

Flemington-Raritan Regional School District
Dr. Kari McGann
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July 15, 2021

Dear Flemington-Raritan Regional School District Parents and Community Members,

As our excitement grows for the start of the 2021-22 school year, the Flemington-Raritan Regional School District is planning for the return to school in the safest manner possible. We are excited to welcome our students back to school in the fall for in person learning five days a week, starting Wednesday, September 8, as the first day.

The district has made plans to provide our students with the extra time and care they need from the past 18 months and to successfully transition back to in person learning. The entire team is available to provide support to students for the return to full in-person learning. Guidance counselors, school nurses, building principals, and others are available to support students with returning to school for in-person learning.

Heading back to school can create new worries for kids and COVID-19 has heightened feelings of worry and anxiety.¹ Students that have not returned yet for in-person learning may experience “re-entry anxiety.” Re-entry anxiety is defined by Inger Burnett-Zeigler, Ph.D, Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Psychology at Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University, as the stress that people feel as it pertains to getting life back to normal.² Experts in the field of mental health share that an important part of mental health is to recognize that it's okay to feel uncertain of the situation.³ Our guidance counselors can support your child and family to prepare for spending time apart and returning to school. Please contact your child's building principal to learn of ways your child and family can receive support.

To provide support for parents on returning to in-person learning, a virtual parent town hall is scheduled with the U.S. Department of Education on Thursday, July 29, from 8 to 9 PM ET. After a year and a half of grappling with the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, students from across the country are slated to return to school in-person this fall. However, for many, parents and students, the return to in-person learning has brought with it a variety of worries, hesitations, and questions. During this event, panelists from the U.S. Department of Education and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will answer parents' questions and address concerns around the return to in-person instruction. Parents are invited to submit questions about the return to in-person instruction on the registration form. The event is sponsored by the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement. Registration is available [here](#).

As we move closer to the full opening of all our schools, we will continue to closely watch our local metrics and advise parents accordingly. Aggressive sanitation protocols, quarantining, contact tracing, and screening are all part of the comprehensive COVID-19 prevention strategies. The District has implemented layered mitigation strategies like handwashing, excluding students with COVID-19 symptoms, and contact tracing to identify threats of exposure to the virus. We will continue to monitor community transmission, vaccination coverage, the occurrence of outbreaks, and local policies and regulations to guide our decisions on the use of layered prevention strategies.

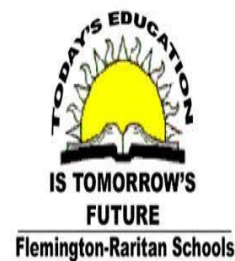
We are confident in our procedures for the safe return of students, faculty, and staff and we look forward to September 8 when students return for a full day of school.

¹ [How to Help A Child with Anxiety Deal with School Transition \(psycom.net\)](https://www.psycom.net/help-articles/2020/07/15/how-to-help-a-child-with-anxiety-deal-with-school-transition)

² [Re-Entry Anxiety: 7 Ways to Deal With Stress About Post-Pandemic Life | SELE](https://www.sele.org/re-entry-anxiety-7-ways-to-deal-with-stress-about-post-pandemic-life)

³ [Back-to-School Anxiety During COVID-19 – Children's Health \(childrens.com\)](https://www.childrens.com/back-to-school-anxiety-during-covid-19)

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Sincerely,

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