



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
201 Main Street
VESTAL, NEW YORK 13850

September 1, 2021

Dear Vestal Community,

With the beginning of the school year fast approaching, we wanted to share an outline on how the District will handle the beginning of the school year. As was the case last year, I would ask that all of our families extend continued patience, flexibility, and understanding as we once again navigate through this pandemic. Many of us were anxious about what last year would bring for our Vestal students, and what we learned is that our students are resilient, adaptable, and capable of following the ever-changing requirements related to school safety. Again, the health and safety of our students, staff, and families remains our top priority this school year. The District's 2021-22 Back-to-School objectives are to provide a high-quality education for students and keep our schools open for in-person instruction while, at the same time, protecting the health and safety of our school family.

Moving forward, changes will be made to Vestal's [Back-to-School Plan](#) as they become necessary. The District will make changes based on current conditions presented by the virus, and/or new information handed down by state or federal officials.

As an update to Vestal's Back-to-School Plan, I wish to provide you with the following details for the start of the school year:

- The NYS Department of Health has issued a regulation regarding [face coverings for COVID-19 prevention](#). This mandate requires all students, staff, and visitors to wear a face covering while in school buildings, as well as on school buses. As expected, this regulation follows the CDC's recommendations.
- The District will be open five days a week for in-person learning starting on Thursday, September 9, 2021. (Please be advised that the District will only offer remote learning for approved medically-excused K-12 students. This service will be provided through Broome-Tioga BOCES.)

- Per CDC guidelines, students will be physically distanced from 3 to 6 feet in classrooms, where feasible.
- Physical education, band, and chorus classes will maintain 6 feet of physical distance, where feasible. However, some learning activities will require shorter distances.
- While eating in the cafeteria, students will not need to wear face coverings as they will be physically distanced to the extent possible.
- Students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, should stay home and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care.
- Students/families and staff are expected to complete an attestation form prior to the start of the school year. By signing this form, you are confirming that you will take your temperature each day before school and will not come to school if you have a temperature over 100.0° F. You are also confirming that you will not come to school if you exhibit new or unusual symptoms associated with COVID-19.
- Extra-curricular clubs and activities will resume in September and all school masking and physical distancing protocols will be in place.
- Custodial staff will clean high-touch surfaces throughout the day. Cleaning and sanitation supplies and hand sanitizer will be readily available in each classroom.
- Contact tracing will be conducted in conjunction with the local county health department(s). The District will provide updates once a week pertaining to the number of positive cases reported. Of course, individuals identified through the contact tracing procedure will be notified as part of the process.
- Please be advised that the District will modify the above procedures/protocols in accordance with changes in local health data and/or county, state, or federal guidance documents. It is the District's intention to work collaboratively with our learning community and appropriate health department(s) to ensure a safe and enjoyable 2021-22 school year.

I want to thank you for your anticipated cooperation, patience, and understanding.

Stay safe, Stay healthy,



Jeffrey J. Ahearn
Superintendent