



## JAMES I. O'NEILL HIGH SCHOOL

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Dear OHS Parents:

As November 9 approaches, we know that families have questions about in-person instruction. This letter intends to answer some Frequently Asked Questions we have been receiving. Please refer to the district website for other questions and answers.

Thank you.

Ms. Brand  
Principal

Questions (Click on the link to take you directly to the question answer):

[What cohort will my child be in and what days will he/she be attending school?](#)

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**What cohort will my child be in and what days will he/she be attending school?**

Students will be broken down into the following cohorts:

- Maroon Cohort: Students with the last names that begin with A through Le will be attending in-person instruction on Mondays and Tuesdays.
- Gold Cohort: Students with the last names that begin with Li through Z will be attending in-person instruction on Thursdays and Fridays.
- White Cohort: All students who have opted for remote instruction will participate in synchronous online instruction all weekdays except Wednesdays.

All students will still have synchronous instruction if they are in a cohort that is not in person that day. They should follow the same schedule as they have been thus far.

**Will my high school-aged child be in the same cohort as my younger children who do not go to OHS?**

If your family lives in the Highland Falls or Fort Montgomery and has children attending either FMES or HFIS, your cohort schedule will be based on the last name of the child attending O’Neill. For example, if your high school child has the last name of “Adams” and you have a younger child with the last name of “Marks”, both children will be in the Maroon Cohort since the high school-aged child with the last name of Adams has a name that falls between A-Le.

NOTE: If a family had an unusual circumstance, the guidance department and/or the administration contacted your family directly.

**What do I have to do that is new on days that I report to school?**

All students must take their temperatures and complete the periodic COVID screening form that will be sent to your email prior to entering the building on any day they have in-person instruction. Families of students in the Maroon cohort will need to complete the form on Tuesdays and the families of the Gold cohort will complete them on Thursdays. Students who are 100% virtual (i.e., the White cohort) will not be completing the form weekly, except if they are coming to the building for a sport or activity. In those instances, they will need to fill in the visitors form that is on the website. Additionally, all students must enter the building through the back entrance nearest the main stairwell (i.e. at the top of the ramp) or the main entrance of the building. Temperature scans will be taken of each student as they enter the building.

**Will my child have transportation to and from school?**

All students will have transportation to and from school on the days that their cohorts are assigned in-person instruction. BOCES students will continue to have the same bus routes as they have had since the start of the school year. Parents may opt to drive their child to and/or from school should they choose to do so. Note that drop off will now be in the back of the building.

**What safety precautions will be in place on the buses for high school students?**

All students on the bus will be required to sit in the seat furthest to the back when they get on the bus in the morning. They cannot share a seat with any other student (unless that person lives in the same household) and must sit in the area closest to the window. Students must also be wearing a mask at all times while on the bus. As students exit the bus, they must stay 6 feet behind the person in front of them. When they board the bus in the afternoon, students should sit in the same general area as they sat in that morning, while maintaining social distance from others by sitting in a seat near the window.

NOTE: The afternoon buses will be leaving the school parking lot promptly at 2:30 p.m., which means students have only 6 minutes after the final bell to get to their buses. This is a strict schedule and cannot be altered, so students should be conscious of this at the end of the day.

**Will there be an after-school bus for extracurricular activities?**

Students who are assigned to be “in-person” on the day of an after-school club or activity will be allowed to stay for the activity so long as an adequate space is available to safely accommodate the students in the club that day and the advisor opts to do it in person. The meeting will also run virtually at the same time. A bus will be provided at 3:45 p.m. Students who play a sport will have to arrange for transportation to and from practice on days that their cohort is not in school. Additionally, athletes will need to arrange for pick-up after practice on all days.

**Will students be assigned a locker?**

All students will have the same locker as they have had in the past. New students and freshmen have been given a locker and combination which will be reviewed on the days of the student tours. Students will only be allowed to use their locker at certain times. Students with odd-numbered lockers (i.e. top lockers) will be allowed to use them before odd-numbered periods. For example, if the student’s locker number is 235, she could use it before periods 1, 3, 5, and 7. Students with even-numbered lockers (i.e., bottom lockers) will be able to use a locker before even-numbered periods. All students can use their lockers when they first enter the building in the morning so long as they maintain social distancing. In general, if students see someone at a locker which is beside their own, they should wait until that student is done using it in order to maintain social distancing.

NOTE: Students will NOT have gym lockers at this time, so they should plan to wear flexible clothing and sneakers on the one day a week they have in-person PE class.

**How will students maintain social distancing between classes?**

Because students have 8 minutes between classes, they are expected to maintain social distancing in the hallways. To help ensure this, all hallways in the A wing of the building will move in a counter-clockwise direction only. Signage will be posted throughout the building to guide students. Additionally, bathrooms will be limited to no more than 2 people at a time. All others are asked to wait in a socially-distanced line outside the bathroom.

Stairwells are two-way, but students must maintain distancing behind the person in front of them.

**How will lunches work?**

Students will be assigned to an area in the building where they will have a seat that is socially distanced from others. All students will have the option of picking up a free, pre-packaged lunch from three different locations in the building should they opt to take one. (Free breakfast will also be available to all students at two different locations.) While some vending machines may be available for snacks, there will not be snacks sold in the cafeteria at this time and no cash can exchange hands at all.

**Will new transfer students and freshmen have a chance to tour the building prior to November 9?**

Yes, all new students and freshmen will be assigned a tour time between 3:00-4:10 to find their classes and their lockers during the week of November 2. The guidance department will be sending out information shortly about these tours.

**Can Seniors drive to school starting on November 9?**

Yes, seniors can drive to school, so long as they have a permission slip, license, access to a car and the registration for that car. More details will be sent directly to seniors in the next week. At this time, only seniors can drive to school.

**Can students bring their own computers to school instead of the school-issued chromebooks?**

No, students are not able to access the school's wifi on any computer or device other than the ones issued by the school. This rule is in place to keep the network safe from outside hackers and to maintain the necessary oversight of internet usage and maintenance of devices. This means that all students must come to school with their chromebooks fully charged and ready for usage.

**Do students have to wear masks at all times?**

Yes, students must wear a mask at all times while in school or on the bus, except when they are eating lunch or when they have requested a mask break during a class. During mask breaks, students can step out into the hallway for a few minutes after asking permission to do so. Students may only have their masks off in the hallway when the hallway is mostly empty. This means that during the times classes are passing, all students must be wearing a mask. All students must also wear a mask on the bus. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in the student being removed from the classroom and possibly sent home for the remainder of the day.