

# Newfane Central School District

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Michael J. Baumann  
Superintendent of Schools

*"Together We Can"*

August 5, 2021

Dear parents, students and members of the Newfane Community:

We hope you are enjoying your summer and are spending time with family and friends. We look forward to welcoming your child(ren) back to our buildings in September.

We are looking forward to opening schools at full capacity in September and are currently preparing our buildings for full-time (5 days/week) in-person learning. Yesterday, superintendents across the state were informed that there would be no direction given to us by either the governor's office or the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) regarding any restrictions or requirements for operating schools in September. And we were previously notified by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) that NYSED would not be providing guidance or making recommendations regarding reopening plans.

In the absence of any leadership from New York State officials, we are prepared to take whatever steps are necessary to get our students back in school safely. As always, providing for the health, safety and well-being of our students, our staff and our entire community is our highest priority. In making these difficult decisions, we are constantly monitoring local data supplied to us by the Niagara County Department of Health, as well as statements issued by:

- The Center for Disease Control (CDC): "Given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant...CDC recommends **universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools**, regardless of vaccination status;" and
- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP): "**All students older than 2 years and all school staff should wear face masks at school** (unless medical or developmental conditions prohibit use)."

Our plan for returning to full-time, in-person instruction in all our buildings on September 7, 2021 will include following these protocols:

- Bus Travel
  - Masks will be worn on buses by both vaccinated and unvaccinated students and staff.
- Safety Protocols
  - The 3-foot social distancing guidance will be followed *whenever practicable*; however, small group instruction and students working together in groups will be allowed.
  - All other safety protocols (frequent cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surfaces, etc.) will continue as currently in place.
- Outside on School Property
  - Masks are not required to be worn outside while on school property by either vaccinated or unvaccinated students and staff.
- Wearing a mask at all times is encouraged and always an option.
- Inside School Buildings
  - Masks will be worn by vaccinated and unvaccinated staff and students whenever moving about inside of buildings (upon arrival, during the change of classes, at dismissal, etc.).
  - Masks may be removed by vaccinated and unvaccinated students once seated in the classroom at the discretion of the teacher or while in grouped or cohort settings (cafeteria, phys ed, etc).

**The effectiveness of these protocols will be reviewed at the end of each month; adjustments will be made based on the data available and the current circumstances in our community.**

The return to in-person, full-time everyday instruction includes a return to our previous full-day schedule at Newfane Elementary School- student arrival between 8:30 and 8:50 AM, in their classrooms by 9:00AM; dismissal beginning at 3:05PM. Information regarding arrival and dismissal procedures will be coming directly from the Elementary Principal, Mrs. Danielle Hawkins, in the next few days.

As we have offered throughout the pandemic, if your child has a specific medical condition that affects his/her ability to wear a mask, please contact the Special Education Office at (716) 778-6458. With appropriate medical documentation, your child may be eligible for an in-school accommodation.

Throughout the pandemic, we have made it our #1 priority to get our children back in school safely, in-person, every day; and that remains our goal. We appreciate the tremendous support you have given us throughout the pandemic and look forward to working closely with our entire Newfane Community as we progress closer and closer to true normalcy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Baumann', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael Baumann  
Superintendent of Schools