

GARFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

34 OUTWATER LANE, GARFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07026

ANNA SCIACCA
Superintendent of Schools

973-340-5000
FAX 973-340-4620

October 27, 2020

Dear Parents/ Guardians:

As part of the Garfield District Restart and Reopening Plan, the district planned to open schools with the Hybrid model of Instruction on November 9, 2020. As you are aware, parents had the choice to either send students to school to receive in person instruction with the implementation of the hybrid model or to continue to keep students learning from home with the fully remote learning model that is currently in place.

The district is currently providing in person instruction for our Special Education students who experienced the greatest challenges with remote learning. As the district has been preparing for the reopening of in-person instruction for all students on November 9, 2020, the Garfield community is experiencing a surge in the number of positive Covid-19 cases. Garfield has reported over 100 positive cases in the month of October, which are the highest numbers on record since May 2020. Unfortunately, the district has also experienced a rise in reported positive cases of staff and students. The district was forced to close one school completely for fourteen days and most recently, two Special Education classrooms in two different elementary schools in order to provide the mandated quarantine period due to the exposure to an individual who has tested positive for Covid-19.

While we understand the tremendous benefits of in-person instruction from an academic and social-emotional standpoint, the first priority of the district must be to protect the health and safety of students and staff and reduce the spread of Covid-19 in our school community. As we have experienced, the Covid-19 situation is a fluid one; circumstances can change very quickly, and we must be prepared to meet those challenges as they occur. These changes can include the closing of the entire district, one school, one grade level, one classroom, etc. within one day's notice. When schools do reopen, parents must continue to have childcare available in the event that students are directed to remain home and participate in fully remote learning classes.

A meeting of the Garfield District Reopening and Restart Committee was held on Friday, October 23, 2020. While the committee acknowledges the importance of reopening the schools, we all share the same reservations regarding the increase of Covid-19 cases in the Garfield community. This administration and Board of Education will continue to monitor the data as provided by the City Office of Emergency Management, our local Department of Health, and the Bergen County Department of Health Services and plan accordingly for the reopening of Garfield Public Schools.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and understanding as we work through the many challenges and unprecedented situations presented by the Covid-19 pandemic. We will continue to keep you informed regarding the reopening of schools on November 9th. A final decision will be made on or before November 2nd.

Kind Regards,

Anna Sciacca

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