, 2022
- Wednesday, January 26, 2022
- Wednesday, February 2, 2022
- Wednesday, February 9, 2022
- Wednesday, February 16, 2022
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- Wednesday, June 8, 2022
- Wednesday, June 15, 2022
- Wednesday, June 22, 2022
- Wednesday, June 29, 2022



If you did not have a chance to attend the Board of Education (BOE) Business Meeting held on Tuesday, December 21st, here is what you missed. Stephanie Castelletto from Sayreville War Memorial High School (SWMHS) and Jayda Ronquillo from the Sayreville Middle School (SMS) began the meeting by providing their respective Student Council Representative to the Board of Education Reports. Next, Mr. Esposito expressed his opening remarks and Mr. Walsh shared a few district highlights. During the presentation portion of the meeting, students and staff from



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the middle school and high school who attended the Day of Dialogue in South River back in November eloquently and passionately shared their experience. In addition, Ms. Mannino, Director of Food Services, presented the 2022-23 Food Services Budget Presentation. To view the presentation, click [here](#).

The Board then moved the action items from the Superintendent's Report onto the Board Agenda and approved them all. To see the Agenda, click [here](#). To see the Agenda Addendum, click [here](#). To view the video of this meeting, click [here](#). Among other motions, on the Vision 2030 Finance and Infrastructure portion of the agenda, the BOE approved the application and acceptance of the New York Jets Girls Flag Football Grant in the potential amount of \$13,000 for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. Likewise, it approved a cooperative jointure agreement with the Board of Education of South Amboy for the purpose of offering the students in the South Amboy School District the opportunity to participate in football. It also approved a professional services agreement with the Spiezle Architectural Group to pay them \$339,800 for professional services related to the construction of a Transportation Complex on the Selover School property, and the withdrawal from Capital Reserve of the funds to pay for it. Furthermore, the BOE approved the submission several HVAC upgrades for large spaces projects to the New Jersey Department of Education for review and Department approval consistent with the district's approved long-range facilities plan, and for the Spiezle Architectural Group to make the submission on behalf of the district. Finally, the Board of Education approved revised substitute rates due to a change of the minimum wage in New Jersey, effective January 1, 2021.

On the Student Achievement portion of the agenda, among other motions, the Board approved two revised course title changes at the high school. In accordance with the aforementioned grant submission approval, it also approved a pilot Girls Flag Football athletic program at SWMHS for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. Likewise, among other motions, on the Governance portion of the agenda, the Board of Education adopted the 2021-2022 Sayreville Public Schools Nursing Services Plan. It also approved the submission of the Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials and Addendum for school year 2021-2022.

Finally, on the Personnel portion of the agenda, as well as other motions, the Board of Education appointed new certificated and non-certificated staff for the 2021-22 school year. Likewise, it appointed staff for the elementary and middle school Math and Literacy Academies, English Language Learning Tutoring, and Tier 3 Tutoring. It also approved an increase in the hourly wage rates for Lunchroom/Playground Aides and Hall Monitors for the 2021-22 school year due to the State of New Jersey Minimum Hourly Wage Increase effective January 1, 2022. In addition, the Board approved the transfer of non-certificated staff members for the 2021-22 school year. Lastly, it approved teacher supervisors for NJHS Afterschool Homework Help program at the middle school.

During the Open Public Comment portion of the meeting, a parent and community member expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the work performed by Board of Education Member Carrie Kenny, who will be stepping away from the BOE in January.

Likewise, during the Board Discussion portion of the meeting, the Board and administration presented Mrs. Kenny with a plaque to demonstrate their appreciation for the amazing work she performed while serving on the Board of Education for the past four years. Furthermore, several BOE members, led by Mr. Esposito, took turns commending and thanking Mrs. Kenny for her hard work, dedication, and commitment to the students and staff, school district, and greater Sayreville community. After that, Mr. Balka reviewed what was discussed during the last Finance and Infrastructure Committee Meeting, as did Mrs. Kenny and Mr. Walsh for the last Student Achievement and Personnel Committee Meetings. Mrs. Bloom also shared news from the Middlesex County School Boards Association. Finally, Mr. Fernandez provided an update on happenings with the Sayreville/South Amboy Rotary Club.

The next meeting will be tomorrow, **Tuesday, January 4th**. During this meeting the newly elected and re-elected Sayreville Board of Education Members will be officially sworn in. In addition, a short Business Meeting Agenda with motions for approval will also be presented to the new BOE. The agenda for this meeting will be posted on the



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district website on Friday, December 17th. A complete copy of the **December 21st** meeting minutes will be posted on the BOE Meeting Minutes page of the website once they are approved by the BOE during the next BOE Meeting on **January 18, 2021**.

As noted above, tomorrow evening at **7:30 pm**, there will be a Board of Education (BOE) Reorganization and Business Meeting in the Sayreville War Memorial High School (SWMHS) Cafeteria. During it, the newly elected and re-elected Sayreville Board of Education Members will be officially sworn in. In addition, a short Business Meeting Agenda with motions for approval will be presented to the new BOE. To see the Reorganization Meeting Agenda, click [here](#). Likewise, click [here](#) to see the Business Meeting Agenda. In order to access the live streaming of the meeting click [here](#). Since the viewing of the live stream will be handled by YouTube, you must be viewing the stream on a browser or application that is live stream compatible. If you are unable to hear audio you may need to try a different browser/application. The live stream will only be available during the real-time duration of the meeting. Directions for public participation during the meeting will be provided on the above-mentioned live stream page of the website. Finally, if on Wednesday you wish to view it or other past-recorded BOE meetings, click [here](#).



In other happenings across the district, thanks to our magnificent teachers and instructional staff, our students continued to progress in learning and had a ton of fun doing so this past week. At the Samsel Upper Elementary School, students in Ms. Brandon's and Ms. Terrano's class collected, cleaned and sorted over 100 toys for the Second Chance Toys Charity. We commend and thank them for this outstanding display of charity. At the high school, students in Ms. Benoy's and Ms. Stokes' Chemistry classes made holiday sugar glass ornaments



during very cool labs. In addition, the faculty and staff clapped out and said goodbye to beloved teachers Mr. Craft and Ms. Berman, who retired at the end of the month. Lastly, at the Arleth School, students and staff recognized the many Golden Award character education winners for December, which focused on compassion, empathy and caring.



Over the past two weeks our students, staff, and community members continued to impress us with their amazing accomplishments. We begin by commending our SWMHS Air Force Junior ROTC cadets who presented our nations colors during Washington Football Team and Philadelphia Eagles football game two weeks ago. We also commend and thank Peter and Bianca Pietek who donated holiday gifts valued at approximately \$3,000. Likewise,



we commend and thank Sayreville Recreation for also donating countless gifts to children in Sayreville. Furthermore, we commend and thank the Sayreville Middle School PTO for donating 100 gift cards for seven families in need at the middle school. Finally, we commend and thank the Christ Episcopal Church of South Amboy and the 1st Presbyterian Church of Sayreville for donating food, winter coats, gift cards and a laptop to well over a dozen families in Sayreville.



In athletics, last week the SWMHS Girls Basketball Team defeated Matawan High School in the Blue Devil Holiday Tournament. In addition, the SWMHS Boys Winter Track and Field Team performed outstandingly during the Spiked Shoe Holiday Festival Meet at the New York Armory last week. Anthony Voto won First Place in the Shot Put, Sean Wilson took First Place in the 800 Meter Race, and



Ryan Donnamaria came in Second Place in the High Jump. Finally, other student athletes demonstrated great effort during the first month of their winter strength training program. Win or lose, all our amazing student athletes continued to compete fiercely and demonstrate the teamwork and sportsmanship that makes us all proud to be Bombers. Thus, we thank them and their coaches for their hard work, dedication, and the manner in which they represent SWMHS and our community. Please remember that you can see all athletic team schedules and view all the action by watching them on the live streaming links posted on the Athletics page of our website or by clicking [here](#).



As per the [2021-22 School District Calendar](#) and the [January Monthly Activities Calendar](#) (click on each to view them) there will be a **BOE Business Meeting** tomorrow, **Tuesday, January 4th and Tuesday, January 18th**. Please also remember that our students will be dismissed early on **Monday, January 10th** so that our staff can participate in professional development. Please also note that our schools will be closed for instruction on **Monday, January 17th** in observance of Martin Luther King Day. Finally, as previously noted, please remember that we will be dismissing students early January 31st through February 4th so that parents and our faculty can participate in **conferences**.

If you or someone you know would like to **advertise** with us on our **website** and via **Bomber Blasts**, you should click [here](#) and submit an inquiry with *School Revenue Partners*. Naturally, we will continue to Bomber Blast activity information and community service announcements for our schools and the greater community at no cost. Likewise, if you would like to advertise on our **buses**, click [here](#).

Have a great day and wonderful week.

Dr. Labbe